



FORCE FEMMES, FRANCE

What?

Force Femmes is a non-profit organisation that supports unemployed women over 45 years old in business creation and finding employment through training and individualised support. The programme is supported by public institutions and private sector companies.

Why?

The organisation was created by women business owners to address what they identified as a “double discrimination” faced by older women in the labour market due to their age and gender. Force Femmes aims to address this by providing women over 45 years old tailored support responding to their specific needs.

Key Activities

The programme offers personalised support to beneficiaries. Support is open to women over 45 years old who have been registered jobseekers for 2 years or less. After applying online, candidates are contacted to set up an initial meeting to discuss their project. Selected candidates receive individualised support during all stage of business creation (idea development, viability study, setting objectives and monitoring progress, sustaining motivation), adapting support to evolving needs. Participants are offered training courses on specific topics (e.g. project development and management, marketing, trade relations, legal and administrative requirements). Support is usually offered in person, but a remote option is available for women with no local branch of Force Femmes in their area. The length of support is adapted to the needs of each individual, but check-ins are organised every 6 months and the need for continued support is assessed at this occasion.

A support track for women seeking to find salaried employment is also available, and offers a similar mix of individualised support and group courses.

The programme is free and support is offered through a network of volunteers and partners (e.g. a course in

partnership with IBM was open to members in 2021).

How did the programme adapt to the pandemic? The programme has continued its activities during the pandemic, moving to a fully digital format for coaching and events. For examples, Force Femmes organised a series of virtual webinars on entrepreneurship for women over the age of 45, and a virtual conference on digital entrepreneurship and employment for senior women.

Impact

As of March 2020, Force Femmes had supported 25 000 women since its launch in 2005, one-third of which had started a business. As of 2020, 53% of previous beneficiaries were still in employment in total (as business owners or employees). The project is active in 15 cities and has 11 employees and 1 000 volunteers. The programme carries out a survey on a sample of 500 recent beneficiaries (past three years) every two years. The 2020 survey found that the average age of beneficiaries was 55.4 years old. 80% of beneficiaries had tertiary education (two or more years of post-high school education) and half had two or more employees. 90% of beneficiaries were supported for less than a year and 77.6% were satisfied with the support offered by Force Femmes.

Source

- Force Femmes (2021), Force Femmes website, www.forcefemmes.com/ [1].
- Force Femmes (2020), Enquête l'emploi des femmes de plus de 45 ans, www.forcefemmes.com/enquete-sur-lemploi-des-femmes-de-plus-de-45-ans-2/ [2].

Source URL: <https://betterentrepreneurship.eu/en/content/force-femmes-france>

Links

[1] <http://www.forcefemmes.com/> [2] <https://www.forcefemmes.com/enquete-sur-lemploi-des-femmes-de-plus-de-45-ans-2/>