

FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS FOR EXPORTS

A number of federal grant programs, some standing and others likely temporary, are available that can prove helpful to support execution. These include:

STEP Grants: The State Trade and Export Promotion Grant (STEP) Pilot Grant Initiative, sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration, provides grants to states to develop their own small business export promotion programs. The aim of the STEP Initiative is to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting and increase the value of exports from small businesses within the state. More information can be found at: <http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-content/1/2889/resources/14315>

MDCP Grants: Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP) awards include financial and technical assistance from the International Trade Administration (ITA) to support projects that enhance the global competitiveness of U.S. industries. An MDCP award establishes a partnership between ITA and non-profit industry groups such as trade associations and chambers of commerce. Such groups are particularly effective in reaching small- and medium-size enterprises. The non-profit groups compete for a limited number of MDCP awards by proposing innovative projects that enhance their industry's competitive position. Industry groups pledge to pay a minimum of two-thirds of the project cost and to sustain the project after the MDCP award period ends. On average from 1997 through 2011 projects generated \$211 in exports for every \$1 of MDCP awards made. More information can be found at: <http://www.ita.doc.gov/td/mdcp/>

Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Grants: The Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (Jobs Accelerator) is an inter-agency funding opportunity led by the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) and designed by the Taskforce for the Advancement of Regional Innovation Clusters (TARIC), in partnership with other Federal agencies and bureaus. TARIC recognizes that regions can benefit from coordinated, flexible, regionally customized investments with stronger goals and metrics that link economic development, workforce development, small business development, and the inclusion of historically underrepresented and excluded communities. Through the coordination of Federal resources, the Jobs Accelerator supports the development of self-identified clusters that demonstrate high-growth potential. In fiscal year 2011, the funding agencies and bureaus in the Jobs Accelerator, EDA, Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and SBA, awarded \$37 million to 20 clusters in a variety of industries across the United States. In addition, another 13 Federal agencies and bureaus committed technical assistance to provide streamlined support to selected clusters for qualifying projects under current appropriation authority. For more information visit: <http://www.manufacturing.gov/accelerator>.

TIGER Grants: The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants are awarded to transportation projects that have a significant national or regional impact. Projects are chosen for their ability to contribute to the long-term economic competitiveness of the nation, improve the condition of existing transportation facilities and systems, increase energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improve the safety of U.S. transportation facilities and enhance the quality of living and working environments of communities through increased transportation choices and connections. The Department also gives priority to projects that are expected to create and preserve jobs quickly and stimulate increases in economic activity, as well as those that will enhance the facilitation of exports. More information can be found at: <http://www.dot.gov/tiger/>