



Press Release

Standard Chartered and LIFTWOMEN® Jointly Launch “SC WIN Now & Next Challenge”

Providing HKD 1 million in grants and professional training to empower women entrepreneurs for further growth

6 March 2025, Hong Kong – Standard Chartered and LIFTWOMEN® announced the launch of “**SC WIN Now & Next Challenge**”, a new initiative under Standard Chartered's **Women's International Network (“SC WIN”)**. The programme will leverage SC WIN's global network and resources, alongside LiftWomen®'s extensive experience and expertise in supporting women entrepreneurs, to offer 10 selected entrepreneurs an 8-week "LiftHER Global Accelerator Programme". Five winners will be awarded a total of HKD 1 million in grants and professional training to support their business growth.

The launch event of the "SC WIN Now & Next Challenge" brought together prominent women entrepreneurs from the startup and business communities, celebrating the inaugural launch of the programme and learning about Standard Chartered's enhanced support for SMEs which is to strengthen their financial capabilities and develop business skills for expansion. According to the research by "Women of Hong Kong", SC WIN's Hong Kong partner, women entrepreneurs generally face limited access to funding channels. SC WIN was established to provide comprehensive support to women entrepreneurs through three key pillars: delivering products tailored to various business development stages, creating platforms to connect markets, client communities, suppliers and entrepreneurs across different regions, and assisting SMEs in formulating development and expansion strategies.

As a new initiative under SC WIN, the “SC WIN Now & Next Challenge” targets women entrepreneurs who have successfully established their business models and are now poised for growth and market expansion. The programme is expected to attract over



a hundred local women entrepreneurs to apply. Ten outstanding participants will be selected to join the 8-week LiftHER Global Accelerator Programme, where they will gain in-depth understanding of business operations and industry trends to refine their business strategies. The finalists will compete in a pitching challenge in late August for five awards.

Mary Huen, CEO, Hong Kong and Greater China & North Asia, Standard Chartered, said, "Standard Chartered Hong Kong is committed to supporting SMEs development. By collaborating with chambers and industry associations, we would help SMEs transform through digitalisation, cross-border expansion, and sustainability initiatives. To support women entrepreneurs to take their business to the next level, we launched SC WIN in Hong Kong in October 2023, offering a suite of lending solutions and networking events that enable them to connect for better business opportunities. The new addition of 'SC WIN Now & Next Challenge' will bring more benefits to the SMEs by providing them with better exposure and tools to strengthen their brand competitiveness and business skills to capture the upcoming growth opportunities which will inject new impetus into Hong Kong's economic development."

Xie Wen, Global Head of SME Banking, Standard Chartered, said, "Our ambition extends beyond empowering women entrepreneurs—we strive to build a truly inclusive business ecosystem that fosters cross-sector and cross-gender collaboration to drive the overall economy forward. We not only want to support the growth of women entrepreneurs but also build a genuinely inclusive business ecosystem that promotes cross-gender, cross-industry cooperation and resource sharing. Looking ahead, Standard Chartered will invest more resources with a commitment to providing USD 1 billion in financing to women entrepreneurs globally by 2028, helping them to reach new heights in their businesses and contribute to the economic and social development of Hong Kong and beyond."


“SC WIN Now & Next Challenge” – Programme Overview:

Eligibility	Women entrepreneurs and business owners (including startups and SMEs seeking expansion)
Entry Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $\geq 51\%$ shareholdings owned by women OR $\geq 50\%$ shareholdings owned by a woman founder • Incorporated in Hong Kong with valid Business Registration (BR) • The company must have been established for at least one year
Application Period	From today until 24 April, 2025 (7 weeks)
Selection Criteria	The organiser will shortlist 20 women-led businesses or female entrepreneurs, from which 10 finalists will be selected through online interviews to participate in the final competition and the 8-week LiftHER Global Accelerator Programme
Awards	Grand Prize – HKD 500,000 Innovative Award – HKD 100,000 Best Social Impact/ESG Award – HKD 100,000 Most International Business Award – HKD 100,000 People’s Choice Award – HKD 100,000
Professional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each finalist will receive dedicated mentorship and professional guidance. • Support for marketing and branding to enhance brand visibility. • Finalists will have the opportunity to join SC WIN Community, expanding business connections and collaboration opportunities.

All Standard Chartered "SC WIN Now & Next Challenge" activities are subject to terms and conditions. For details, please visit sc.com/hk/scwin



Photos (Click [here](#) for high-resolution images)

	<p><i>(From left) Winnie Tung, Head of SME Banking at Standard Chartered Hong Kong; Xie Wen, Global Head of SME Banking at Standard Chartered; Mary Huen, CEO, Hong Kong and Greater China & North Asia at Standard Chartered; and Irene Tsang, Founder and CEO of LIFTWOMEN® participated in the launch ceremony of “SC WIN Now & Next Challenge”.</i></p>
	<p><i>(From left) Xie Wen, Global Head of SME Banking at Standard Chartered; Elsa Pau, Founder and CEO of BlueOnion; and Irene Tsang, Founder and CEO of LIFTWOMEN® engaged in an in-depth discussion about the future development and dynamics of women entrepreneurs in Hong Kong and beyond.</i></p>

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About Standard Chartered

We are a leading international banking group, with a presence in 53 of the world’s most dynamic markets. Our purpose is to drive commerce and prosperity through our unique diversity, and our heritage and values are expressed in our brand promise, here for good.

Standard Chartered PLC is listed on the London and Hong Kong stock exchanges.

The history of Standard Chartered in Hong Kong dates back to 1859. It is currently one of the Hong Kong SAR’s three note-issuing banks. Standard Chartered incorporated its Hong Kong business on 1 July 2004, and now operates as a licensed bank in Hong Kong under the name of Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Standard Chartered PLC.



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About LiftWomen®

LIFTWOMEN® is Asia-Pacific's first and leading women-focused crowdfunding platform and global network, empowering women and girls to start, grow, and scale their businesses. Through accessible funding, tailored coaching, and international mentorship, we bridge the gender funding gap and create transformative opportunities for women entrepreneurs to thrive.

Our mission is to democratize access to funding, equipping women worldwide with the tools, resources, and networks to build sustainable, scalable, and profitable businesses. We envision a future where every woman and girl has equitable access to funding and opportunities to realize their entrepreneurial dreams and unlock their full potential.