

every
woman



NatWest

CASE STUDY

WOMAN IN BUSINESS
ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME
HELPS NATWEST'S FRONT-LINE
STAFF SUPPORT FEMALE BUSINESS
OWNERS AND ENTREPRENEURS



“Since the start of the Women in Business Programme, we have seen a huge uplift in lending to female business customers, as well as a significant increase in female customers - which is all fantastic.”

Julie Baker
 Head of Enterprise and Climate
 Engagement and Partnerships at NatWest Group



PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

Market
 Business Banking

Services
 Bespoke Accreditation Programme,
 NatWest everywoman Awards,
 everywoman Entrepreneur’s Hub,

everywomanNetwork
Initiation
 2003

Region
 UK

BACKGROUND

ATTRACTING MORE WOMEN INTO BUSINESS

The Alison Rose Review into Female Entrepreneurship demonstrated that up to £250bn could be added to the UK economy if women started and scaled new business at the same rate as UK men. The 2019 report by the NatWest Group CEO backed up the bank’s long-standing view that women in business were an important emerging market in difficult economic times.

However, it also highlighted that female business owners and entrepreneurs faced unique and multi-layered barriers to their male counterparts. Recent research has also showed that women found managing their business during the coronavirus pandemic more stressful than men, while women were 17% more likely to struggle balancing business demands with family life.

“51% of the UK population is female but when we looked at the number of women in business, it was down in the low 20s,” said NatWest’s Head of Enterprise and Climate Engagement and Partnerships, Julie Baker. “As a bank, we wanted to do something that would help attract more women into business, as well as give them more reasons to bank with us.”

To do so, NatWest recognised they needed to help their front-line staff - across all grades and divisions - connect better with women in business, and understand the differences for women as they started and scaled their businesses. They turned to everywoman, partners since 2003 when NatWest first sponsored the everywoman Awards, which helped showcase the success of women in business, raise their profile in the media and create positive role models.

The result was everywoman’s innovative Women in Business Accreditation Programme for NatWest’s business development specialists. And because the bank also wanted to advance women at all levels in their own organisation, the everywomanNetwork was also rolled out for all employees in the group.

“everywoman are our longest-standing partner after the Prince’s Trust,” added Julie, “but after sponsoring the awards, we realised there were many other areas where we could work with everywoman - not only to support woman but also to give the bank a market-leading USP.”



everywoman created
The NatWest
everywoman
Accreditation
Programme for
NatWest's business
development specialists

Programme accredited
by Chartered Banker
Institute, and developed
by everywoman
year-on-year

More than 800 Women in Business advisers have
completed the Accreditation Programme – helping
specialists recognise different motivations, challenges
and barriers for female business owners and
entrepreneurs

Accreditation
Programme supports
recommendations from
Alison Rose Review of
Female Entrepreneurship

'Huge uplift' in lending to
NatWest's female
business customers,
and increase in
new customers/
switchers since launch
of Accreditation
Programme

Accreditation Programme part of long-standing
partnership between everywoman and NatWest –
a relationship 'stronger than the sum of its parts'

Bank has been the title
partner of the NatWest
everywoman Awards
since 2003 – shining a
spotlight on more than
200 of Britain's top
female entrepreneurs

everywomanNetwork
rolled out for all
employees in 2014 –
4,500 female and male
employees regularly
access content

Over 10,000 members signed up to the everywoman
Entrepreneur's Hub, a dedicated resource hub and
network for female entrepreneurs.

SOLUTION

THE BANK OF CHOICE FOR WOMEN

The Women in Business Accreditation Programme was designed by everywoman and signed off by the Chartered Banker Institute – making it a recognised and trusted part of the bank’s CPD programme.

Designed to position NatWest as ‘the bank of choice for women’, it helps Women in Business specialists provide tailored mentoring and support for existing and potential customers that recognises the different motivations, but also the opportunity of having a deeper connection with this growing market. Through face-to-face and online learning sessions, networking and events, it equips NatWest employees with the skills and insight to deliver a great customer experience for women in business.

Today, the Accreditation Programme is embedded in every division of the bank, with everywoman and NatWest working together to develop new bespoke content for an ever-changing world. “The programme retains its focus on gender and on supporting female entrepreneurs, but its scope is widening as we recognise that the challenges facing other groups, say ethnic business owners, are increasingly similar,” said NatWest’s Director of Women in Business, Yvonne Greeves.

“Because of this, demand for the programme among front-line colleagues has never been higher. The key thing is that it’s not a ‘tell and forget’ programme; staff are taking the learning and applying it in their everyday roles, and keeping their skills updated with fabulous content.”

However, while NatWest and everywoman set out to support female entrepreneurs, women were still under-represented in senior positions within the bank itself. What was required was a long-term, sustainable model that would ensure that the proportion of talented women rising to the top in business was mirrored within NatWest.

The solution came from NatWest’s membership of the everywomanNetwork – a digital learning and development platform that provides access to senior role models and personal development opportunities through live and interactive webinars, videos, workbooks and thought-leadership content. Through the everywomanNetwork, female employees gain the knowledge, confidence and inspiration to develop their careers within NatWest and pursue leadership positions that afford greater strategic input and more influence over product development.



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Yvonne Greeves
Director of Women in Business, NatWest

RESULTS

ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME CONTINUES TO GROW

Since its launch, more than 800 Women in Business advisers have progressed through the NatWest everywoman Accreditation Programme.

Today, more than 4,500 female and male employees regularly access resources on the everywomanNetwork digital platform, while the NatWest everywoman Awards will celebrate their 19th anniversary in December 2021.

“It’s a relationship that’s stronger than the sum of its parts,” said everywoman’s co-founder, Karen Gill. “It’s a 19-year journey that continues to grow and evolve.”

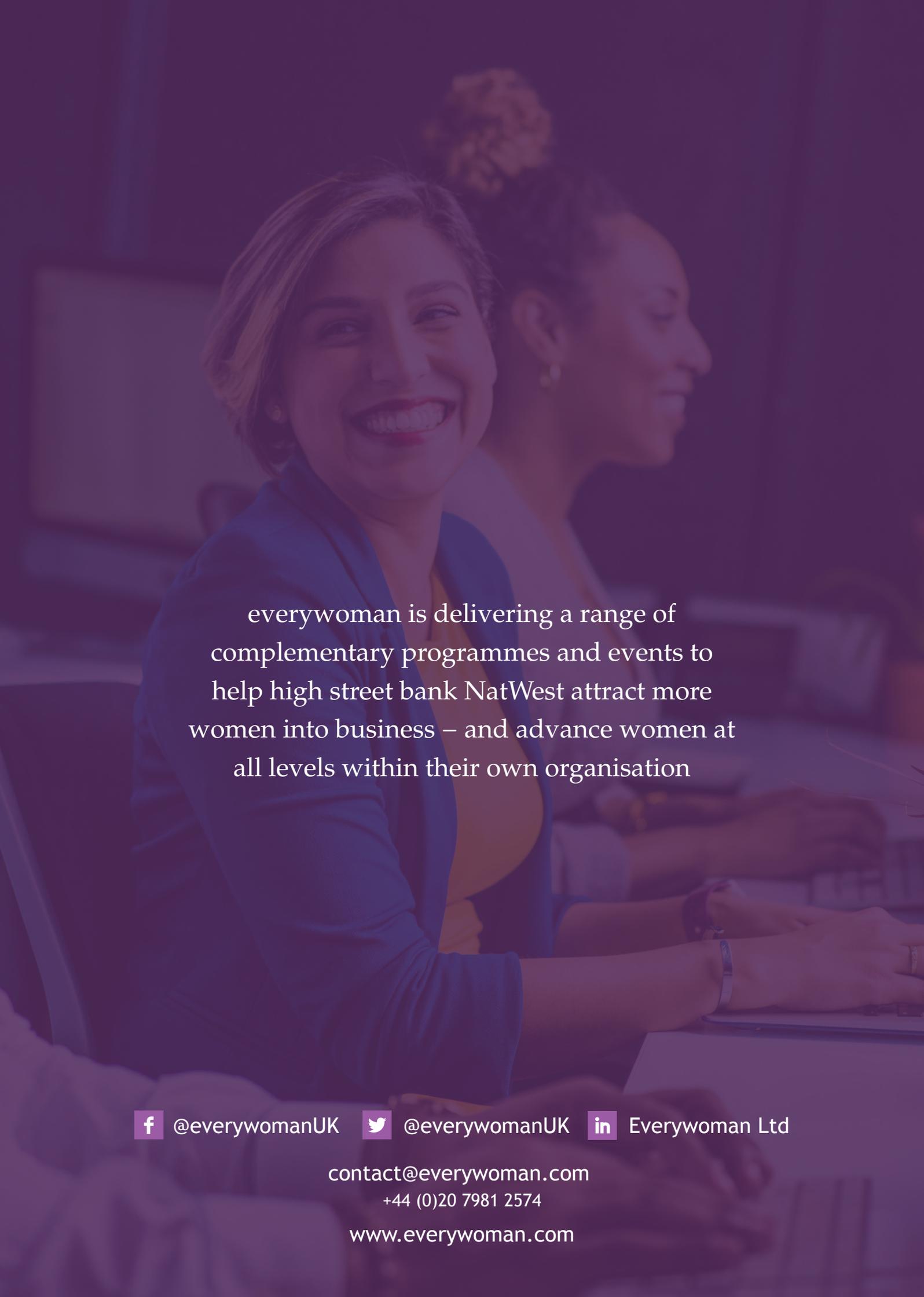
No part of the partnership is evolving more than the Accreditation Programme, with the latest research findings and most innovative thinking creating a tailored curriculum to meet the specific challenges of the banking sector and an increasingly important inclusivity agenda. As well as drawing parallels with the challenges facing ethnic entrepreneurs, the programme has recently included sessions on the unconscious bias that’s holding women back, and the impact of the pandemic on female business owners.

“Our goal is to be the go-to bank for women setting up or scaling a business,” added Yvonne, “so the Accreditation Programme has been really fantastic. I was one of the first people to go through it, and it opened a whole new world for me in terms of understanding the challenges and barriers facing women in business today.

“Every year, we think we have it cracked, and then we work with everywoman to develop great new content that takes the Accreditation Programme to a new level,” added Yvonne.

“We’ve seen a huge uplift in lending to female business customers, and more and more women are switching to the bank. Obviously, there are a lot of reasons behind this, but I speak to a lot of women who tell me that having front-line staff specially trained to understand the challenges they face is a major factor.”





everywoman is delivering a range of complementary programmes and events to help high street bank NatWest attract more women into business – and advance women at all levels within their own organisation

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