Global NY State Trade Expansion Program (STEP)

Program Overview
Empire State Development (ESD) is working in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to increase the number of small businesses that begin to export; increase the value of exports for small businesses that currently export; and increase the number of small businesses exploring significant new trade opportunities.

The following application and associated forms must be completed in their entirety to be considered eligible. If you need assistance completing this application, please contact a Global NY representative in your region listed on the last page of the STEP application. Incomplete applications will be disqualified. Each company will be notified via email whether or not it qualifies to receive a Global NY STEP grant, upon completion of the evaluation of its application.

Allowable Uses of Program Funds

1. Participation in programed foreign trade missions
2. Subscription to services provided by the Department of Commerce
3. Payment of website fees, including translation to foreign languages, localization for foreign markets and search engine optimization
4. Design of international marketing media
5. Trade show exhibition (international and qualified domestic trade shows)
6. Participation in export training workshops
7. Qualified foreign market sales trips

Eligible Companies
New York companies must be in business for at least 1 year, meet SBA size standards, have access to sufficient resources to bear the costs associated with trade, must have a product or service for export and meet the standards and mission of STEP. Site visits and/or telephone interviews will be conducted to further determine a company's eligibility.

Ineligible Companies
Businesses acting as intermediaries for other companies, law firms, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, retail and companies that are recruiting foreign investment are ineligible.

Activity Selection Guidelines
The two-year funding period for the Global NY STEP Grant Program will begin on September 30, 2018 and conclude on September 29, 2020. **Each company may apply for a maximum of three unique STEP awards for this funding period, and the combined award total will be capped at $13,000 per client**. STEP awards are issued on a first-come, first-served basis until the program funds are expended. A company may not select the same trade show twice within one funding period.

Effective October 2018, companies will be limited to attending the same trade show a maximum of two times through the life of the STEP program from this funding period onward . This ensures STEP funding is spread out to allow for a multiplicity of company participation, increasing the number of new STEP clients, and to encourage returning businesses to explore new markets.

Evaluation Process & Funding

ESD staff will review all applications and make a determination regarding the applicant's eligibility within 30 business days of receipt of the application. The Global NY STEP grant is awarded in the form of a reimbursement. Reimbursement for expenses is limited to one company representative and is based on 70% of the total eligible costs. This program does not allow for reimbursement of retroactive trade activities that have already been completed. If changes occur to a company's planned arrangements, failure to provide adequate notice to ESD officials of the changes may void any awarded funds.

Eligible Costs (will vary based on activity):

- Airfare (consistent with Fly America Act guidelines). Travelers may only be reimbursed up to the cost of a full-fare, economy (coach) class ticket. If business or first class tickets are purchased, companies will need to submit a travel agent's or airline's written quotation for the economy ticket for the same dates and itinerary.
- Meals and lodging (based on GSA/Department of State per diem rates)
- Ground transportation fees and parking fees
- Baggage fees
- Registration fees and booth space for trade shows
- Trade mission fees
- Currency exchange fees
- Fees for shipping sample products
- Website translation into foreign language, search engine optimization, and localization services
- Design of marketing media including, brochures, websites, newspapers, posters, social media platform, billboards, banding and advertising in international magazines.

Ineligible Costs:

- Immunizations
- Visa and passport fees
- New product development or alteration of existing products
- Cellphones and cellphone charges
- Television and radio production
- Efforts to create or augment marketing and advertising campaigns to draw international visitors to New York State

Export Readiness

Companies should assess their export readiness before entering their first markets, expanding into additional markets, or taking on more challenging, high-growth export markets. The applicant should review the "EXPORTER ASSESSMENT" information. The tools and resources provided will help applicants assess their export readiness, as well as identify areas where they may strengthen and improve their business export activities. Additional export education can be found at SBA's Export business Planner and USA.gov.

Reimbursement

After review of a company's expenses, reimbursement will typically take 6 weeks or less after payment requisition is submitted. If the company is not currently registered with the New York State Vendor File administered by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC), a Global NY representative will send a fillable NYS Substitute Form W-9 to complete and send back to us for processing.

Post-Trade Event Required Metrics and Report

Each Global NY STEP grant is funded in part through a grant with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The federal grant requires New York State to report all dollar value of export sales generated and directly derived as a result of a company's participation in a trade event or trade promotion activity program. Therefore, upon completion of a trade event each company must complete and submit a STEP Project Impact Report (available here).

A follow-up Project Impact Report is also required to be submitted every 6 months (for a 24 month period) following the original submission of the STEP Project Impact Report. This is done to ensure Global NY is aware of each company's latest statistics. .

Glossary

1. Export Ready – A company that has the commitment and ability to export products to foreign markets.
2. Pre Export – A company that may be less than two years old and/or has not established strong domestic sales. They will be offered consultation and training.
3. New to Export (NTE) – A company that has established strong domestic sales and has not yet become a proactive exporter. They may be new to exporting or have exported reactively.
4. Market Expansion (ME) – A company that has strategically exported and is ready to expand into new foreign markets.

Still have questions? Call 212-803-2300 or email globalny@esd.ny.gov