

Have you got what it takes to be a goddess?

IT is the final call for entries for the NatWest everywoman awards.

The awards, which are in their eighth year and are backed by Financial Mail, recognise female entrepreneurs who have overcome personal or professional adversity. The ten awards, including four categorised by age, are named after Greek goddesses.

Lyn Cecil, 62, founder of central London recruitment firm Secretaries Plus, last year won the Hera award for the most inspiring female entrepreneur aged 50 or over. She started



the business with a £1,000 loan in 1975.

But in 2002 at the peak of the company's success, Lyn discovered her financial director had embezzled more than £500,000 and the

firm was forced into receivership. She borrowed to buy back her business and then built it up again, recording a turnover last year of £2.2 million.

Lyn says: 'Winning the Everywoman award has led to a surge in business. I've appeared on Newsnight with Jeremy Paxman.

'I have had phone calls asking for help with mentoring and it makes my friends, family and colleagues proud of me.'

The deadline for entries is July 30. For details, go to everywoman.com.

Firms relish the year ahead

NEARLY two-thirds of successful entrepreneurs see the economic climate as an opportunity rather than an obstacle.

Research to be published next week by Investec Specialist Private Bank shows that entrepreneurs with a turnover of at least £1 million are largely optimistic about the coming year, with 72 per cent expecting revenue growth in double

figures. Only four per cent expect a decline. One in three entrepreneurs say they are likely to launch a new company or new products in the coming 12 months while 57 per cent are looking for access to capital to help build their business.

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