



U.S. Small Business Administration



Your Small Business Resource

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with
the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Program Guidelines

Missouri Department of Economic Development
Division of Business and Community Services
301 West High Street, Room 720
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone: 573-751-4855

Purpose

The Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 authorizes the U.S. Small Business Administration to establish a 3-year trade and export promotion pilot program, known as the State Trade and Export Promotion (MO STEP=UP) Grant Program, to make grants to States to carry out export programs that assist eligible small business concerns. The aim of the MO STEP=UP Program is to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting and increase the value of exports for those small businesses that are currently exporting.

The Priority Market is the Middle East. Special Consideration is given to The United Arab Emirates.

Eligibility

The target audience for this program is small businesses, with 500 employees or less. DED will focus assistance to these small firms to new markets in order to ensure increased opportunities.

- 500 employees or less
- In business for 1 year or more
- Is operating profitably; based on operations in the US
- Has demonstrated export-sales potential and intent, understanding the costs associated with exporting and doing business with foreign purchasers, including the cost of freight forwarding, custom brokers, packing and shipping and has in effect a strategic plan for exporting
- Registrants will be required to acknowledge and commit to the reporting methodology as set forth by the state and detailed on each application form.

MissouriBUYS

The State of Missouri has implemented a new, secure, web-based statewide eProcurement system, MissouriBUYS.

As a recipient who will be reimbursed by the state, you will be required to register your business with the Office of Administration through MissouriBUYS. The vendor registration portal is available on the MissouriBUYS website at <https://missouribuys.mo.gov>.

Clicking on the 'register' link will allow you to get a username and password. There are links to informational documents and a training video if you need help with the process. Prior to starting registration, please make sure you have the following information available:

- Organization’s Taxpayer ID Number (TIN)
- Business Type (Corporation, LLC, Sole Proprietorship, etc.)
- Email Address
- ACH-EFT Payment Information
- Internal Revenue Service W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and Certification

E-Verify MOU:

In addition to certifying that your organization does not employ illegal aliens, all applicants must: (1) enroll in E-Verify; (2) check the box on the Certification confirming enrollment and participation in E-Verify, and (3) provide supporting documentation. All applicants must complete this form and attach a copy of the E-Verify Memorandum.

The E-Verify Program, conducted jointly by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Verification Division and the Social Security Administration (SSA), is designed to provide employment status information to determine the eligibility of applicants for employment. E-Verify requires that participating commercial employers use the automated Verification Information System (VIS) to check the SSA and the USCIS databases to verify the employment authorization of ALL newly hired employees. An employer's participation in E-Verify is free. To access the E-Verify website, go to: <https://e-verify.uscis.gov/enroll/>.

To access the ‘electronically signed MOU’ – the following must already be completed:

- Must have successfully enrolled in the E-Verify program; and
- Must have successfully completed the tutorial.

To retrieve a copy of your electronically signed MOU:

- Wait until a you have received a Confirmation email from E-Verify / USCIS that the company is successfully enrolled in the program
- Log back into the Account
- Click on “Edit Company Profile” in the left menu
- Scroll about halfway down and click on the green “View MOU” button. (Make sure all pop-up blockers have been disabled – the electronically signed version pop ups in a separate screen)
- ONLY the Program Administrator can access the electronically signed MOU.

For additional assistance, you can contact E-Verify using the toll free Help line number, 888-464-4218.

MO STEP=UP Programs

New-to-Market Program – To qualify for the New-to-Market expansion program companies must currently export to at least one market (Canada Counts!) and demonstrate export sales potential as well as confirmation of export experience.

Program benefits:

- 50% of actual costs or \$5000 maximum reimbursement for trade shows that occur in the Middle East
- 70% of actual costs or \$5000 maximum reimbursement for trade shows that occur in the UAE
- 50% of actual costs or \$4000 maximum reimbursement trade mission participation to the Middle East
- 70% of actual costs or \$4000 maximum reimbursement trade mission participation to the UAE
- 50% of actual costs or \$2000 maximum reimbursement for costs of subscription services provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDOC)
- 50% of actual costs or \$3,000 maximum reimbursement for expenses related to the foreign language translation of your website
- 50% of actual costs or \$1,500 maximum reimbursement for the design and production of eligible marketing media
- 50% of actual travel expenses or \$1,000 maximum reimbursement for airfare - for one corporate representative
- 50% of actual costs or \$1,000 maximum reimbursement for hotel lodging - for one corporate representative.

New-to-Export Program – The New-to-Export Program is targeted at companies that do not currently exporting to at least one foreign market or whose exports are sporadic and very small in volume.

Program benefits:

- 50% of actual costs or \$3,000 maximum reimbursement for expenses related to translating your website into a foreign language
- 50% of actual costs or \$1500 maximum reimbursement for the design and production of eligible marketing media

Eligible MO STEP=UP Expenses

- Airfare (consistent with Fly America Act guidelines)
- Lodging
- Registration fees, standard booth space, standard build out for trade shows
- Trade mission fees
- Website (translation into Arabic)
- Market media

Ineligible MO STEP=UP Expenses

- Passport or visa fees
- Immunizations
- Expenses related to entertaining current or prospective clients or government officials
- New product development or alteration of existing products
- Cell phones and cell phone charges
- Ground transportation fees
- Parking
- Baggage fees
- Meals
- Currency exchange fees
- Meeting space audio/visual for reverse trade missions
- Fees for shipping sample products
- Cost of compliance testing an existing product for entry into an export market

Export Training Program – MO STEP=UP Export Training Program provides companies with an innovative and interactive training program focused on how to export successfully. The training is designed to develop Missouri’s exporters of tomorrow through a dynamic three-month program which is divided into four phases for optimal results.

Phase 1 – Phase one includes the exploration of best practices and the mindset of successful exporters. During phase one, a schedule is developed for company site visits and a coach is designated for each participant from a partner organization.

Phase 2 – Phase two includes sessions specific to marketing research applicable to each firm’s needs.

Phase 3 – Phase three incorporates growing the company’s international business and building an overseas infrastructure through assistance from experts in the field using presentations on international logistics, legal considerations and general export regulations.

Phase 4 – Phase four provides each firm with one-on-one coaching, information and resources and as the critical analysis and evaluation of an export development plan in order to help keep on track.

MO STEP=UP Application Deadline

Applications will be accepted in the offices of DED, prior to eligible events/activities.

Travel Requirements - MO STEP=UP travel request must be submitted to the Program Manager 30 days in advance.

A complete application includes:

- One executed electronic copy emailed to: exports@ded.mo.gov
 - One original signed version to:

Missouri International Trade Office
Attn. Melanie Bax
301 West High Street, Suite 720
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Application/Approval Procedure

Eligible applicants must submit a complete application form in order to be considered. Only applicants applying for approved cost-share activities will be reviewed for approval. Application review will consider activity, market opportunity, impact, likelihood of success and availability of funds. Approval of the application is required in advance of the event. Once completed, all receipts and source documentation evidencing the cost and the cost share must be submitted to DED for reimbursement. Reimbursement is the lesser of the authorized amount in the approval letter or the actual eligible costs. A Tax Clearance Letter from the Missouri Department of Revenue indicating that the applicant/company has no outstanding taxes due must accompany the request for reimbursement.

Reporting

Each participant shall complete a Client Impact Statement(CIS) that provides the outcomes of participation in the trade show event or other approved MO STEP=UP activity. The CIS will be aggregated by DED (without company identification) in order to determine the return on investment to the program as a whole.

Application Check list:

1. Marketing Activity

- Completed Application
- Export Plan (if required)

Supporting Documents

- Executed Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement (DCA) Form
- SBA Self-Representation Form
- SBA Debarment Certification Form
- Missouri Buys
- Sign and Return Certificate of Statement
- E-Verify Memorandum
- Fly America Document

2. Additional Documentation required after activity takes place

- Receipts
- Tax Clearance
- Invoice
- Client Impact Statement