

GLOBAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY FOR WISCONSIN EXPORTS

Companies that want to grow know they need to export—but navigating the global marketplace requires specialized knowledge and a sound strategy based upon proven best practices. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) stands ready to help you gain the insights you need to tap new international markets. Our **Global Business Development Program** helps companies lay the foundation for a new export strategy or build upon existing export programs.

International Market Access Grant (IMAG)

Wisconsin companies can be reimbursed for specific expenses associated with an export project that will help to grow their presence in an international market. This grant program is now tiered to provide a base amount of support (up to \$10,000 per annual application, limited to three total grants per company), with a higher level of support (up to \$25,000 per annual application, limited to six total grants per company) available for companies that have completed ExporTech™.

Collaborative Market Access Grant (CMAG)

This program is designed to help industry associations, alliances, agencies, nonprofits, regional economic development organizations or other state/local departments located in Wisconsin to work with Wisconsin companies to increase exports. This grant provides pass-through reimbursed funds. Organizations may apply for up to \$150,000 to provide assistance of no more than \$15,000 per Wisconsin company per grant.

Eligibility

Applicants for either grant may be new to exporting (with no significant export sales or novice/accidental exports) or be participating in market expansion. An international market is defined as a country other than the United States or its territories.

Under the program, companies that have not completed ExporTech can only receive IMAG funding up to three (3) times with a maximum of \$10,000 per grant, while ExporTech graduate companies can receive IMAG funding up to six (6) times with access to \$25,000 per grant. No company can be funded more than six (6) times through the Global Business Development Grant Program.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

For more information about Global Business Development Grants, please contact:

KATIE UJDAK
Global Trade and
Investment Grants
Manager, WEDC
Tel: 608.210.6773
Email:
katie.ujdak@wedc.org

Or visit our website:
wedc.org/gbdp

All applicants for an IMAG and companies receiving support through a CMAG must:

- Be an established business, operating in Wisconsin for at least one year, that manufactures, processes, assembles and/or distributes a product or performs a service with the potential to be exported. The company does not need to be headquartered in Wisconsin, but it must have export-related operations located within the state that provide economic benefit to Wisconsin.
- Self-certify that at least 35% of the value of the product or service is composed of Wisconsin cost inputs. An Excel spreadsheet can be provided upon request to assist you with these calculations.
- Not have gross revenue exceeding \$100 million for the most recent complete fiscal year.
- Agree to a minimum cost-match of 30% of the total grant awarded.
- Use grant funds to reimburse activities that occur after the award is accepted by WEDC. Costs incurred prior to application acceptance will not be considered.
- Agree not to use grant funds for WEDC trade ventures/missions or to participate in the ExporTech™ Program, as these activities have already been subsidized by WEDC. Any funding reimbursed or used for match may not be duplicated within outside grant requests (e.g., JP Morgan Chase grant or other federal grants).
- Not utilize an IMAG and receive a CMAG scholarship within the same fiscal year.

CMAG applicants must:

- Be an industry association/alliance with a Wisconsin chapter, a state or local agency/department, a regional economic development organization or a nonprofit seeking to create an international export project that supports Wisconsin companies' export growth.
- Have the administrative capacity and eligibility to administer the grant, including creating an export project, determining the financial assistance package for a Wisconsin company, utilizing an administrative fee of no more than 20% of the scholarship amount for marketing and recruitment purposes, and providing all the required documentation for project applications, reimbursements and evaluations.
- Provide a compelling case for how the project will benefit Wisconsin companies with international exports, demonstrate organizational support for the administration of the project, and provide an explanation for why their services are needed and how these grant funds will make an impact.
- Ensure that companies benefiting from CMAG funds comply with all eligibility requirements of the IMAG.

Application process

- You may request access to the Network Wisconsin portal to complete the application. The application must be completed within the portal. Submission of documents by any other means will not be accepted.
- A thorough review will be conducted by WEDC grants staff. A WEDC market development director may contact you for additional information on your project.
- To allow sufficient time for project vetting and the financial underwriting process, please submit your application at least six weeks prior to the date you need approval for expenses. There is potential for any application submitted with less than six weeks lead time to be denied.
- Any expenses incurred between the acceptance date and execution of the contract are incurred at the applicant's own risk. You may not submit a request for reimbursement until an executed contract is in place.
- Once the project has been vetted, it is sent to underwriting for background checks and a credit and risk check. Any individual owning 20% or more of the company will be required

to undergo a background check. The company will also be required to provide financial history as part of the application. Without this information, the award process cannot proceed.

- WEDC's in-house legal staff will provide a draft of your contract for review. Following the final internal review, WEDC's legal staff will send you a final contract to sign.
- Once we receive your signed contract, it will be signed by WEDC's executive team and emailed back to you. The executed contract will include an Exhibit A, which you must submit with any requests for reimbursement.

Reimbursement and evaluation process

- The reimbursement request and performance report must be submitted to WEDC no later than 90 days after the project end date.
- Exhibit A request for payment forms are attached to the end of your contract. A performance report will be sent to you via email at the end of your project.
 - IMAG recipients need to submit their performance report with their last request for reimbursement. You will be contacted for a follow-up evaluation within a year.
 - CMAG recipients need to provide a spreadsheet compiling performance report information from all participating companies.
- Proper documentation must be supplied for all expenses being put forth for the grant.
 - For IMAG recipients, WEDC will need documentation for submitted reimbursement requests as well as the company's 30% match. A dated, itemized invoice is required for each expense.
 - For CMAG recipients, WEDC will need all documentation for what the organization has spent its financial assistance on and its administration fee. The organization is responsible for collecting all documentation on the companies' expenses as well as companies' 30% match and submitting it to WEDC. A dated, itemized invoice will also be required for each administrative expense.
- Expense reimbursement requests must be denominated in U.S. dollars. Any invoices or payments charged in a foreign currency must include the currency exchange rate that was used for the transaction, or, if this was not documented, must be accompanied by proof of either the currency exchange rate from the Wall Street Journal or the interbank bid rate from www.OANDA.com for the date of the listed expense.
- Cash is very hard to document for reimbursement. If you must use cash, make sure you have provided substantial documentation on the transaction. If such documentation is not provided, that expense may not be reimbursed.
- Credits used by a company across international divisions are not able to be audited for value, and thus are not eligible to be claimed for reimbursement.
- Electronic forms of currency (e.g., Bitcoin) or non-currency transactions (e.g., airline miles, company credits, gift cards) cannot be reimbursed.
- Proper documentation for any expense is a dated, itemized invoice. An email verification, ticket stub, credit card receipt or other documentation that does not verify the vendor, date, item and amount paid may be rejected.
- Invoices in foreign languages must be accompanied by a verifiable translation (not Google Translate or a similar digital service).
- WEDC has the right to contact the company for evaluation follow-up for up to a year after the grant has been completed in order to comply with state and federal reporting standards.

Eligible expense examples

Trade shows/ventures

- Non-WEDC-sponsored international trade mission participant fees
- Registration and booth expenses for an international trade show/exhibit
- Registration for international conferences/meetings where the company is presenting and having business meetings to increase its international exports
- Shipping charges to and from the show for booth, display, samples, literature and/or equipment
- In-country interpreter services during an approved trip

Marketing and promotion

- Costs associated with foreign-language translation of brochures and supporting materials
- Design services, printing, marketing and advertising at the trade show or within the target market
- Website microsites/landing pages' translation and/or hosting for a specific market
- Company product, international trademark and/or foreign trade zone certification registration

Consulting services

- Business services provided by WEDC's authorized trade representatives or other market research professionals
- U.S. Department of Commerce services such as Gold Key
- Website builders or graphic designers
- Interpreters or translators
- Consulting service fees and legal, professional and/or government fees needed to meet certification standards to export a product, such as:
 - CE, UL or CCC mark certification
 - Intellectual property registration in foreign countries

Export education

- Registration for international and export-related conferences, seminars, meetings, webinars and courses (a company may plan ahead and budget for educational opportunities with its grant application and then submit exact course titles and dates as part of the reimbursement process)
- Language and cultural competency training for the target market

Product modification

- A limited number of product modification projects will be accepted this year. If you are requesting funds for product modification, please schedule a meeting with WEDC's grants manager prior to submitting your application. You will be required to provide an attachment detailing the product, how it will be modified, and how the modification will make the product more salable in the target market. Provide research or other evidence to support your proposal as well as an overview of the costs involved.

Eligible for company match but ineligible for reimbursement

- Transportation – domestic/international/intra-national flights, cabs, trains, parking etc.
- Lodging

Ineligible expense examples

Note: This is not an exhaustive list.

- Business-related expenses that are considered “costs of doing business”
- Production or purchase of samples
- Other business service providers currently subsidized by a state or federal government (e.g., Food Export Association, ExporTech, WEDC-led trade ventures)
- Salaries, stipends, living expenses, office costs, allowances, office parking fees
- Communication costs relating to international trade show participation (hotel and cell phone charges, internet usage, other business center charges)
- Passport or visa costs
- Travel and lodging expenses for non-company employees, including consultants, customers, interpreters, independent representatives, distributors and dealers
- Refundable deposits and advances paid before the grant approval date
- Design of materials and websites used exclusively for domestic markets
- Rental, lease or purchase of warehouse space
- Purchase, construction or lease of space for permanent displays (i.e., displays lasting beyond a one-year activity plan)
- Meals, reception refreshments, entertainment or gifts
- Business cards, seasonal greeting cards or subscriptions to publications
- Research not related to international exporting
- Capital expenditures
- Costs associated with U.S. patents, trademarks, copyrights, or product certifications
- Membership fees to join industry-specific or trade-related associations
- Software, digital devices, or other communications technologies, either as rental, purchase, or subscription
- Medical expenses, clothing or other non-business expenses

Project window and budget

- The project window is the time between your application acceptance date (up to 6 weeks after you submit your application) and your project end date. All expenses must be incurred and invoiced within this window. Any expense that falls outside this window or was documented or paid outside this window will be rejected.
- The Global Business Development Program grant cycle closes annually on October 31. Grant applications are accepted until the budget is exhausted or until October 31, whichever occurs first. If grant funds still remain after October 31, a second round may open from February 1 to March 15. Applicants should communicate with the program coordinator to inquire whether funding is still available. All grant projects must end on or before Dec. 31, 2024.
- IMAG assistance is up to \$10,000 (with a lifetime limit of three (3) awards). ExporTech graduates may apply for up to \$25,000 (with a lifetime limit of six (6) awards).
- CMAG assistance is up to \$150,000 with the requirement of a schedule of expenditures and a single project audit, or up to \$100,000 without a schedule of expenditures and independent audit. From each CMAG, no more than \$15,000 may be given to a single company.
- Previous grant projects must be completed, along with their reimbursements and performance reports, before a new application will be considered. No company may receive more than one IMAG or CMAG in any given fiscal year. Past grant utilization and lapse history will be considered when reviewing a new application.