



CATALYST

PROPELLING SMEs
FOR SUCCESS IN 2025

PLATINUM SPONSOR



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UNIT TRUST
CORPORATION



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President's Message



Dear Friends

Welcome to this year's inaugural SME Conference – Catalyst!

Small and Medium Enterprises are the life blood of our economy, generating employment opportunities and nurturing innovation in ways larger corporations cannot. Their energy, agility, and determination power diverse industries and are integral to our future and in driving our nation's prosperity. All large corporations were once in the SME category.

We stand at a pivotal moment in our nation's timeline. No matter which path we choose, we will encounter hurdles that test our resolve. By discussing these challenges and collaborating to craft innovative solutions, we can transform potential setbacks into steppingstones for growth.

At this critical juncture, the voice of SMEs must resonate more loudly than ever. Rapidly evolving markets, technological advancements, uncertain geopolitical shifts and changing consumer demands require us to adapt swiftly.

We must have an enabling policy environment to flourish. Policy makers should actively seek out and value the perspectives of SMEs, ensuring a framework that is relevant and robust for those at the forefront of commerce.

By combining resources, sharing expertise, and learning from one another, we strengthen our ability to innovate and overcome. Collective action is not mere rhetoric, but it is the foundation of sustainable progress.

Our success depends on our perseverance, determination, and unity of purpose. Together, we can mould a brighter tomorrow for every enterprise, no matter its size or sector. But true progress also hinges on the quality of policies that underpin our environment. By engaging with government, regulators, and industry bodies, we can drive the creation of a supportive ecosystem—one that catalyzes growth, sparks creativity, and keeps us competitive.

Your presence and participation at this conference shows your commitment to advancing the SME sector. The next chapter in our nation's story must be one guided by the resilience, versatility, and innovative spirit unique to SMEs. May this conference be a catalyst for bold ideas, strong partnerships, and meaningful change.

Thank you, and may you have a productive and inspiring conference.

Yours in Service

Kiran Maharaj

Ms. Kiran Maharaj
President

CATALYST Propelling SMEs for Success



When: February 11 and 12, 2025



Where: Leon Agostini Conference Hall, Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Westmorrings



Time: 9 am to 4pm



Concept Overview:

“Catalyst” the conference is a transformative two-day event designed to empower Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Trinidad and Tobago with the tools, insights, and connections necessary to drive economic growth in 2025.

Hosted at the prestigious Leon Agostini Conference Hall, this event will bring together key players from the business community, government, and international organizations to create actionable pathways for reducing the food import bill, expanding exports, and unlocking the untapped potential of the cultural and creative economies.



Why Attend?

The conference will highlight:

- **Innovative Models for success:** Practical strategies for SMEs to thrive in agriculture and the orange economy.
- **Real-World Insights:** Lessons from top CEOs who grew small businesses into regional powerhouses.
- **Opportunities for Growth:** Networking with industry experts, investors, and policymakers to foster impactful collaborations.



Tuesday 11th February 2025

Opening Ceremony (9:00 am – 10:00 am)

- Welcome Address, Kiran Maharaj, President, TT Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Title Sponsor Remarks, Bernardo Requena Blanco, CAF Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean *"Empowering SMEs: Building Resilient and Sustainable Economies Together"*
- Remarks and Launch of the "Catalytic Fund", The Honourable Colm Imbert, Minister of Finance
- Sponsor Remarks, John Tang Nian, Chairman, EXIMBANK
- Keynote Address: *"The Future is Now: SMEs as Regional Game-Changers"*
 - Shaun Rampersad, CEO, Ramps Logistics

Coffee Break: 10: 00 am to 10:30am

10:30am -12:00pm

- 2 **CEOs Roundtable Discussion: From Humble Beginnings to Big Success: Lessons from Top CEOs** –Kiran Maharaj (Moderator), Angella Persad, Angela Lee Loy, Cheryl Bowles, Dalvi Paladee, and Eesa Mohammed
Q & A

- 3 **Networking Lunch (12:00 pm – 1:00 pm)**

- 4 **Sponsor Remarks 1:00pm -1:05pm:**

Empowering SMEs: Strengthening the Backbone of Our Economy

- Deyson Scott, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, Unit Trust Corporation

- 5 **SME Pitch Fest (1:05 pm – 3:00 pm)**

- Budding entrepreneurs pitch ideas to an expert panel for live feedback and potential funding.

Moderator of the Pitch Fest

- Navin Dookeran- Chief Executive Officer, EXIMBANK

Advisors:

- Dr. Christian Stone- Chief Executive Officer, Term Finance
- Sheldon Thomas- Manager – Marketing and Business Development, (EXIMBANK)
- Karen Guyadeen-Gosine- Head of Investments, Unit Trust Corporation
- Gary Awai- Chief Executive Officer, Development Finance Limited (DFL)
- Jason Baptiste- General Manager Retail and Corporate, JMMB



NETWORKING EVENT- Sponsored by the Unit Trust Corporation- 3:00pm-4:00pm



Creatives and Agricultural Tracks

Wednesday 12th February 2025



Theme: From Vision to Action

Session 1: Creative Capital: Unlocking Revenue Streams in the Cultural and Creative Economy

Objective:

Explore innovative models and strategies for monetizing cultural and creative assets, ensuring sustainable growth for Caribbean SMEs in the orange economy.

Key Topics:

- **Content Monetization:** Leveraging digital platforms (streaming, social media, and e-commerce) to earn from cultural products such as music, art, film, and fashion.
- **Licensing and Intellectual Property (IP):** Maximizing value through copyright, trademarks, and patents for creative works.
- **Tourism and Cultural Experiences:** Integrating creative industries with the tourism sector to boost income and diversify offerings.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborating with government and corporate sponsors to fund and scale creative ventures.

9:00 am – 10:00 am

- Opening Remarks, Kiran Maharaj, President, T&T Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Remarks: Senator The Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry
“Government Ecosystem for Supporting SMEs”
- Feature Address, Senator The Honourable Kazim Hosein, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
“Sow Local, Reap Global: Reducing Imports Through Strategic Agriculture”



BREAK OUT SESSIONS

Creatives Session

10:00am-10:45am

Unlocking Opportunities: Accessing Funding for Creative Entrepreneurs and Synapse.zone launch- Marielle Barrow Maigan, CEO, Caribbean InTransit **ZOOM**

Coffee Break 10:45am-11:00am

11:00am -11:45am

Crafting Impactful Pitches to Shine at Trade Shows

Dorian Sullivan, Vice President, Audience Development and International Relations, NAB Show **ZOOM**

Lunch 11:45 am – 12:45pm

12:45pm -2:00pm

Panel Discussion: Featuring Successful Caribbean creatives and industry leaders sharing their revenue-generating models: “Unlocking Revenue Streams”– Kiran Maharaj (Moderator), Leslie Ann Wills-Caton, Lorraine O'Connor, Gian Franco, Roxanne Pompa and Louis Hillelson

Q & A

2:00pm – 2:30 pm

Creatives Track Takeaways

Kiran Maharaj, President, TT Chamber of Industry and Commerce

- **Unlocking Grants:** Step-by-step guidance on completing grant applications and accessing funding opportunities.
- **Securing Funding:** Proven strategies for obtaining financial support to grow your creative ventures.
- **Building Networks for Success:** Tips and tools to create meaningful connections and collaborations in the industry.

Agriculture Session

10:00am-10:45am

Harvesting Opportunities: Incentives in Agriculture

- Christian Young Sing, CEO, Epilimnion Aquaculture Limited

Panellists: **Joe Pires**-Caribbean Chemicals & Agencies Limited Managing Director and Visionary and **Lorraine Waldropt Ferguson**, Agricultural Economist Consultant

Q&A

Coffee Break 10:45am-11:00am

11:00am -11:45am

Strategies for Market Access and Compliance Success in the Canadian Market

- Felicia Smart, Vice President, Emsol Consulting Inc. & Founder of AgriAssure **ZOOM**

Lunch 11:45am -12:45pm

12:45pm -2:00pm

Panel Discussion: Featuring Successful Caribbean experts on Agriculture. Exploring pathways for SMEs to grow and compete in regional and global markets.

- **Christian Young Sing (Moderator)**- CEO, Epilimnion Aquaculture Limited,
- **Marc Mouttet**-Group Sustainability Director at Agostinis Limited,
- **Andrea Power** - Owner and Managing Director of Hatchman's Premium Cheeses Inc,
- **Jody White** -Executive in Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Innovation and Host,
- **Joe Pires** -Caribbean Chemicals & Agencies Limited Managing Director and Visionary and
- **Lorraine Waldropt Ferguson**, Agricultural Economist Consultant

2:00pm-2:30pm

Meeting the "Twenty-five by 2025 Initiative"

- Andrea Power, Owner and Managing Director of Hatchman's Premium Cheeses Inc **Zoom**

2:30pm- 2:45pm

Closing Remarks- Flavour of Change

- Vashti G. Guyadeen, CEO, TT Chamber of Industry and Commerce

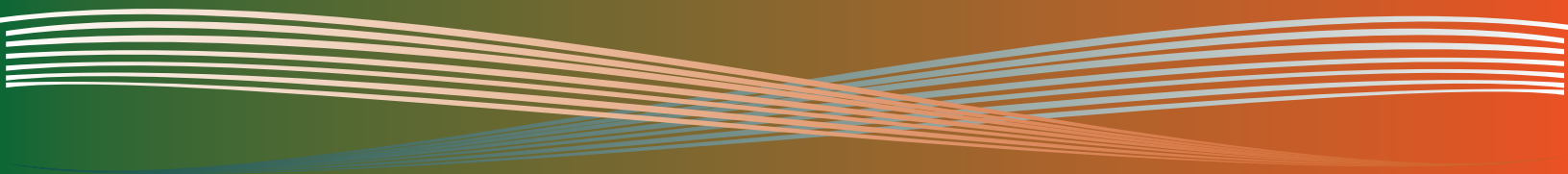
3pm Formal Closing

- Eva Mitchell, CEO, Trinidad and Tobago Stock Exchange

✦ —————> **END OF CATALYST 2025** <————— ✦



Digital Transformation *Checklist*





Digital Transformation *Checklist*

1. Build a Strong Online Presence

- Set up a professional business website
- Choose a reliable hosting provider (e.g., Bluehost, SiteGround, GoDaddy).
- Use user-friendly website builders (e.g., Wix, WordPress, Bluehost).
- Include essential pages such as Home, About, Products/Services, Contact, and Blog.
- Ensure the website reflects your brand identity with a professional logo and color scheme.
- Add an FAQ section to address common customer questions.
- Optimize for mobile users
- Ensure the website design is responsive and adjusts to various screen sizes.
- Test loading speeds on mobile devices using tools like Google PageSpeed Insights.
- Simplify navigation menus for mobile usability.
- Include a "click-to-call" feature for easy contact.

2. Strengthen Security Measures

- Use Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) certificates for encrypting website data.
- Train employees on recognizing phishing and other cyber threats.
- Regularly update software and plugins to avoid vulnerabilities.
- Install firewalls and antivirus software on company devices.
- Use two-factor authentication (2FA) for all business accounts.
- Back up critical data regularly to a secure cloud storage solution.

3. Data-Driven Decision Making

- Set up Google Analytics to monitor website traffic and user behavior.
- Track social media performance with built-in tools (e.g., Facebook Insights, Instagram Analytics).
- Monitor email marketing campaigns with platforms like Mailchimp or Constant Contact.
- Use heatmaps (e.g., Hotjar) to understand user interactions on your website.
- Generate monthly reports to analyze trends and adjust strategies.

Digital Transformation *Checklist* (continued)

4. Digital Marketing and Outreach

- Leverage social media platforms
 - Create business accounts on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok.
 - Develop a content calendar for consistent posting.
 - Engage with followers by responding to comments and messages promptly.
 - Implement email marketing campaigns
 - Build an email list through sign-up forms on your website.
 - Segment your audience for targeted communication.
 - Use automated email sequences for welcome messages and follow-ups.
 - Run paid advertising campaigns
 - Set up Google Ads to target keywords relevant to your business.
 - Use social media ads to reach specific demographics.
 - Track ad performance to optimize ROI.
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5. Automation and Efficiency

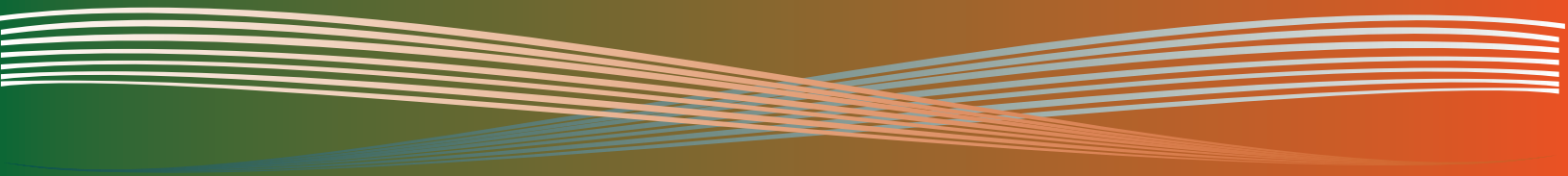
- Adopt digital tools for productivity
 - Use project management software (e.g., Trello, Asana) to track tasks.
 - Automate routine tasks such as invoice generation or social media posting.
 - Implement customer relationship management (CRM) systems like Salesforce or Zoho.
 - Digitize inventory and sales processes
 - Use inventory management software to track stock levels.
 - Implement e-commerce platforms to sell products online.
 - Integrate payment gateways (e.g., PayPal, Stripe) for secure transactions.
-

6. Upskilling and Training

- Train employees on using digital tools effectively.
- Host workshops or enroll in online courses on topics like digital marketing, data analysis, and cybersecurity.
- Stay updated on emerging digital trends to maintain a competitive edge.



Startup *Checklist* for SMEs





Startup *Checklist* for SMEs

1. Legal and Administrative Setup

- Register your business with local authorities:
- Choose a business structure (e.g., sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company).
- Register your business name with the Companies Registry in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Obtain a Board of Inland Revenue (BIR) number for tax purposes.
- Apply for a Value Added Tax (VAT) registration, if applicable.
- Secure any necessary licenses or permits for your industry.
- Open a business bank account:
- Compare banks to find the best terms for business accounts.
- Gather required documents (e.g., proof of registration, ID, business plan).
- Register for NIB (National Insurance Board):
- Register as an employer and ensure employees are enrolled in the NIB system.

2. Secure Financing and Startup Capital

- Develop a funding strategy
- Identify startup costs, including equipment, marketing, and operational expenses.
- Explore funding options such as personal savings, bank loans, or government grants.
- Apply for SME-focused financing programs available in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Create a financial plan
- Develop a budget for your first year of operations.
- Establish cash flow projections to ensure liquidity.
- Set aside an emergency fund for unexpected expenses.

3. Business Planning and Strategy

- Develop a basic business plan
- Define your mission, vision, and core values.
- Identify your target market and customer segments.
- Outline your products or services and their unique value propositions.
- Set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals.
- Include a marketing strategy detailing how you will attract and retain customers.
- Conduct a market analysis
- Research competitors and industry trends.
- Identify potential challenges and opportunities in the market.



Startup Checklist for SMEs (continued)

4. Operational Setup

- Identify suppliers and logistics
 - Research and select reliable suppliers for raw materials or inventory.
 - Negotiate favorable terms and build strong relationships with suppliers.
 - Set up logistics for receiving supplies and delivering products.
 - Establish an office or workspace
 - Choose a location that aligns with your business needs.
 - Ensure compliance with zoning regulations and safety standards.
 - Set up utilities, internet, and communication systems.
 - Acquire necessary equipment
 - Purchase or lease equipment and tools required for daily operations.
 - Maintain an inventory checklist for easy tracking.
-

5. Marketing and Branding

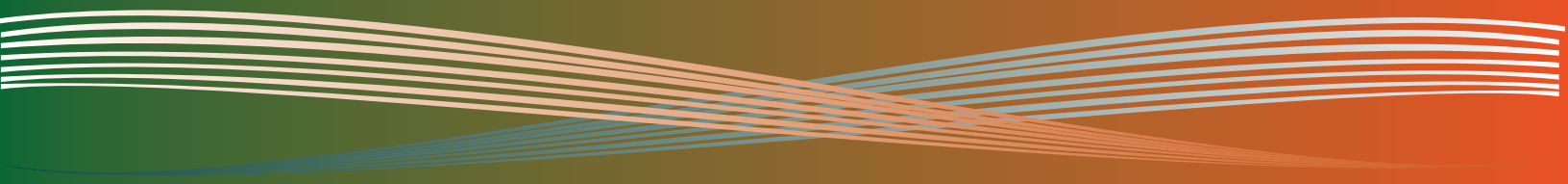
- Create a brand identity
 - Design a professional logo and select brand colors.
 - Develop a tagline that communicates your value proposition.
 - Create branded business cards, letterheads, and signage.
 - Build an online presence
 - Set up a professional business website with essential pages.
 - Create social media profiles on platforms relevant to your audience.
 - Start an email list for marketing and customer communication.
 - Develop a marketing strategy
 - Define your advertising channels (e.g., digital, print, radio).
 - Plan promotional campaigns to launch your business.
 - Leverage partnerships or collaborations to expand your reach.
-

6. Team Building and Management

- Hire and onboard employees
- Develop job descriptions and post on job boards.
- Conduct interviews and background checks.
- Provide new hires with training and onboarding materials.
- Establish company policies
- Create an employee handbook outlining expectations and benefits.
- Implement policies for attendance, safety, and performance management.
- Set up payroll and HR systems
- Choose a payroll solution for timely salary payments.
- Track employee records and ensure compliance with labor laws.



Operational *Checklist*





Operational Checklist

1. Human Resources and Workforce Management

- Set up employee contracts and training
 - Draft clear employment contracts outlining roles, responsibilities, and compensation.
 - Provide a comprehensive onboarding process for new hires.
 - Develop a training program tailored to job-specific skills and compliance requirements.
 - Create a performance evaluation system for regular employee reviews.

 - Ensure workplace safety and compliance
 - Develop and communicate workplace safety policies.
 - Conduct regular safety training and drills.
 - Maintain first-aid kits and emergency response procedures.
 - Comply with local labor laws and occupational safety standards.

 - Build a positive work environment
 - Foster open communication through team meetings and feedback sessions.
 - Implement recognition programs to reward employee performance.
 - Offer professional development opportunities, such as workshops and courses.
-

2. Inventory and Supply Chain Management

- Develop inventory and supply chain processes
- Set up an inventory management system to track stock levels and reorder points.
- Create supplier agreements outlining delivery schedules and payment terms.
- Maintain relationships with backup suppliers to mitigate risks.
- Conduct regular audits to prevent theft, spoilage, or discrepancies.

- Optimize logistics and distribution
- Establish efficient delivery routes for product distribution.
- Use tracking systems to monitor shipments and ensure timely delivery.
- Implement quality control measures to maintain product standards.

- Plan for scalability
- Evaluate storage capacity and plan for expansion if necessary.
- Automate processes to handle increased order volumes.

Operational Checklist (continued)

3. Operational Systems and Technology

- Set up business operational tools
 - Use project management software (e.g., Asana, Trello) to organize tasks and workflows.
 - Implement CRM software to manage customer relationships and sales pipelines.
 - Automate recurring tasks, such as payroll and inventory updates.

 - Establish communication systems
 - Set up business email accounts and instant messaging platforms for team collaboration.
 - Use video conferencing tools (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for remote meetings.

 - Maintain IT infrastructure
 - Ensure all systems and software are regularly updated.
 - Back up critical business data to a secure cloud storage solution.
 - Protect company data with antivirus software and cybersecurity measures.
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4. Customer Service and Feedback

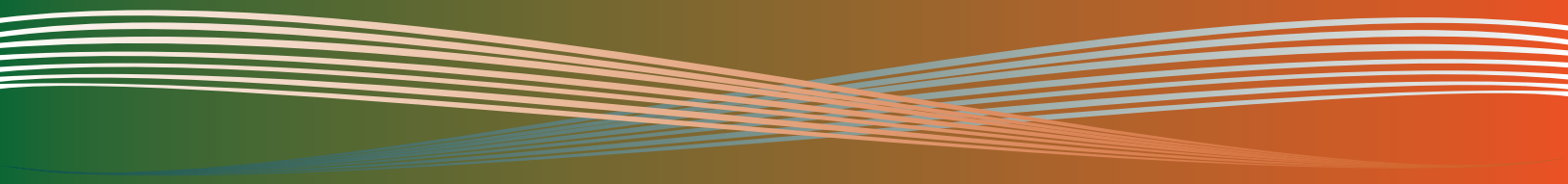
- Develop a customer service framework
- Train employees on handling customer inquiries and complaints.
- Create a feedback loop to collect customer reviews and suggestions.
- Use CRM systems to track customer interactions and preferences.

- Set customer satisfaction goals
- Monitor response times for inquiries and resolve issues promptly.
- Implement a loyalty program to reward repeat customers.
- Regularly analyze customer feedback to identify areas for improvement.

- Expand customer engagement
- Use social media platforms to communicate updates and promotions.
- Host events or webinars to build a community around your brand.
- Develop personalized email campaigns to maintain customer relationships.



Legal *Checklist* for SMEs



Legal *Checklist* for SMEs

1. Intellectual Property Protection

- Protect your brand identity.
 - Register your business name and logo with the Intellectual Property Office of Trinidad and Tobago.
 - Apply for trademarks for unique product names or slogans.

 - Safeguard proprietary content.
 - Register copyrights for original content, such as marketing materials or software.
 - Use non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) to protect sensitive business information.

 - Monitor and enforce IP rights.
 - Regularly check for unauthorized use of your intellectual property.
 - Take legal action against infringements when necessary.
-

2. Contract Management

- Draft clear contracts for business relationships.
- Create agreements for suppliers, clients, and partners.
- Include payment terms, delivery timelines, and dispute resolution clauses.

- Review contracts regularly.
- Ensure contracts remain up-to-date with changes in laws or business operations.
- Seek legal advice before signing or renewing contracts.

- Maintain proper records.
- Store signed contracts securely, both physically and digitally.
- Keep a record of contract expiry and renewal dates.

 **Legal Checklist for SMEs** (continued)**3. Compliance with Local and International Laws**

- Follow local trade regulations.
 - Comply with export and import regulations for goods and services.
 - Ensure products meet quality and safety standards.

 - Adhere to data protection laws.
 - Implement measures to protect customer and employee data.
 - Comply with the Data Protection Act of Trinidad and Tobago.

 - Stay updated on international laws.
 - Research regulations in target markets for exports.
 - Ensure compliance with international trade agreements and tariffs.
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4. Dispute Resolution and Risk Management

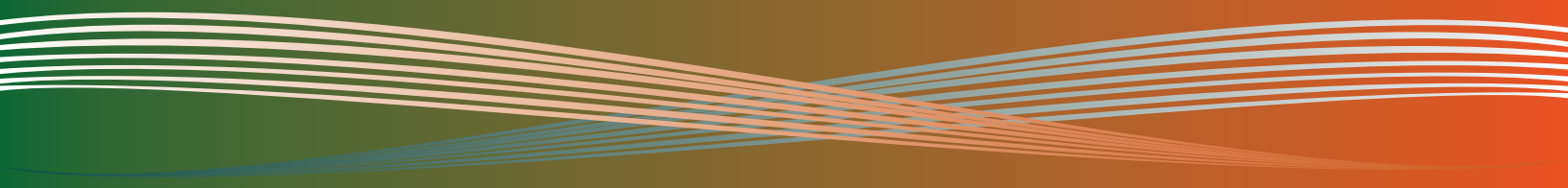
- Develop a dispute resolution strategy.
- Include arbitration or mediation clauses in contracts.
- Identify legal counsel to handle potential disputes.

- Obtain necessary insurance coverage.
- Secure business insurance for liability, property, and workers' compensation.
- Review policies annually to ensure adequate coverage.

- Maintain a risk management plan.
- Identify potential legal risks in your operations.
- Regularly review and update your risk mitigation strategies.



Export Readiness *Checklist* for SMEs





Export Readiness *Checklist* for SMEs

1. Assess Product Market Potential Internationally

- Conduct market research.
- Identify target international markets for your product.
- Analyze consumer preferences, demand trends, and pricing in the selected markets.
- Evaluate competitors and their market positioning.
- Determine product adaptability.
- Assess if your product meets the cultural, legal, and regulatory standards of the target market.
- Make necessary modifications to suit international preferences or requirements.
- Develop a market entry strategy.
- Decide on the most effective entry method (e.g., direct exports, distributors, or partnerships).
- Evaluate trade shows, online marketplaces, and export agents to increase visibility.

2. Meet Labeling and Packaging Requirements

- Research labeling regulations.
- Understand the labeling requirements for your target market (e.g., language, units of measure, and safety warnings).
- Include country-specific certifications or symbols if required.
- Adapt packaging for international shipping.
- Use durable, weather-resistant materials suitable for long transit times.
- Include proper instructions, handling symbols, and product information in multiple languages if needed.
- Comply with sustainability guidelines.
- Investigate eco-friendly packaging trends in your target market.
- Ensure compliance with environmental regulations, such as recycling mandates.

3. Secure Necessary Certifications and Permits

- Identify export certifications.
- Determine if your product requires export licenses, phytosanitary certificates, or quality certifications.
- Obtain certifications like ISO standards or HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) for food products.
- Verify compliance with trade agreements.
- Check if your product qualifies for tariff reductions under regional or international trade agreements (e.g., CARICOM, WTO).
- Ensure proper documentation to benefit from trade incentives.
- Register with export authorities.
- Enroll with relevant export organizations.
- Use trade facilitation tools like the TTBizLink platform for streamlined processes

Export Ready *Checklist* for SMEs (continued)

4. Identify and Engage with Freight Forwarders

- Research freight forwarders.
 - Compare reputable freight forwarders experienced in handling exports to your target market.
 - Evaluate their services, costs, and shipping timelines.

 - Select the right mode of transportation.
 - Choose between air, sea, or land freight based on product type, delivery urgency, and budget.
 - Consider multimodal solutions if needed for efficiency.

 - Finalize shipping terms and insurance.
 - Negotiate Incoterms (e.g., FOB, CIF, DDP) with your freight forwarder.
 - Secure marine cargo insurance or other coverage to protect against losses during transit.
-

5. Establish Export Processes and Documentation

- Prepare export documentation.
 - Create commercial invoices, packing lists, and certificates of origin.
 - Ensure accurate and complete information to avoid customs delays.

 - Set up customs clearance processes.
 - Work with customs brokers to handle export declarations.
 - Ensure all duties, tariffs, and taxes are accounted for and paid.

 - Develop a logistics plan.
 - Create a schedule for production, packaging, and shipment to meet delivery deadlines.
 - Track shipments in real time using logistics platforms or apps.
-

6. Develop Post-Export Strategies

- Build relationships with overseas clients.
- Provide excellent customer service to encourage repeat business.
- Seek feedback to refine your product and processes.

- Monitor market performance.
- Use analytics tools to track sales trends and customer satisfaction in the target market.
- Adjust your strategies based on performance data and competitor activity.

- Plan for expansion.
- Explore opportunities to enter additional international markets.
- Strengthen your supply chain and operational capacity to handle growth.

The Way Forward:

A Call to Action for SMEs

As we conclude Catalyst 2025, we find ourselves at a crossroads—not just for SMEs, but for Trinidad and Tobago’s economic future.

The last two days have been more than a conference; they have been a launchpad for transformation, equipping our SMEs with knowledge, capital access, and the right networks to thrive in an ever-evolving global marketplace.

Now, the real work begins.

The Time for Action is Now

SMEs are the backbone of our economy, yet they face persistent challenges—access to financing, limited export opportunities, high operational costs, and an unpredictable global environment. But let’s be clear: **obstacles are not roadblocks; they are opportunities waiting for solutions.**

The insights shared at Catalyst 2025 reinforce one undeniable truth: **growth is not accidental—it is intentional.** Whether in agriculture, manufacturing, or the creative industries, businesses that **innovate, leverage technology, and build strong partnerships are the ones that will succeed.**

Our Collective Responsibility

1. SMEs, Step Forward – The days of waiting for change are over. It is time to take the tools, strategies, and connections gained here and act. Digital transformation, market expansion, and financial resilience are within reach—but only if we apply what we have learned.



2. The Enabler – A business-friendly environment is not a luxury; it is a necessity. We need policies that are agile, financing that is accessible, and a regulatory frame-work that facilitate business growth. The launch of the Catalytic Fund is a step in the right direction.

3. Investors & Corporations, Open Doors – SMEs cannot grow in isolation. Big business must engage in meaningful partnerships, serving as mentors, market access facilitators, and innovation drivers. It is time to collaborate, not compete, because a stronger SME sector means a stronger national economy.

A Commitment to the Future

Let Catalyst 2025 be more than just an event. Let it be the turning point for a new era of SME empowerment. The TT Chamber remains steadfast in its commitment to advocating, facilitating, and driving real change for our SMEs. To every entrepreneur, policymaker, and business leader here today: **the future of Trinidad and Tobago is in your hands. Let’s not wait for change—let’s create it. See you at #Catalyst2026. The time is now. Let’s build. Let’s grow. Let’s lead.**

Vashti Guyadeen

Vashti G. Guyadeen, CEO,
Trinidad & Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce



CATALYST SPEAKERS



Meet the *Speakers*

DAY 1



Kiran Maharaj
President
Trinidad & Tobago Chamber
of Industry & Commerce



Bernardo Requena Blanco
CAF Development Bank
of Latin America and
the Caribbean



**The Honourable
Colm Imbert**
Minister of Finance



John Tang Nian
Chairman
EXIMBANK



Shaun Rampersad
Chief Executive Officer
Ramps Logistics



Angella Persad
Executive Chairman
Office Authority Group



Angela Lee Loy
Chairperson and Founder
Aegis Business Solutions Limited



Cheryl Bowles
*Biochemist & Cosmetic Chemist |
Benefactor | Entrepreneur*



Dalvi Paladee
Pennywise Cosmetics Limited

Meet the *Speakers*

DAY 1



Eesa Mohammed
Director
S.M. Jaleel & Co. Ltd.



Deyson Scott
Chief Sales and Marketing Officer
Unit Trust Corporation



Navin Dookeran
Chief Executive Officer
EXIMBANK



Dr. Christian Stone
Chief Executive Officer
Term Finance
PITCH FEST ADVISOR



Sheldon Thomas
Manager – Marketing and
Business Development
EXIMBANK
PITCH FEST ADVISOR



Karen Guyadeen-Gosine
Head of Investments
Unit Trust Corporation
PITCH FEST ADVISOR



Gary Awai
Chief Executive Officer
Development Finance Limited (DFL)
PITCH FEST ADVISOR



Jason Baptiste
General Manager Retail and Corporate
JMMB
PITCH FEST ADVISOR

Meet the *Speakers*

DAY 2



Kiran Maharaj
President
Trinidad & Tobago Chamber
of Industry & Commerce



**Senator The Honourable
Paula Gopee-Scoon**
Minister of Trade and Industry



**Senator The Honourable
Kazim Hosein**
Ministry of Agriculture,
Land and Fisheries



Marielle Barrow Maigan
Chief Executive Officer
Caribbean InTransit



Dorian Sullivan
Vice President
Audience Development and
International Relations, NAB Show



Leslie-Ann Wills-Caton
Owner and Founder
FIXERfilm Limited



Lorraine O'Connor
General Manager
C15 Studios Ltd.



Gian Franco
Pavilion Entertainment



Roxanne Pompa
*CEO, RoxPro Global Consulting
& Talent Management*
Executive Producer, Media Consultant

Meet the *Speakers*

DAY 2



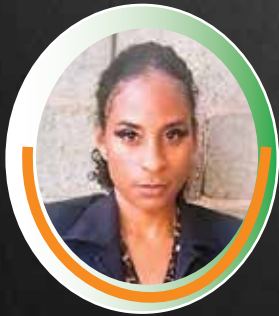
Louis Hillelson
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