

# Regional Export Network Export 2000 Block Grant

Program Guidelines | May 2013

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## Section I – Overview

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### A. Vision

Through its collaboration with public and private partners, DCED's Office of International Business Development (OIBD), Center for Trade Development (CTD) guides and directs international trade development efforts throughout the commonwealth with a goal of leveraging existing strengths and building competitive advantage for the future.

### B. Mission

OIBD's Center for Trade Development is a team of international economic development specialists that contributes to the growth and strength of the commonwealth's economy by providing value-added export services to Pennsylvania's companies.

### C. Opportunity

Under the working partnership between the OIBD, the Regional Export Network (REN), and the Authorized Trade Representatives (ATR), the Export 2000 Block Grant program provides funding to the REN so that it may provide services to Pennsylvania companies to enable them to access international markets and grow through exports, as more fully described below.

### D. Roles and Responsibilities

The Center for Trade Development is an office within OIBD, which is a subdivision of the Department of Community and Economic Development. CTD serves as the program coordinator, developer, monitor and liaison for Commonwealth-sponsored international development activities, initiatives, market intelligence and overseas support for Pennsylvania companies.

Pennsylvania's REN is comprised of ten regional providers with established export assistance programs. The REN is an integrated, coordinated and customer-focused network of trade professionals that is the primary regional contact for Pennsylvania businesses wishing to access OIBD services.

The REN has three key goals. First, promote and expand the delivery of CTD's services and activities within their respective regions. Second, assist Pennsylvania companies in growing through exports by counseling companies in export market selection, market entry strategy and support on technical exporting issues. Third, act as an export development resource center for new-to-export businesses.

The ATRs serve as in-country resources that support and assist the REN in providing market selection guidance, intelligence, entry strategies, partner search, and on-the-ground assistance to Pennsylvania businesses wishing to penetrate new international trade markets.

## **Section II – REN Operations**

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The REN will undertake the following activities to drive the goals outlined above, as more fully described below:

### **A. Marketing**

- Expand the reach of CTD's programs and services by (1) actively promoting and recruiting companies for CTD-sponsored activities and events; and (2) reaching out to companies that have not previously participated in OIBD sponsored activities and events.
- Refer clients to DCED/OIBD website [www.newPA.com/trade](http://www.newPA.com/trade).
- Contribute news items covering client successes, upcoming regional trade education events, for CTD's report which may be of interest to other RENs, ATRs and partnering organizations.
- Promote and display timely export success stories on a regional web site, use success testimonials at speaking engagements and trade events.

### **B. Trade Activities and Events**

- Provide consulting services and technical assistance to export-ready companies seeking to sell product/service overseas.
- Refer businesses to appropriate partner organizations in the region when clients are determined not-yet-ready-to-export.
- Recruit qualified export-ready companies for OIBD scheduled trade events.
- Link export-ready companies to ATRs; facilitate client-ATR communication for in-country support.

### **C. Network Partners List**

Each region will maintain a network of partners and trade professionals within the region to assist companies and support businesses interested in exporting. The network within each region should include, but not be limited to:

- U.S. Department of Commerce;
- Small Business Development Centers;
- Industrial Resource Centers;
- Team Pennsylvania Foundation;
- Industry associations for targeted industry segments;
- Chambers of commerce; and
- Other public, private, industry and academic organizations that support international business within the region.

## **D. Market Access Grants (MAG) and Global Access Program (GAP) Grants**

Regional Coordinators are responsible for:

- Promoting the Market Access and Global Access Grant program to client companies,
- Coaching clients on preparation of strong applications for the above joint programs,
- Ensuring proposed uses of MAG/GAP funding conforms to the respective program guidelines,
- Providing commentary through a cover letter on company's background and ability to undertake proposed initiative,
- Updating the LYNX client management system on Grant awards, and performance outcomes including export actions and export sales.

## **E. "Pennsylvania International Week (PIW)"**

- The two week fall event will be held annually in September in most regions across the state,
- As funding allows on a yearly basis, select ATRs visits to Pennsylvania to be scheduled between March through May,
- The events will target new companies for the program, specific industry sectors, and strategies for seeking targeted overseas markets,
- RENs will be responsible for event promotion and recruitment, hosting speakers and co-sponsors, scheduling meetings between ATRs and client companies.

## **F. Work Plan**

- In collaboration with the CTD, RENs will identify specific industry segments as those most likely to achieve increased export sales during the fiscal year covered by these guidelines. The region will concentrate its efforts on businesses in those industry segments so as to maximize the likelihood of success in the region, as measured by the criteria identified in these guidelines (expanding the reach of the program, increased export sales, other successes and customer satisfaction).
- In collaboration with the CTD each region will develop a work plan that describes the strategies that will be used to achieve the goals outlined in these guidelines, including identification of prospects and key overseas markets, initiatives, activities and events.
- CTD-sponsored trade events will be selected to maximize support for the industry sectors selected by the REN (subject to financial, timing and other constraints). The CTD will update its calendar of trade events as needed, and provide to the Regional Export Network on a regular basis. The REN will solicit and provide to the CTD on a timely basis, a description of any events of interest to exporters being held within its region for the purpose of promoting such events throughout the commonwealth.

## **Section III – Reporting**

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REN is responsible for maintaining data within CTD’s LYNX client management system, including:

1. Number of Active Clients assisted during the fiscal year (date-stamped data entry)
2. Number of New Companies participating in CTD-sponsored programs and activities
3. Number of Export Actions undertaken by clients
4. Number of Exporting Companies reporting export sales through the fiscal year
5. US dollar value of all sales reported by clients via Export Sales Confirmation forms forwarded to REN, copies of which are forwarded to CTD as received by REN
6. Export Sales attributed to ATR assistance.

## **Section IV – Funding Summary**

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The total funding amounts will be confirmed upon the Commonwealth’s allocation of funds to the department. An executed grant agreement or contract between the Contract Organization and the Department of Community and Economic Development is required for payment. A Single Application Form must be filed electronically through the DCED website, newPA.com. The contract will be sent to the Contract Organization once the Business Plan has been reviewed and approved.

## **Section V – Accessing Funds**

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### **A. Nondiscrimination**

No assistance may be awarded to a Contract Organization under this Act unless they certify to the Department of Community and Economic Development that they shall not discriminate against any employee or against any regional organization for employment because of race, religion, color, handicap, national origin, age or sex. All contracts for work to be paid for with Block Grant assistance must contain the commonwealth’s official nondiscrimination clause.

### **B. Project Account**

For record maintenance and audit purposes, all funding assistance received by the Contract Organization shall be deposited in a separate project account, maintained by the Contract Organization to hold and disburse all funds related to the Export 2000 Block Grant project.

### C. Disbursement Process

As an option, up to 20% of funds can be advanced at the end of the first quarter to the Contract Organization upon the receipt of justification. Quarterly invoices are required to be received in one submission by the program manager no later than 30 days past the end of each quarter according to the following calendar:

First quarter invoice/expenses:	No later than October 31
Second quarter invoice/expenses:	No later than January 31
Third quarter invoice/expenses:	No later than April 30
Fourth quarter invoice/expenses:	No later than July 31*

**\*All expense reimbursements submitted for the current fiscal year must be submitted no later than August 31, in order for the commonwealth to close out the fiscal year expenses.**

### D. Audit

An audit from a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) of all project costs \$100,000 or more must be submitted to the Department of Community & Economic Development at the end of each fiscal year in which the funds have been allocated. In the opinion section of the CPA's audit, a statement shall be made certifying that commonwealth funds were disbursed in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. Audits must be submitted within 120 days after completion of the contract and in accordance with guidelines provided at: [www.newPA.com/compliance](http://www.newPA.com/compliance).

### E. Project Records

The Contract Organization shall maintain full and accurate records associated with the implementation of the Block Grant initiatives. The Department of Community & Economic Development shall have access to such records and shall be able to inspect all project work, invoices, materials and other relevant records at reasonable times and places. The contract will require the Contract Organization to furnish upon request of the Department of Community & Economic Development, all data, reports, contracts, documents and other information relevant to the project. The contract agreement will specify a periodic reporting requirement for the Contract Organization.