



WASHINGTON STATE

GROW YOUR EXPORT BUSINESS BY LEVERAGING STEP VOUCHERS

The STEP Grant voucher program has allowed Silicon Forest Electronics to play on the world stage of aviation. The grant created an affordable opportunity for a small company to participate in the Farnborough Air Show and the Paris Air Show. Neither would have been feasible without the STEP Grant support. As a result, we created an international marketing and sales presence. Our international business has increased from zero to five percent of our total revenues with many more prospects in the wings.

Frank Nichols, CEO, Silicon Forest Electronics

State Trade Expansion Program (STEP)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has awarded the Washington State Department of Commerce a tenth year of funding to help state small businesses grow through exporting. More than 1500 unique businesses around the state have benefited from STEP-funded support. Combined, they have achieved more than \$562 million in export sales.

STEP Vouchers Available to Reimburse Export Related Expenses

Qualifying Export Expenses:

- Design of international marketing, digital advertising
- International website design, development and translation
- International search engine optimization, maintenance and monitoring; website localization
- Expenses to set up a website to accept international payments
- E-commerce fees including hosting and maintenance
- Translation of marketing media, including audio/video
- Online market listing fees
- International shipment of product samples
- Services of the U.S. Commercial Service
- Compliance testing of an existing product for entry into an export market

- Export research tool subscription
- Cost associated with international IP protection limited to USPTO PCT transmittal fees up to \$120, filing fees up to \$200, search fees up to \$1040, Hague Intl Design App transmittal fees up to \$60, Trademark Madrid Protocol fees up to \$250
- International business travel (airfare only, economy rate only)
- International trade show or mission fees (virtual or in-person)
- International conference or symposium fees

The Small Business Export Assistance team at Commerce has built a network of consultants around the globe with expertise in the markets and business cultures to help Washington companies succeed in exporting. Our export assistance services include:

- Trade Shows and Trade Missions
- STEP Vouchers
- Market Research & Trade Data Analysis
- Export Strategy Counseling
- Business Matchmaking: partners/distributors search, lead generation and virtual B2B.
- Export Opportunities Webinars



Eligibility

- Be registered to do business in Washington.
- Have a Federal Employer Identification Number tied to a Washington address.
- Be in good standing with the Washington State Department of Revenue.
- Be a small business concern (SBC) as defined by SBA criteria and meet other program criteria, such as being in business for at least one year and being able to demonstrate export readiness.
- Have at least 51% of your total goods/services sourced from the U.S.

Delta Computer Systems has enjoyed STEP grants for several years, and it has most definitely helped us as a small businesses going global. It helped us gaining the brand recognition from virtually none to recognizable brand in certain applications such as high-end hydraulic presses and die cast machines in China. STEP grants have been playing a significant and pivotal role for our successes.

- Phil Lin, Regional Director

Apply

- Visit bit.ly/export-vouchers and complete the application.
- Applicants must demonstrate export readiness, financial resources and commitment necessary for exporting, and the value of the proposed export activity in their application.
- Keep all your receipts for preapproved eligible expenses and make sure you meet all the required criteria to receive reimbursement.
- Voucher awards require a cash match of 25% of the voucher value.
- Export activities must be completed by September 29, 2024 or when the STEP fund runs out, whichever comes first.

Find out how you can leverage STEP vouchers to grow your export sales by visiting our website: bit.ly/export-vouchers

1. Read the guidelines for additional information.
2. Check out the FAQ page.
3. Fill out the application form.

To learn more, please contact our Small Business Export Assistance (SBEA) team today!

STEP Export Voucher Program Manager

Nicole Gunkle

Nicole.gunkle@commerce.wa.gov

206-256-6131

STEP Export Voucher Program

Callum Cleary

Callum.cleary@commerce.wa.gov

206-256-6145



The State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.