



Export Express Grants

In partnership with the Governor's Workforce Board

International business is rapidly becoming the road to growth and prosperity for many Rhode Island companies. Saturation of domestic markets, as well as increased foreign competition, has forced many local companies to "go global." Eligible Rhode Island companies may apply for up to \$5,000 in matching funds to address their international training needs. The goal of the Export Management Training Grant Program is to create jobs in Rhode Island by boosting exports.

Companies will develop their own customized training program to meet their specific need; the International Trade Office is available to guide companies through this process. The following are examples of allowable training programs:

International Business Plan Development

Senior managers learn how to develop an international business plan. Companies may be trained on how to access and analyze primary and secondary data to determine which foreign markets have the most potential for their products/services. Employees develop a strategy to maximize their resources to systematically enter global markets.

Market Entry Strategies

Employees are instructed how to target the specific global markets they have identified as having the most potential for their products. They learn how to select distributors/agents, to effectively negotiate in the foreign country, to manage distribution channels, to price their product in the specific foreign market, and be cross-culturally aware.

Export Logistics and Export Financing

Shipping and export departments may receive training in export documentation, transportation, export terms of sale (letters of credit, managing currency risk, accessing available export financing vehicles, etc.) insurance and international product standards.

Foreign Standards/Certification

Many times a product must comply with foreign standards in order to be exported. CE certification training, training to comply with different foreign market standards (such as UL or CCC), and ISO training for export sales may also be included under this heading.

International Trade Mission/Trade Show Development

International trade missions and shows provide one of the most cost-effective vehicles for small to medium-sized businesses to gain exposure in new global markets. To better prepare for international trade missions and shows, companies may be trained in how to: conduct pre-show research, develop target mailings to key attendees of the trade show, increase knowledge of the host country's culture and business practices, develop a system for capturing customer and market data during the show, select a distributor or agent, and implement a post-show follow up strategy.

Language Training

Knowing a foreign language is critical in international business. Companies may be instructed in the foreign language that is spoken in the country where they are doing business.

Note: A company may combine elements of different training programs into one grant application.

Example: Language Training and Trade Show Development may be combined in one training plan.

Eligibility and Guidelines

- The purpose of the export training grants is to increase trade and exports and create jobs in Rhode Island. Grant applications that do not meet these criteria will not be considered.
- Applicants must pay into the Rhode Island Job Development Fund. In order to pay into this fund, the business must be a Rhode Island company with at least one employee in addition to the business owner. Sole proprietorships with at least one employee in addition to the business owner are eligible.
- No Rhode Island state taxes should be past due at time of application. All applicants must provide their Rhode Island Employer Tax ID number and Federal Tax ID number. Commerce RI will check with the Rhode Island Department of Taxation to determine if all tax payments have been made to date.
- All grant applications must be approved by the Commerce RI's Project Review Committee. Total grant award will be based on the following factors: overall quality of the export training plan, number of employees trained, degree of training, skills acquired and company's match of grant funds.
- Grant funds must be used to train Rhode Island employees. Funds may not be used to train individuals in other states or foreign countries.
- Requested grant funds may be used to pay for export training expenses. Example: consultant/trainer fees, seminar fees, tuition, etc. A company's match may only be used to pay for the following: software used only for training, consultant fees, seminar fees and tuition.
- Matching financial support is required at the minimum of 1:1 for grant funds requested.
- The program operates on a reimbursement basis. After the training costs are incurred, the company will be reimbursed upon submission of an invoice to Commerce RI. Back-up documentation such as invoices, sign-in sheets, proof of payment, etc. must be forwarded to Commerce RI prior to payment.

Submitting an application:

1. Contact Commerce RI to obtain an export management training grant application package.
2. Schedule an appointment with a Commerce RI representative for an explanation of the application procedure. The representative may assist you in developing a training plan tailored to your needs.

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