
Regional Export Network Export 2000 Block Grant

Program Guidelines

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Tom Wolf, Governor

Department of Community & Economic Development



dced.pa.gov

Table of Contents

Section I	Overview	1
A.	Vision	1
B.	Mission	1
C.	Opportunity	1
D.	Roles and Responsibilities	1
Section II	REN Operations	2
A.	Marketing	2
B.	Trade Activities and Events	2
C.	Network Partners List	2
D.	“Bringing the World to PA”	3
E.	Work Plan	3
Section III	Reporting	4
Section IV	Funding Summary	4
Section V	Accessing Funds	4

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Section I – Overview

A. Vision

Through its collaboration with public and private partners, DCED's Office of International Business Development (OIBD) 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 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

OIBD is a subdivision of the Department of Community and Economic Development. OIBD 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 OIBD'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

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

A. Marketing

- Expand the reach of OIBD's programs and services by (1) actively promoting and recruiting companies for OIBD-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 dced.pa.gov/trade.
- Contribute news items covering client successes and upcoming regional trade education events for OIBD'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 and 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/services 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 and 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;
- Industry associations for targeted industry segments;
- Chambers of Commerce;
- Other public, private, industry, and academic organizations that support international business within the region; and
- PREP partners.

D. “Bringing the World to PA”

- The two week fall event will be held annually in September/October in most regions across the state.
- As funding allows on a yearly basis, select ATR visits to Pennsylvania to be scheduled between March and 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, and scheduling meetings between ATRs and client companies.

E. Work Plan

- The REN work plan must cover a one-year period of performance.
- In collaboration with the OIBD 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.
- OIBD-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 OIBD 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 OIBD 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.
- REN work plans should demonstrate the availability and utilization of any additional local, state and federal funds incorporated into the delivery of REN-related activities. This may include awarded or requested federal funds from the U.S. Small Business Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, U.S. Department of Commerce, or any other public/private funding source(s). Grants not pertaining to REN network activities do not need to be included. OIBD does not require matching funds, and anticipated funds that do not materialize, or are subsequently withdrawn or reduced, will not impact contract compliance.
- REN work plans that demonstrate significant additional public/private leveraged funds and resources are strongly encouraged. To the extent possible, REN funds should be maximized to leverage additional public and private resources for the purpose of expanding and strengthening the regional partnerships. These are not required matching funds nor subject to DCED compliance and monitoring.

Section III – Reporting

REN is responsible for maintaining data within OIBD’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 OIBD-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 sent quarterly to DCED.
6. Export Sales attributable to ATR assistance.
7. All client information in LYNX is the responsibility of the REN and must be updated on a regular basis.

Section IV – Funding Summary

The total funding amounts will be confirmed upon the commonwealth’s allocation of funds to the Department of Community and Economic Development’s (DCED) Office of International Business Development line item. An executed grant agreement or contract between the REN and DCED is required for payment. A Single Application Form must be filed electronically through the DCED website, dced.pa.gov. The contract will be sent to the REN once the work plan has been reviewed and approved.

Section V – Accessing Funds

A. Nondiscrimination

No assistance may be awarded to a REN 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 in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and applicable federal laws. 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 REN shall be deposited in a separate project account, maintained by the REN to hold and disburse all funds related to the Export 2000 Block Grant project.

C. Disbursement Process

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. Reports

OIBD will provide a standardized template to be utilized by each REN to report program results. One report will be due 30 days after Quarter 2 and the final report is due no later than 60 days after Quarter 4.

E. Audit

If the contract amount is greater than \$100,000 an audit from a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) of all project costs must be submitted to the DCED 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: dced.pa.gov/compliance.

F. 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.