



Women & Investing: The Top Three Sectors of Interest

Barbara Stewart

Last summer I interviewed more than 50 leaders (male and female) in the global finance industry across 31 cities and 25 countries in research commissioned by Kensington Capital Partners. The focus was on alternative investments as a class, and the alt subsectors that appealed the most to women investors.

It wasn't a surprise to me that although women also prefer to invest in causes and concerns that matter to them, their main focus is to make money!

Angela Holter is the Founding Partner and Chair of the Board of WIN Ventures I in Oslo, Norway: "Women are of course interested in anything that can bring a positive impact to society whether that is supporting animals or the planet. But while we will always filter for a potential negative impact of an investment, this does not necessarily hinder our involvement. We want a financial return on our investment!"

Women around the world are open to investing in all sectors including financial services, FinTech, wellness,

beauty, food, FarmTech, health care, FemTech, education, childcare, pet food, fashion, beauty, AI, general tech, and security.

Here are the top three sectors of interest to women investors:

#1 Healthcare

According to Sriram Prakash, Global Head of M&A Ideation & Global Leader, Disruptive M&A, at Deloitte London in the UK: "The data shows that female investors are more active in sectors such as life sciences, biotech, lifestyle, wellness, and healthcare."

My research shows that healthcare, especially FemTech, is top of mind for women around the world today. Research, diagnosis and treatment of diseases have historically and globally been centred around men, but we are now seeing a rapid expansion in technologies targeted at women's health.

Jacqueline Ruedin Rüsch is the Founding General Partner of Privilège Ventures in Lugano, Switzerland: “In terms of investment interests, health-related areas such as prevention, medical devices, FemTech, and fertility hold the greatest appeal for women.”

Alicia Syrett is the Founder & CEO of Pantegriion Capital and the Founder of Madam Chair in New York City: “Women bring a different investment perspective. They control the vast majority of household spending and have in-depth knowledge of many consumer companies. They are often interested in supporting mission-driven companies which reflect their values and industries like healthcare. The term “FemTech” is often used to refer specifically to investment opportunities in women’s health. For example, the company Aunt Flow stocks 30,000+ bathrooms for customers such as Google, Netflix and schools with free tampon and menstrual pad dispensers.”

My proprietary Rich Thinking research has shown that generally speaking, women prefer to invest in what they understand. Healthcare is front row and centre for women and their families.

Alice Tang is the Chief Operating Officer for MA Asset Management in Sydney: “Women know women’s needs, such as health and wellness. And women know best how to invest in these sectors.”

#2 Defence

Likely due to current geopolitical events, women are increasingly considering the defence sector as part of their overall investment strategy. Whereas the defence and military “brand” used to be perceived as a negative one (lumped in with sin stocks like alcohol and tobacco stocks, or companies with reputational issues), defence is now seen as more worthy of consideration as a way to protect women’s families and countries. Defence tech, such as drones or radar systems, is no longer seen as macho investments just for men. These investments are practical tools for resilience and security.

Anne Marie Jess Hansen is the Chief Executive Officer of CBS Executive Fonden in Copenhagen, Denmark: “Interestingly, the defence space is being heavily debated here in Denmark. We know that Trump does not prioritize defence in Europe and thus we need to step up in terms of defence. We are lagging in terms of the defence industry, and I would say about half of the 100 C-Suite women I talk to would invest in these types of companies.”

Caroline Cremen is a Portfolio Manager at Adviceworx, and, the Director & Company Secretary of CFA Society South Africa in Johannesburg: “Women are fine with investing in defence companies such as Lockheed Martin or Raytheon. Some may have a strong opinion about it, but they don’t say no to it. Both male and female investors want to know ‘Am I going to make money from it?’”

Olga Burenko is the Vice-President of Investment Banking at Dragon Capital in Kyiv, Ukraine: “Today women are focused on making real-life investments in security and donating to help Ukraine and its people. They are investing their resources in helping civilians, saving the lives of children, and fundraising to help the Ukrainian forces with equipment, medication, armour, and helping civilians with rebuilding their homes.”

#3 Collectibles

Women are increasingly collecting, and collectibles are growing as an alt asset class. Luxury assets (such as watches, jewellery, wine, art, handbags, fashion) but also cars, musical instruments, and memorabilia, even including exotics like Pokémon cards and Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs).

Adriano Picinati di Torcello is the Global Art & Finance Coordinator at Deloitte Luxembourg:

“We are seeing a lot of development around a vast array of collectibles. Certainly, I would highlight handbags as an investment domain for women. As we see the transfer of wealth between generations (this is happening now) we know that women live longer, and they are more likely to inherit the family collection.”

Art is one of the collectibles that appeals to women.

Nancy Bertrand is the Global Market Manager and Head of Citi Private Bank Canada: “Female clients are way more likely than male clients to be connoisseurs of fine art. Women collect art mostly because they like the artist or the painting/sculpture...not because they think the piece will double or triple in value in short order, like some men who ask our art advisors for assistance in spotting the next Basquiat. Due to the level of speculation and illiquidity, we will not lend against cars and wine but certainly lend against art collections. This enables UHNW clients to monetize the millions they have on the wall to invest in investments that can generate a yield.”