

Oklahoma STEP Forward Enhancement Fund Application

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

The Oklahoma STEP Forward Enhancement Fund is part of the State Trade Expansion (STEP) Grant Program which is an export promotion initiative to make matching-fund grants for states to assist 'Eligible Small Business Concerns'. The intent of this program is to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting, and to increase the value of exports for those small businesses that are currently exporting. This grant is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Part I. Guidelines & Requirements

A. Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible, an applicant must own a small Oklahoma based business which: (1) has been operable for not less than the one year period ending on the date on which assistance is provided using this grant; (2) is operating profitably, based on operations in the United States; (3) has demonstrated understanding of the costs associated with exporting and doing business with foreign purchases; (4) has in effect a strategic plan for exporting; (5) in good business standing; and (6) complies with the SBA size standards found at 13 C.F.R. Part 121.

B. Application Requirements:

In order to be considered for the Oklahoma STEP Forward Enhancement Fund, all applicants are required to submit the following application packet which consists of the following sections:

- a. Part I - Guidelines & Requirements;
- b. Part II - Company Profile Form;
- c. Part III - Project Proposal and Strategic Export Plan Guidelines (typed, single-spaced, 12-pt font, 3-page limit);
- d. Attachment I - Self-Representation as an 'Eligible Small Business Concern' Form;
- e. Attachment II – Debarment Certification Form;
- f. Attachment III - Export Questionnaire Form (must score 66% or higher); and
- g. Other Attachments and exhibits as deemed necessary to support project proposal and eligibility requirements (Please limit to 3 pages)

C. Grant Requirements:

The recipient must use the grant specifically for international marketing purposes. Services to be provided to 'Eligible Small Business Concerns' under Program grants include, but are not limited to: participation in an international business plan development program (ExporTech); exhibition at designated export trade shows and travel costs associated; website translation and international marketing media design services; compliance testing to export an existing product for entry into a new export market, and shipping sample products.

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D. Prohibitions on the Use of Grant Funds:

(1) This Award may not be subgranted, either in whole or in part, to a third party. (2) Grant proceeds cannot be used for expenses related to entertaining current or prospective clients or government officials; (3) Grant proceeds are subject to the limitations on political activity under the Hatch Act, 5 USC §§ 1501 et seq, and 18 USC § 595. No grant proceeds may be used for any political activity or to further the election or defeat of any candidate for public office. No grant proceeds may be used to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with an election or any voter registration activity pursuant to 42 USC § 9904(c)(7); (4) No portion of the grant proceeds may be used for lobbying activities in accordance with OMB Circular A-122; (5) Grant proceeds cannot be used for construction purposes and cannot be used for costs of litigation; and (6) Grant proceeds cannot be used for salaries, paying off existing debt or non-export related costs.

E. Deadline & Filing Instructions for the Grant Application:

To be considered, the applicant must e-mail all application components listed under item B to stepfund@okcommerce.gov by the following deadlines. Must include "STEP FUND APPLICATION" in the subject line.

ExporTechs: Applications to use grant funds to attend an ExporTech are due 30 days before each event.

Tradeshows: Applications to use grant funds for tradeshows are due on the following schedule:

- Avalon 2017 – Aerospace and Defense Expo
Apply by December 15, 2016. Approval notification by January 15, 2017
- Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) 2017
Apply by February 1, 2017. Approval notification by March 1, 2017
- Mexico Petroleum Congress 2017
Apply by March 6, 2017. Approval notification by April 6, 2017
- Paris International Airshow 2017
Apply March 6, 2017. Approval notification by April 6, 2017

Services: Applications for website translation and design, compliance product testing, and shipping sample products are accepted between November 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

F. Application Review Process and Notice of Awards:

Each application will be acknowledged by e-mail and will then be distributed to the Oklahoma STEP Forward Advisory Committee for review. The Advisory Committee has the ability to approve, dismiss or submit a Request for Information (RFI) based upon the application content. The Advisory Committee will use a scoring system, which is outlined on pages 7 & 8, to rate those applications that support the most efficient and effective use of public funds. Notice of Awards will commence no later than 30 days after the deadline.

G. Minimum & Maximum Amounts of Funding Available:

Each applicant shall request the amount of funds needed to support their project at the time of application as outlined in their project proposal. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce is not obligated to fund a grant at the amount requested and the amount awarded is determined solely by the STEP Forward Advisory Committee. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce estimates that the grant awards will not exceed \$35,000. Please note that Recipients are eligible to receive funds to supplement costs for up to 4 services or designated trade events.

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H. Start Date & Length of Grant Contract Period:

The grant contract period shall be from September 30, 2016 through September 29, 2017 in which the Recipient will be required to expend all the grant funds.

I. Match Requirements:

Funds provided under this Grant shall be matched as follows: 75% Federal funding, 25% Recipient funding. Grants will be funded through a reimbursement process in which the recipient will be required to supply copies of receipts and other documentation as deemed necessary to support their preapproved costs. Funds provided under this Grant will be made available as they are received through Federal funding.

J. Award Criteria:

The Recipient agrees to submit all records of expenses which include receipts no later than 30 days after service has been rendered and/or end of exhibiting at a designated tradeshow, and also include a detailed report and/or survey that illustrates the initial result and overall effectiveness of their project to stepfund@okcommerce.gov at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. A follow up report will then be required in one year.

K. Additional Information

Please refer to www.okcommerce.gov/stepfund for more information. For all other questions, please e-mail the Department of Commerce at stepfund@okcommerce.gov.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines and requirements for the Oklahoma STEP Forward Enhancement Fund and I agree to comply with all the terms & conditions listed if selected as a Recipient.

Applicant Printed Name

Applicant Signature

Date

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Part II. Projects

Please indicate the services or designated events you would like to apply for. (4 Maximum - listed in item G.)

Trade Shows

Avalon 2017 – Aerospace and Defense Expo
Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) 2017
Mexico Petroleum Congress 2017
Paris International Airshow 2017

Services

Website translation and design
Compliance testing
Shipping sample products

ExporTech

Aerospace ExporTech
Spring ExportTech
Fall ExporTech

Part III. Company Profile

Company Name:

Year Established:

Contact Person:

Title:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Fax:

Web Address:

E-mail:

Annual Sales Range (Please choose from the drop-down box):

Number of Employees:

- A)** Please select the category which best describes your company:
1) Please Indicate your firms level of export experience (Check one)

New to Export Market Expansion

- B)** Ownership of the company is: Public Private

- C)** Please indicate which industry category best describes your company:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerospace	<input type="checkbox"/> Food Processing
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing
<input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical & Biotechnology
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil & Gas
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering/Construction/Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

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Please select your product classification category:
What is your product classification within this category:

D) Briefly describe your product(s) or service(s) and how they are different from those of your competitors.

E) Your products are: (Check the appropriate response) Standard Modular Built-to-order N/A

F) What is your domestic market share? %

G) Please list your major competitors: Domestically:

Internationally:

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H) List any complimentary or companion product lines.

I) How do you sell your products domestically (Please choose from the drop-down box):
If a combination or if you have specified other please elaborate:

J) Does your company currently do business internationally? Yes No
If applicable, please list the countries/regions in which you are doing business:

Exports: % of sales Sourcing: % of product content

K) Is this your first time to apply for a State or Federal Grant? Yes No
If not, please provide the last time that you received a Grant. Grant:

Date:

L) How did you learn about this Grant?

Global Business Services

A) Besides receiving funding and support with a grant, please check additional Commerce global business services and countries/regions in which you would be interested in receiving:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> International trade consulting meeting(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> International business protocol consulting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Export Education Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign market research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade financing referrals | <input type="checkbox"/> Component sourcing assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign company due diligence | <input type="checkbox"/> International trade shows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agent/distributor / partner search | <input type="checkbox"/> Other service(s): |

Commerce international trade offices: Mexico
 Other countries / regions:

B) Should you choose to have our Mexico trade office assist and identify potential foreign buyers in Mexico, would you be able to travel to Mexico to meet with these potential buyers with additional assistance from the trade office?
Yes No

C) How did you learn about our office?

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Part III. Project Proposal & Strategic Export Plan Guidelines

Please submit a typed project proposal and export plan to explain your need for funding and international market(s) you intend to pursue. Project proposal should be single-spaced utilizing a 12-pt font and should be no more than 3 pages in length. Please request the amount of funds needed to support your project(s) based on the services and designated trade shows covered under this grant. The applicant should include all of the following as part of their project proposal:

- *Foreign markets the client intends to pursue;*
- *Estimated return of investment (ROI) based on STEP services that client intends to utilize;*
- *Objectives the client expects to achieve in the foreign markets that it intends to pursue, and relevant time-frames;*
- *Appropriateness of the client's products or services to the foreign markets it intends to pursue;*
- *Sufficiency of the client's financial resources to support its entry into or expansion in the foreign markets that it intends to pursue;*
- *Sufficiency of the clients productive capacity for entry into or expansion in the foreign markets that it intends to pursue;*
- *Sufficiency of the client's staff resources and time to support marketing and development of opportunities in the foreign markets the client intends to pursue; and.*
- *Sufficiency of the client's international trade infrastructure (i.e., knowledge base of U.S. export requirements, foreign market import market requirement, logistics, export financing, etc.) with respect to the foreign markets that it intends to pursue.*

Project Proposal Scoring System

The STEP Forward Advisory Committee will rate the eligible applicant's proposal based upon the two categories below and the degree to which their proposal illustrates and addresses the following:

Category One: Commitment & Readiness to Exporting – 50 pts

- *Company commitment to exporting– 20 pts*
 - *Is your company management committed to exporting as a new or expanded area of activity?*
 - *How long is your management willing to wait to achieve acceptable export results?*
- *Company export readiness – 15 pts*
 - *Have you adopted a long-term export plan?*
 - *Have you made an effort to move forward with this plan?*
 - *Does the company have current funds established for their export plan?*
 - *Does management or company staff have export marketing or sales expertise?*
- *Product or Service export readiness – 15 pts*
 - *How much has the domestic sales of your product or service grown over the past 3 years?*
 - *What is your product's or services' current share of the domestic market?*
 - *Is your product price-competitive in the domestic market?*
 - *Is your product costly to transport over long distances?*
 - *Has the company received unsolicited inquiries from foreign firms?*

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Category Two: Growth, Expansion, Profitability & Retention – 50 pts

- *Company forecast or projection of potential sales from exporting – 30 pts*
 - *What do you hope to gain by exporting your product or service? ○
How profitable could exporting be to your company?*
 - *How easily could your company promptly fill any new export orders from present inventory or other sources?*
 - *How would additional export business within your company be handled?*
- *Company plans for future expansion via exporting after proposed project has been completed – 20 pts*
 - *What plans will be implemented to retain customers and end users?*
 - *What specific actions would you take to continue to export into new or expanded areas of activity if you were awarded this fund?*

I certify that the above information is true and correct and hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines and requirements for the Oklahoma STEP Forward Enhancement Fund and agree to comply with all the terms & conditions listed if selected as a Recipient.

Signature

Date

Title

Company