



# State Trade Expansion Program (STEP)

Assisting Texas Small Businesses Create and Expand Export Capacity



Funded by the State Trade Expansion Promotion (STEP) Grant Initiative from the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) aims to increase the number of Texas small businesses exporting to foreign markets and to boost the value of exported goods and services. TDA has partnered with the Texas Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism (OOG), the University of Texas at San Antonio - International Trade Center (ITC), and the U.S. Department of Commerce to develop and implement a program to offer Texas businesses export training, technical assistance, market expansion opportunities through the participation in the state-led trade shows, and financial support to conduct individual export activities.

## Export Training

Through TDA's partnership with the ITC, eligible small businesses will have the opportunity to receive on-site training, consulting and market research assistance related to international sales, logistics, finance, compliance and personnel management.

## State Coordinated Export Events

In addition to their regular export assistance activities, OOG will coordinate the participation of Texas small businesses in two foreign trade shows. Eligible small businesses will receive free, turnkey, shared booth space and on-site assistance from experienced staff at the:

- *INA PAACE Automechanika Mexico City* (June 14 – 16, 2017) is an automotive trade show and the ultimate platform for sourcing domestic and international products and suppliers.
- *The International Paris Air Show* (June 19 – 26, 2017) is an international aviation and aerospace exhibition in Le Bourget, France and offers opportunity to showcase technologies of the aerospace industry and related equipment.
- For more OOG-coordinated trade shows visit [texaswideopenforbusiness.com/about/events](http://texaswideopenforbusiness.com/about/events)

TDA will coordinate the participation of Texas small businesses in two foreign trade activities.

- *VIV Asia 2017* (March 15-17, 2017) showcases every segment of animal protein production and processing industry in Bangkok, Thailand bringing together supply and demand within the complete animal protein chain.
- *Sub-Saharan Africa trade mission* in May/June 2017 to support exports of consumer-oriented food products will include meeting coordination and business-to-business matching.

## Financial Assistance for Eligible Export Activities

To incentivize companies to enter new international markets and provide the customized assistance needed, TDA will provide post-completion reimbursement of up to \$5,000 to eligible businesses for approved export activities which include the following:

- Customized U.S. Commercial services, include Discover Global Markets Conferences, Initial Market Check/Gold Key Matching Services, and International Partner Search, etc.
- Design of international marketing products or campaigns
- Expert financial counseling for companies in need of more sophisticated support
- Develop websites to attract foreign buyers
- Fees for shipping sample products
- Foreign language translations
- Foreign market sales trips
- Non-state participation in foreign trade missions and trade shows
- Services to support foreign market entry
- Website translation, search engine optimization, localization services

## Eligibility

The applicant must be a Texas-based business that: 1) meets SBA “Small Business Concern” size guidelines; 2) is not barred from receiving state and federal funding; 3) has a product/service manufactured, produced, processed or value-added in Texas, 4) has been in business for at least one year and 5) demonstrated an understanding of the costs associated with exporting.

The STEP program is conducted on a first come, first served basis.

For additional details contact TDA’s grants office at (512) 463-4406 or [Grants@TexasAgriculture.gov](mailto:Grants@TexasAgriculture.gov). Applications are available on TDA’s website at [www.TexasAgriculture.gov](http://www.TexasAgriculture.gov).



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration



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