

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MANDATE

PARO is primarily focused on delivering programs to enhance enterprise development and to provide for the development and support of peer lending circles.

1. Growing women-led companies (Start-up Support)

This pillar will encourage greater economic participation of diverse women through the delivery of enhanced and specialized supports for women owned businesses, from Start-up to Scale-up

2. Accessing new growth opportunities by expanding and strengthening PARO's Hubs (Scaling Support)

By facilitating connections to growth capital and increasing the knowledge and skills of women entrepreneurs so they can take advantage of growth opportunities

3. Expanding access to domestic and export markets by providing resources and supports to build export readiness and capacity.

This pillar will encourage greater economic participation of diverse women through the delivery of enhanced and specialized supports for women owned businesses, from Start-up to Scale-up



New Head Office

OUR VALUES

- Cooperation
- Ownership
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Simplification
- Peer Support

#Proud PARO Women

HOW WE MADE AN IMPACT



974
Businesses
Created

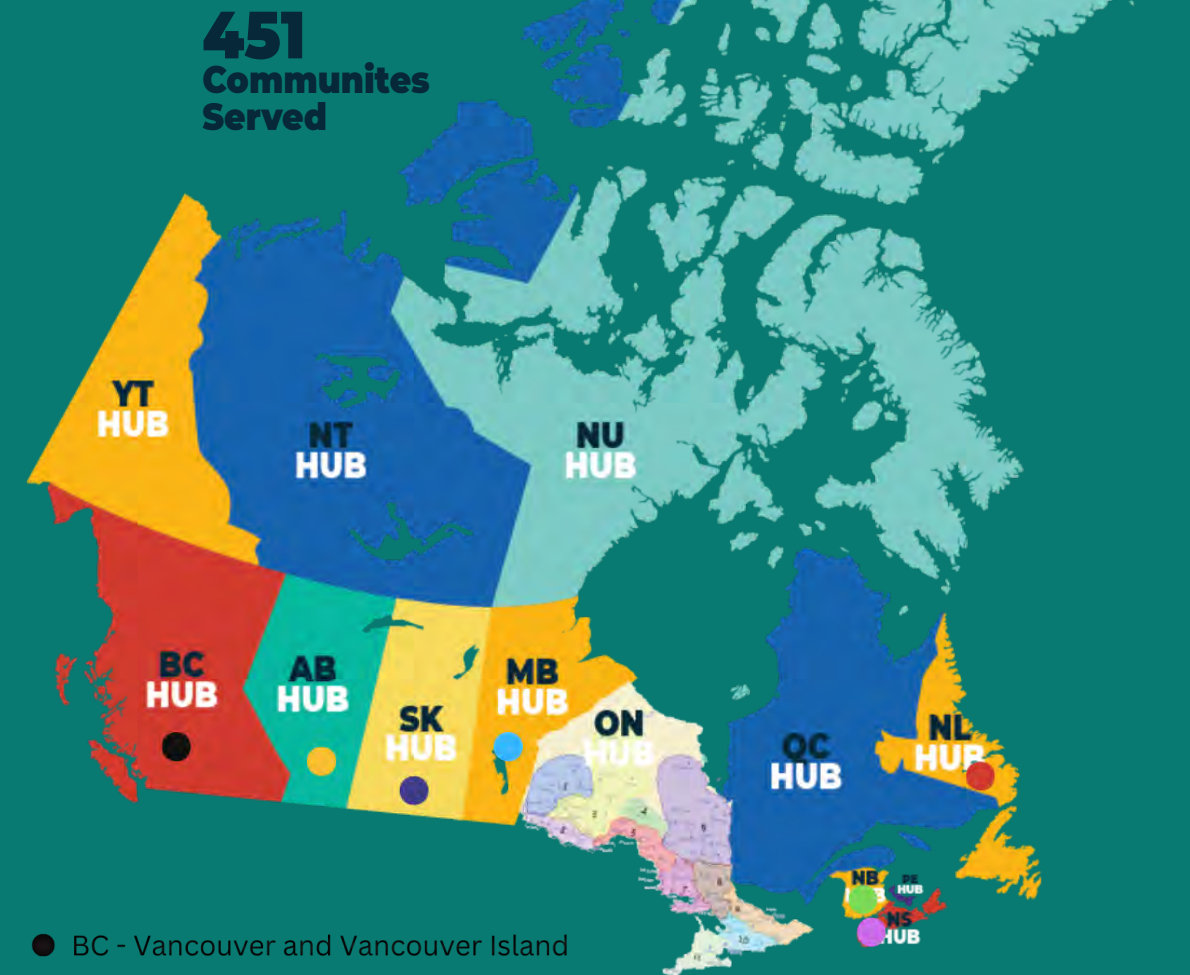


1,213
Businesses
maintained
or expanded



3,911
Jobs created
or maintained

276+
Circles



- BC - Vancouver and Vancouver Island
- Alberta - Edmonton
- Saskatchewan - Regina
- Manitoba - Winnipeg
- Nova Scotia - Springfield
- New Brunswick - Fredericton
- Newfoundland - St. John's

PAROntario

1 Kenora / Sioux Lookout	7 Sault Ste-Marie / Sudbury
2 Fort Frances / Aitkolan	8 Temiskaming / Bracebridge
3 Dryden / Ignace & North	9 Renfrew / Ottawa / Belleville
4 Greenstone	10 Huntsville / Durham
5 Thunder Bay / Superior North	11 Greater Toronto Area
6 Hearst / Timmins and North	

PARO works in all areas of these provinces! Whether you're in the city or rural area, a PARO team member can support you wherever you are.

From 2010 - 2024, we helped entrepreneurs access:



\$16,522,183
Total grant and loan dollars to clients



\$10,855,044
Grants and loans from PARO Programs



\$5,816,382
Grants and loans leveraged from other sources



PARO Prosper BIZCamps and Prosper Circles

PARO is pleased to announce that in April 2023, the PARO Prosper Circles Program spread its wings across 7 provinces, igniting the entrepreneurial spirit of Canadians in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Programs and services available across Canada:

- Prosper Circles Peer Support and Microlending Program, a lifeline for aspiring entrepreneurs.
- Business Advising services, featuring the dynamic PARO GoForth on-demand learning experience.
- BIZCamps designed to fire up Foodpreneurs, gear up for investment readiness, and champion the Green Economy (plus many more thrilling options).
- The formidable Business Advisory Committees, standing strong to guide and elevate businesses.
- Webinars in both English and French, accompanied by a treasure trove of training and funding opportunities!

The Prosper team is on a relentless mission to supercharge these services, spreading prosperity to every corner of the Great White North. Unveil the epic journey at www.paro.ca/canada, and join the revolution!



PARO TRADE MISSIONS

Women's Companies are underrepresented amongst exporting enterprises. We are committed to expanding supports and building connections for women-owned businesses looking to scale up, increase their knowledge, and create pathways to export to global markets.

Women's Enterprise Centre of Northern Ontario (WECNO) and Women's Innovative Initiatives (WIN)

Funded by FedNor and FedDev respectively, WECNO and WIN ensure that all women in Ontario, regardless of location, have access to the right tools and resources to develop and grow their businesses. PARO's initiatives focus on key areas such as:

Growing and Scaling Women's Companies
Encouraging Greater Participation of Women in the Economy by delivering tailored supports to scale up majority women-owned companies. Our goal is to foster the growth of world-class businesses, providing resources from start-up onward. Through goal-oriented counseling, mentorship, BIZCamps, workshops, webinars, and specialized skills development, women entrepreneurs gain competitive advantages. This support includes creating or licensing intellectual property, commercializing products or services, and adopting innovative technologies with a particular focus on green and cleantech.

In June, PARO will lead a Trade Mission to the WBENC National Conference in New Orleans. This mission is a unique opportunity for women entrepreneurs to connect with global markets, establish networks, and promote their businesses on an international stage, fostering connections that drive growth and visibility for Ontario's women-owned enterprises. If you are interested please contact Karen at trainer@paro.ca



Letter from the CEO & President

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year at PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible achievements and milestones we have reached together. 2024 has been a remarkable year of growth, empowerment, and resilience for women entrepreneurs across our PARO community.

This year, we organized two trade missions that saw our women entrepreneurs venturing beyond local markets. Through these missions, over 50 women participated in events aimed at fostering international trade relationships. We collaborated with global partners to provide exposure and networking opportunities, allowing women to showcase their products and services on larger platforms. The connections made through these trade missions have led to substantial new business opportunities and partnerships, furthering our goal of empowering women to expand their ventures globally.

We are continually working to address one of the most significant barriers women entrepreneurs face: access to funding. In 2024, we expanded our funding programs to include Circles Grants and loans tailored specifically for borrowers across Canada. Our Circles Grant initiative provided over \$100,000 in funding to women-led businesses, allowing them to invest directly in their growth and development. Additionally, our innovative loan programs have made capital more accessible, with over 200 loans issued to women entrepreneurs in various sectors. PARO's Circle network now has 276 circles-from sea to sea!

One of the highlights of our year was the growth of our BIZCamp program. Designed to offer intensive entrepreneurial training, BIZCamps provided women with hands-on experience and insight into starting and scaling a business, and some for targeted sectors such as foodpreneur, Invest-readiness and bioenterprise. Over 150 participants benefitted from these programs, which included workshops on business planning, marketing strategies, financial management, and pitch preparation. A pitch competition, allowed women to present their business ideas to a panel of judges for a chance to win funding and mentorship opportunities and to be better prepared for trade missions.

Our partnership with the Women's Enterprise Organizations Canada (WEOC) has been instrumental in providing even more funding options for women entrepreneurs. To date, through the WEOC National Women's Loan Fund, PARO has supported 128 women entrepreneurs with \$5.8 million in low-interest loans specifically designed to meet their unique needs. This collaboration has empowered numerous entrepreneurs to pursue their visions and bring their innovative ideas to life, reinforcing our commitment to supporting women at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey.

Beyond these programs, our initiatives continue to promote sustainability and social impact within our community. This year, we launched several programs aimed at encouraging environmentally friendly practices among women entrepreneurs. These initiatives not only highlight the importance of sustainability but also create new market opportunities for those who prioritize eco-conscious business practices.

As we move forward, we are excited to announce the expansion of our digital resources and online learning platforms. Through these innovative initiatives, we aim to provide accessible training and support tools to women entrepreneurs, regardless of their location. Our commitment to inclusivity drives us to ensure that every woman, no matter her background, has access to the resources she needs to succeed.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters for their unwavering commitment to PARO's mission. Together, we are breaking barriers and paving the way for a brighter, more equitable future for women in business.

As we move into the next year, let us continue to support one another in our journeys. I encourage all of you to engage with our programs, share your stories, and advocate for women's entrepreneurship in your networks. Together, we can ignite change and empower the next generation of female leaders.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Here's to another year of empowerment, innovation, and success at PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise!

Warm regards,

Rosalind Lockyer,
Founder & CEO



Anne Marie Parr

Anne Parr,
President



Board of Directors & PARO Team

President

Anne Parr

Past President

Levina Collins

Vice President

Donna Brown

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Directors

Jodi-Rose Richer

Doris Shewchuk

Summer Reilly

Holly Watson

Juliet Kego Ume-Onyido

Coordinators Other

Provinces

Montse Galeana

Rosales - NL

Lesa Isenor - NS

Zulfira Pulotova - AB

Joy Idoko - MB

Alauna Whelan - WESK

Deborah Lampitt - WeBC

Founder & CEO

Rosalind Lockyer

Financial Manager

Judith Tiriwepi

HR & Program Developer

Maria Talarico

Program Manager

Melissa Cook

Lead Business Counsellor-Northern

Karen Lynn Evans

Lead Project Coordinator-Southern

Renee Gendron

HR & Executive Assistant

Brenda McDougall

Counsellors/ Coordinators - Ontario

Lori Morin

Kylee Monteith

Mary Margaret Laing

Oghenetega Okorigba

Kayla Soomer

Haley Lidster

Luciana Palotino

Nathalie Plouffe

Boneita Maria Joseph Valentine

Business Growth Advisors

Andrea Zappe

Carol Brazeau-Weisflock

Kaouthar Faouzi

Elizabeth Verwey

Victoria Watts

Deborah Hebert

Chantal Fraser

Melissa Maltais

Gabriela Casineanu

Carole Perrin

Karen Tretter

Linda Farmer

Francoise Briet

Suzanne Tighe

Cathy Tait

Leila Durante

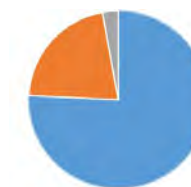
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Jennifer Wellsman

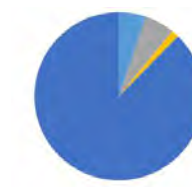
Laura Lynch

Cathleen Lundgren-McMahon

2024 Financials



Revenues	
Federal	\$4,310,272
Provincial	\$589,988
Fees & Other	\$372,47
TOTAL	\$5,267,738



Expenses	
Administration	\$198,396
Amortization	\$462
Conferences Seminars Workshops	\$89,198
Non-Repayment Portion/Grants	\$38,500
Other Programs & Services	\$4,394,289
TOTAL	\$4,720,845

Partners List

<https://paro.ca/community-partners/>



Financial Partners

Proudly supported by/ Fièrement appuyé par:



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada



Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub
Portail de connaissances pour les femmes en entrepreneuriat



For Women's Enterprise
pour l'entreprise des femmes
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#Proud PARO Women

276+
Circles



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