

News RELEASE – Final

Haltech Expands “Beyond Boundaries” Program to Benefit More Companies During COVID Business Accelerator Program for Women Entrepreneurs Increases Adds Advanced Advisory Services, Power Panel Mentoring and Tech Skill Development in 2020

Burlington, ON – December 3rd, 2020 – Haltech Regional Innovation Centre (Haltech), in partnership with the Region of Halton, expanded the scope and size of their “Beyond Boundaries” business-accelerator program for Halton-based businesses owned or founded by women to provide more support to women entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participating companies will benefit from increased mentoring and networking opportunities, and support to strengthen tech skills to grow their companies.

Created to address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by diverse women who found and operate businesses, “Beyond Boundaries” was developed by Haltech and the Halton Region Global Business Centre with funding support from the Government of Canada’s Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund delivered by FedDev Ontario.

“Beyond Boundaries works directly with women entrepreneurs to grow and scale up their businesses to more effectively operate and market their products and services, diversify and expand their customer base, and innovate to explore new market opportunities,” said Shann McGrail, Executive Director of Haltech. “The program encourages participants to think big about their businesses, connects entrepreneurs with successful women mentors in finance, technology, business management, sales and marketing. Our mentors work closely with participants to create solutions to issues specific to their businesses and give them the skills and resources they need.”

“COVID-19 has hit women-owned businesses hard and we have expanded ‘Beyond Boundaries’ to help them pivot and devise new strategies to succeed in this challenging and constantly changing economic environment,” said McGrail. “Beyond Boundaries” has added three new streams that help business owners build and strengthen skills and business relationships that support business growth. The new streams are:

- *Power Panels*: Sector-specific showcases give participating companies the opportunity to present their business propositions to high profile, experienced mentors and receive in depth, personalized feedback. There is a great line up of mentors lending their time to this effort including Linda Hasenfratz, CEO of Linamar; Jill Schoolenberg, Regional President Canada, Australia and Latin America at GoDaddy; Mary Ann Wenzler-Weibe Vice-President BDC; Jennifer Cooke of EDC and Claudette McGowan, Global Executive Officer- Protect Fusion & Cyber Experience, TD Bank.
- *Advanced Advisory Services*: A 1:1 mentoring service for companies that are past the ideation stage and looking to scale their business by developing a growth plan. Each woman entrepreneur will be matched to a mentor with specialized experience to help establish solutions for identified gaps and pain points in their business and reach the next milestone in their business evolution.
- *Roadmap to MVP*: A combination of content sessions and mentoring that help women starting tech companies deepen their technology skills to develop a minimal viable product (MVP) and move the company beyond the discovery stage and into the marketplace. This service includes

curated introductions to experts and developers needed to take the company to the next development phase.

“Haltech has an exceptional track record in successfully advising women tech entrepreneurs, which represent 53% of its client base where[as] women-owned companies comprise about 15% of all tech startups in Canada. This specialized experience has contributed greatly to the quality and success of “Beyond Boundaries,” which proved in its first year that access to technology, resources, management counsel and networking are essential to a thriving business,” said Stephanie Mazhari, Manager of the Halton Region Small Business Center and Global Business Centre”

“‘Beyond Boundaries’ was invaluable in helping us focus on the areas of the business that offered the greatest revenue potential — and provided the counsel, resources and industry connections we needed to expand into new markets,” said Denise Bedell, Executive Director of Content Innovo Inc., a first-year “Beyond Boundaries” graduate. “Thanks in large part to our participation in the program, we successfully launched new services, hired staff and began exploring partnership opportunities to evolve new business models and grow revenue.”

“Our government is thrilled to support initiatives such as Haltech’s Beyond Boundaries business accelerator program through our Women Entrepreneurship Strategy. Haltech’s program is designed to address the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, particularly amid COVID-19. We will continue to work with partners like Haltech to deliver the support that women entrepreneurs and all small business owners need to rebuild on the road to recovery and succeed into the future.”

- the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister for Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade

Beyond Boundaries is funded in part by the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario and with the support of sponsors, including BDO, Bereskin & Parr, Enable Education, Angel One, bdc, EDC, Innovation Factory, MEV Innovation Centre, RBC, RIC Centre, Silicon Halton, and Tech Place.

About Haltech: Haltech is a not for profit Regional Innovation Centre funded by the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade. Haltech provides entrepreneurial education, advisory services and strategic connections to technology start up and scale up companies in Halton Region to help them accelerate growth and bring innovations to market. Since its inception, Haltech has worked with over 800 technology and innovation companies. In its last fiscal year, clients of Haltech generated over \$63 million dollars of revenue, created 428 jobs, and raised \$21.5m in capital.

About Halton Region Global Business Centre (GBC): The GBC is a hub of resources and support for local small to medium-sized businesses that are looking to scale up, export and go global

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