

Written evidence submitted by Female Techpreneur [FEN0027]

Call for evidence

What are the barriers facing women, including specific groups of women such as those from an ethnic minority background, seeking to start and grow successful businesses in the UK?

We know the struggles our community faces every day.

Despite having brilliant ideas, innovative solutions, and strong business acumen, many female founders, especially Black women, struggle to access funding, resources, and support they need to build and scale their businesses.

1. **Funding remains a major hurdle:** Even with strong business models and compelling pitches, Black female founders continue to be overlooked by investors. The numbers don't lie—**only 2% of VC funding in the UK goes to female-led businesses**, and for Black women, the reality is even worse. Many are forced to rely on personal savings or alternative funding options that aren't enough to scale.
2. **Mentorship and networks are hard to find:** So many women are trying to navigate business alone because they lack access to experienced mentors or the right circles. The right connections can open doors, but for Black female founders, those doors are often shut or simply don't exist.
3. **Limited access to product development resources:** Many female founders have groundbreaking ideas but lack access to the necessary infrastructure to bring their products to life. These barriers slow down progress and limit opportunities.
4. **The bias is real:** Women, especially Black women, face added scrutiny, skepticism, and systemic barriers that make it even harder to break through. We know these challenges because we see them every day in our community.

In which sectors of the economy do women face the greatest barriers to entrepreneurship, why is this, and what could be done to tackle them?

As we have worked with many founders, we have come to the conclusion that women struggle with **credibility and funding access**, especially in male dominated industries.

They struggle to gain **credibility** in the tech industry because Investors and stakeholders frequently **question their expertise**, making it harder to secure funding.

They also struggle to find investors who understand their vision, because their work is sometimes undervalued.

Solutions:

- There should be more sponsored funding programmes and grants specifically targeted at **female founders and women of color**.
- Access to **industry mentors, and investor networks** to bridge the credibility gap and provide valuable guidance.

- Programmes that offer support to female founders, entrepreneurs should be sponsored **like business training, legal support, and Incubators/Accelerator**
- We should promote gender diversity in venture capital firms and investment boards.

How can women best be supported to overcome the challenges they face in securing funding to start and grow their businesses?

With what we have seen, we conclude that the challenges women face in securing funding can be solved by **increasing access, representation, and targeted support.**

- When there is an Increase of female representation in spaces like **venture capital firms, angel investment networks, and government-backed funding bodies** this will help close the funding gap, and female founders are more likely to receive funding.
- There should be more **women-focused grant opportunities, microloans, and alternative funding sources** to provide female founders with capital at the early stages of their businesses.
- More programme like our Fundher forward should be sponsored where female founders have Financial education on:
 - **How to pitch to investors**
 - **Managing cash flow & business finances**
 - **Understanding different funding options**
 - **Scaling a business sustainably**
- **Access to mentors, advisors, and business networks** that connect them with investors, funding opportunities, and practical guidance on growing their businesses.
- Governments and financial institutions should also **eliminate bias in funding decisions.**

What examples are there of best practice in supporting female-led entrepreneurship, both in the UK and internationally?

- **Female Founders Fund (UK and US):** A venture capital firm investing exclusively in female led businesses.
- **Female Techpreneur:** We provide the resources, mentorship, and community support needed to help women **turn their ideas into fundable, scalable businesses.** Through our:
 - **Incubator Programme**
 - **FundHer Forward Programme**
 - **Mentorship & Expert Guidance**
 - **Networking & Community**

Our goal is simple: To help more women succeed in tech, break barriers, and build thriving businesses. **(We also need Investors and sponsors to join us on this journey in order to provide our programme for Free to Female Founders).**

What steps should the Government take to help support the development of female-led high growth enterprises?

- The Government should set targets for female-owned businesses in public sector contracts to create more opportunities for women entrepreneurs.
- Create mentorship schemes that connect female founders with investors and industry experts which will help women gain valuable insights and opportunities.
- Introduce More Female Focused Business Grants
- Sponsor Female Founders Programme - **Accelerators and Incubators, Fundher Forward will help** female founders gain **structured support, training, and investor connections** to help women thrive in business.

What data exists or is required to track success and monitor progress in female entrepreneurship?

Yes, it's required to track success and monitor progress by

- **Conducting Annual Surveys on Female Entrepreneurship**

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