

Nove Onlus Presents

‘Daring Women in Business’ Prize

THE WHY

Nove Onlus is an Italian non-profit organization founded by international development professionals. Its mission is to support vulnerable people, in particular women, children and disabled persons in living a dignified life. It does this by providing them with a range of opportunities such as vocational training, socio-economic programs for creative enterprises, literacy classes and social integration for disabled people through sporting activities. It also carries out emergency interventions which include food distributions after the lockdown.

Since 2012 Nove Onlus is active in Afghanistan, where it is registered as an international NGO with the Ministry of Economics. It works in collaboration with Afghan institutions such as the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) and with traditional authorities i.e. local Shura (Community Council) and Elders.

Nove Onlus’ innovative approach to female entrepreneurship in Afghanistan led to the creation of the ‘Pink Shuttle’ project. The Pink Shuttle is the first transportation service run by women drivers for female passengers only. It tackles the problem of women’s independence and emancipation by fostering their economic and social autonomy.

The ‘Pink Shuttle’ which is the first private transportation company run by women in Afghanistan, is deemed to be a successful example of women entrepreneurship. However, still too many Afghan women struggle to set up their own business venture: women-owned businesses are severely hampered by lack of financial resources, network and a general conservative attitude that undermines women’s economic role within their society. The pandemic has exacerbated an already grim perspective for millions of women entrepreneurs who long for self-sufficiency. According to Radio Free Afghanistan, even in strategic and business friendly Afghan provinces such as that of Balkh, which is bordering Central Asia, officials and business leaders say the coronavirus pandemic is pushing Afghan women and their businesses to the brink. According to the CEO of Balkh’s Chamber of Commerce and Industries “In the past four months, 100 percent of female-owned businesses were halted due to the pandemic and half of those businesses are currently not in operation.” The World Bank expects economic growth in Afghanistan to decline sharply this year and a vast majority of Afghans “to fall under the poverty line due to the severe impacts of the pandemic on incomes and jobs.”

As a counterreaction to the economic recession that is hitting the country, Nove Onlus launches its **first Prize ‘Daring Women in Business’ (DWB)**, a new step to encourage daring female entrepreneurs.

THE WHAT

'Daring Women in Business' is a **competition for female entrepreneurs**, which will be held in Kabul in November 2020 (date to be announced to the 5 shortlisted finalists) at the Women Garden.

DWB is a daily event that serves as a **networking platform and innovative business-ideas-incubator** open to all those Afghan passionate women who dare to engage in entrepreneurship and support the growth of Afghanistan's business environment.

Active and creative female entrepreneurs will be presenting their business company or pitching their business idea before a **jury of well-renowned experts** from different walks of life, with opportunity for critical feedback.

The most feasible company or business idea will be awarded a prize of the amount of **4.000 USD**. The Prize also include a **certificate signed by** Nove Onlus and the **Afghan authorities**.

PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

This event is specifically designed for those who meet the following criteria:

- Women who lead a business in Afghanistan (the registration with the local authorities is an asset) OR women who have a business idea to be implemented in Afghanistan;
- Women with Afghan citizenship OR women with a work permit in Afghanistan.

STEPS TO COMPETE

STEP 1: Call for nomination from **October 12th to October 26th**; collection of the applications and shortlisting;

The applicants must send they call for interest to DWB@noveonlus.org by **October 26th at 11:59 PM Kabul Time**.

Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 need to be attached to the call for nomination;

STEP 2: Announcement of 5 shortlisted finalists via email and FB on **November 15th, 2020**.

NOTE: Only shortlisted finalists will participate in the event competition. **The finalists will be notified the exact date of the event by phone or email**. They will pitch their businesses or business ideas to the international expert panel. Those finalists who do not live in Kabul city will be **virtually present at the event via Skype or Zoom**.

The Program

DATE: November 2020 (to be announced to the 5 shortlisted finalists)

VENUE: Women Garden, Kabul

8.30 am	Arrive at the venue and Registration
9:00 am	Opening remarks by MoWA/ DoWA representative
9:30 am	Forum Discussion led by Nove Onlus on female entrepreneurship in Afghanistan*
10:00 am	Tea break & networking
10:30 am	Pitches by the 5 finalists
12:30 pm	Award ceremony
13:00 pm	Lunch

*The forum discussion will precede the competition and will serve as a creative platform for sharing experiences and lessons-learnt on the challenges and potential of women-owned business in Afghanistan. The aim is to inspire the participants and help them in generating their distinctive business ideas or re-boost their already existing businesses. The experience of the 'Pink Shuttle' and that of Nove Onlus' international partners will be shared with the nominees and the international expert panel;

The event will be moderated, and video recorded.

Expert Panel

The Expert Panel (EP) votes and awards the DWB prize. The EP is comprised of most accomplished national and international high-profile personalities from different walks of life i.e. the business sector, NGOs, activists. The EP will evaluate the businesses or business ideas considering specific criteria: originality, innovation, feasibility, social impact, outcomes (if applicable). The award of 4000 USD will be awarded by the expert panel to the most daring women-owned business or business idea!

The names of the members of the expert panel will be announced at a later stage.

The Benefits

Everyone is guaranteed to leave the event better prepared to navigate the challenging world of business in Afghanistan. Apart from the opportunity to win the prize, all participants will be given the unique chance to build their network; launch a business; get in touch with experienced leaders and mentors; join a global community; learn through the art of creating and build business strategy. Here are the benefits you will get:

- Enlarge your own network of high-quality women who are leading change in business in a challenging environment;
- Gain powerful insights that inspire change in your own business;
- Make authentic connections and build new friendships to support you on your business and personal journey;
- Develop a new mindset to take your own leadership to the next level;
- Be energized by spending a whole day in the presence of the most fabulous women.

Section 1

All questions in Section 1 must be answered in ENGLISH

General Details

- Registration number of the business and name of the authority the business is registered with (if applicable)
- Business Name (if applicable) or Name of the Business Idea
- Business Address or Personal address
- Full Name of the person competing for the Prize
- Bio of the person competing for the Prize (500 words)
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Job Title
- Copy of a valid Identification card
- Copy of the work permit (if applicable)
- You will also be asked to accept the Terms and Conditions of Entry

Section 2

If you present an already existing business respond in full to section 2.1 **OR**

If you present a business idea respond in full to section 2.2

Answers must be in ENGLISH

2.1 Specific Questions for business:

1. Describe your business and include your yearly turnover and n. of employees (max 1000 words). Including a business plan is an asset;
2. Tell us about your products and services (max 300 words);
3. What key lessons have you learnt from successfully overcoming difficulties in your business or workplace? (max 500 words);
4. Describe your recent milestone achievements, this could include contracts won, innovations, products, and services you have developed, recognition you have received (max 500 words);
5. Describe the key factors that have led to the success of your business (max 300 words);
6. Describe the challenges you and your business are facing (max 300 words);
7. Tell us what is unique about your products and/or services (max 300 words);
8. Describe how your business contributes positively to the local community (max 500 words).

2.2 Specific Questions for Business ideas:

1. Describe your business idea (max 1000 words). Including a business plan is an asset;
2. Tell us about the products and services you'd like to develop (max 300 words);
3. What key lessons have you learnt from successfully overcoming difficulties at the workplace that led you to think of setting up your own business? (max 500 words);
4. Describe your recent milestone achievements, this could include contracts won, innovations, products, and services you have developed, recognition you have received (max 500 words);
5. Describe the key factors that you think are key to the success of your business idea (max 300 words);
6. Describe the challenges you are facing to set up the business and what is needed to overcome them (max 300 words);
7. Tell us what is unique about the products and/or services you have in mind (max 300 words);
8. Describe how your business may positively contribute to the local community (max 500 words).

Section 3

Terms and Conditions of Participation

By signing these Terms and Conditions of Participation the applicant declares to have understood and agreed with the following:

1. Participation into 'Daring Women in Business' Prize is free;
2. The business or business idea must be allowed by the Afghan legislation;
3. The applicant leads a business in Afghanistan or presents a business idea to be implemented in Afghanistan;
4. The applicant must be Afghan citizens or have a work permit in Afghanistan;
5. The award is personal to the winner and is not assignable to another person or business;
6. If shortlisted, only the person named in Section 1 will participate in the event and present the business company or business idea described in Section 1 and 2;
7. No alterations to applications will be permitted after the date of submission. Submissions may be withdrawn prior to announcement of winners;
8. Privacy of the applicants is protected, and all applications are regarded as CONFIDENTIAL;
9. Only 5 applicants will be shortlisted;
10. The total value of the prize is of 4000 USD. The amount must be invested by the winner only in the business or business idea presented at the competition;
11. Nove Onlus will be monitoring the development of the business activities financed with the DWB prize for 12 months after the award;
12. Applications must be submitted by filing in Section 1 and Section 2 and by signing Section 3; All questions must be addressed in full to be eligible;
13. All sections must be sent to DWB@noveonlus.org by October 26th at 11:59 PM Kabul Time. Late entries will not be accepted;
14. No responsibility is accepted for late, lost, incomplete, incorrectly submitted or misdirected applications or due to technical malfunctions that result in an individual being unable to submit an application online;
15. The expert panel's decision is final and not disputable;
16. During the event day the participants will follow Nove Onlus' security guidance;

17. The event will be videoed and photographed. Participants grant to Nove Onlus the right to use their image and name in all forms and media including composite or modified representations for all purposes, including communication purpose and donors reporting.

Date

Signature of the applicant