

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES** July  
Quezon City  
**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session  
**House Bill No. 2073**



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**Introduced by Representative**

**BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA**

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FUND, PROVIDING  
FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Women entrepreneurs are vital contributors to economic development, yet they continue to face significant barriers in accessing startup funding and business support. Globally, female entrepreneurs receive less funding than their male counterparts, a disparity that is even more pronounced for women of color and those in developing countries. This funding gap limits their opportunities to innovate and build successful companies, thereby hindering gender parity efforts and economic growth.<sup>1</sup>

In the Philippines, women own a substantial portion of small businesses, yet they receive a disproportionately small share of business loans. For instance, while women own 43% of all small businesses in the USA, they received only 17% of the business loans approved by the Small Business Administration in 2019. Such disparities highlight systemic issues that also resonate within our local context.<sup>2</sup>

Research indicates that even when women and men present comparable business plans, investors tend to favor male-led startups. This bias is often unconscious and stems from stereotypes equating masculine traits with entrepreneurial success. Additionally, the underrepresentation of women among

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.ubs.com/global/en/wealthmanagement/who-we-serve/women-wealth/insights/2021/funding-gap.html>

<sup>2</sup><https://medium.com/%40LivedPlaces/why-female-entrepreneurs-get-significantly-less-startup-funding-than-men-b6d64a99c1ff>

investors and decision-makers exacerbates this issue, as funding decisions often favor those who reflect the investors' own traits and networks.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these challenges, data shows that female-led firms often outperform their male counterparts. For example, female-founded firms backed by venture capital have been reported to perform 63% better than male-founded firms. This suggests that investing in women entrepreneurs is not only a matter of equity but also of economic prudence.<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing the need to support women entrepreneurs, the World Bank has launched initiatives aiming to provide capital to 80 million women and women-led businesses by 2030. These efforts underscore the importance of facilitating access to finance and support for women entrepreneurs to foster inclusive economic growth.<sup>5</sup>

In light of these findings, this bill proposes the establishment of the National Women Entrepreneurs Fund, a ₱500 million seed fund managed by the Board of Investments (BOI) in coordination with the Small Business Corporation (SBCorp), Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). The Fund aims to provide zero-interest microloans, mentorship, capacity-building, and market access support to women-led startups, particularly in social enterprises, technology, and agribusiness sectors.

By addressing the systemic barriers that women entrepreneurs face, this legislation seeks to empower women, promote gender equality, and stimulate inclusive economic development in the Philippines.

In light of the forgoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA  
Representative  
FPJ Panday Bayanihan Party-List

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<sup>3</sup><https://www.ubs.com/global/en/wealthmanagement/who-we-serve/women-wealth/insights/2021/funding-gap.html>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.thetimes.com/business-money/companies/article/female-led-firms-outperform-rivals-finance-s235q6dw5>

<sup>5</sup>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/world-bank-rolls-out-new-strategy-boost-economic-opportunities-women-2024-10-25/>

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FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “National Women Entrepreneurs Fund Act.”

**SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote inclusive economic growth by empowering women entrepreneurs. Toward this end, the State shall expand financial support, mentorship, training, and market access to women-led enterprises, especially startups and social enterprises, and shall integrate such initiatives with existing government programs that support micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) .

**SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

- a) Women Entrepreneur – refers to any woman or group of women who establish, own, and manage a business enterprise, regardless of size, provided it is duly registered.
- b) Social Enterprise – refers to a business with a primary goal of solving social problems while maintaining financial sustainability.
- c) Start-up – refers to a newly established business, typically less than five (5) years in operation, in any sector of the economy.
- d) BOI – refers to the Board of Investments.
- e) SBCorp – refers to the Small Business Corporation.
- f) OSAC-SI – refers to the One-Stop Action Center for Strategic Investments.
- g) Fund – refers to the National Women Entrepreneurs Fund created under this Act.

**SEC. 4. Creation of the National Women Entrepreneurs Fund.** – There is hereby established a special fund to be known as the National Women Entrepreneurs Fund in the initial amount of ₱500 million, which shall serve as seed capital to support women-led startups and enterprises.

**SEC. 5. Management and Administration.** – The Fund shall be managed by the Board of Investments (BOI), in coordination with the Small Business Corporation (SBCorp), Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP). The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall provide oversight and alignment with existing MSME and export development initiatives.

**SEC. 6. Zero-Interest Microloans.** – Women entrepreneurs may avail of zero-interest microloans from the Fund, particularly for ventures in social enterprises, technology, and agribusiness. Loan repayment shall have a grace period of up to 12 months, and terms shall be designed to encourage sustainability and reinvestment.

**SEC. 7. Capacity-Building and Mentorship Programs.** – The Fund shall be integrated with the Go Negosyo Program and SheTrades PH, to provide:

- a) Business mentoring and incubation programs;
- b) Access to trade fairs, export promotions, and international market linkages;
- c) Fast-tracked registration and licensing through BOI's OSAC-SI.

**SEC. 8. Women Entrepreneurs Summit.** – An Annual National Women Entrepreneurs Summit shall be convened by the BOI in partnership with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the DTI, and relevant NGOs. The Summit shall serve as a venue for:

- a) Business networking and funding pitches;
- b) Investor and government dialogues;
- c) Policy feedback and collaboration.

**SEC. 9. Appropriations.** – The amount of ₱500 million shall be appropriated from the current General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation shall be included in the annual GAA.

**SEC. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the BOI, in consultation with the PCW, DTI, SBCorp, DBP, and Landbank, shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

**SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

**SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

**SEC. 13. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian Poe", with a stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

HON. BRIAN DANIEL POE LLAMANZARES, PhD, MNSA  
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