



John H. Chafee Center for International Business

In Partnership with The Rhode Island
Commerce Corporation

STEP FY16

State Trade Expansion Program

September 30, 2016 – September 29, 2017

The State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) is a national export initiative which makes matching-fund awards to states to assist small businesses in entering and expanding into international markets. Administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of International Trade, the program's objectives are to ***increase the number of U.S. small businesses that export*** and to ***increase the value of exports by small businesses***.

The Chafee Center for International Business at Bryant University, in partnership with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, is pleased to announce they have once again been awarded by the SBA the STEP program for the next year. The Program will begin September 30, 2016 and will expire on September 29, 2017.

STEP – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in the RI STEP program, a company must meet the following requirements:

- Registered in Rhode Island as a for-profit business
- Meets the SBA definition of a "small business" (*see form*)
- Has been in business for at least one year
- Has sufficient resources to support international trade growth
- Is engaged in or wishes to be engaged in the delivery abroad of goods and/or services produced in the United States.

Eligible small business concerns will be classified as either:

NTE: New To Export = businesses with either little or no export experience.

ME: Market Expansion = Active exporters focused on expanding into new markets, new target customers and/or launching new products or services



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



For more information contact:

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MATCHING-FUND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Eligible RI companies may apply for financial assistance for specific activities designed to support export growth. All requests for financial assistance must be pre-approved prior to the start of the activity and are available on a reimbursement basis, subject to completion of the approved project and submission of all required materials.

The following activities are eligible for consideration for STEP assistance*:

✓ **Rhode Island Sponsored International Trade Events**

(Trade Missions, Best of New England Pavilion, Sponsored Trade Shows)

Up to 100% Reimbursement for specific activities related to each event.

✓ **U.S. Department of Commerce Programs**

(Gold Key, IPS, Single Company Promotion, etc.)

Up to 75% reimbursement. Maximum Reimbursement: \$3000

✓ **Websites: Translation, Search Engine Optimization and Localization**

Up to 75% reimbursement. Maximum Reimbursement \$3000

✓ **International Marketing Media Design**

(Design of promotional materials; social media marketing campaigns; translation of marketing materials, etc.)

Up to 75% reimbursement. Maximum Reimbursement \$3750

✓ **International Trade Show Exhibits (Foreign)**

Domestic Trade Events – Only those part of the Department of Commerce *International Buyers Program (IBP)*

(Booth registration fees, exhibit design fees, shipping of samples, etc.)

Up to 75% reimbursement. Maximum Reimbursement:

For Overseas Shows: \$7500 - For Domestic IBP Shows: \$5000

✓ **International Training Programs**

(Customized in-house training, Chafee Center sponsored seminars, or other third party seminars)

Up to 75% reimbursement, Or Stipends Available

✓ **Other Export Initiatives**

(Examples: Use of translators/interpreters; in-country market research and matchmaking; product testing)

Up to 75% reimbursement, Maximum Reimbursement \$2250

****Travel expenses, including air fare, hotels and meals are not eligible for STEP reimbursement.***

To receive STEP funding:

- Step 1: Complete a ***Request for Approval***. Each request will be evaluated based on the proposed project, the company's ability to execute the project, how the project supports the company's export marketing plan and the anticipated increase in export sales.
- Step 2: If approved, a ***Letter of Approval*** will be issued confirming the eligibility for STEP funding and the approved level of funding.
- Step 3: Submit a ***Request for Reimbursement***. Once the project is completed, the company must submit a Request for Reimbursement within 30 days, providing all required documentation.

For more information and to join STEP contact:

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