

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

Partners & Programs for
American Exporters

EXIM
EXPORT-IMPORT BANK
OF THE UNITED STATES

FEDERAL SUPPORT

American exporters have access to local or statewide resources & commercial vendors that can help their export business grow.

Do you have an international buyer interested in your products or services? Perhaps you're looking to find new cash flow streams? The decision to export is a major question that businesses face, but for many, it is not an easy one. Markets go up and down, governments are in or out, and currencies fluctuate. Uncertainties like these can wreak havoc on small businesses.

However, as you create your sales plans, don't ignore opportunities to receive added assistance. To get you started, these government agencies offer aid for exporters:

For export financing:

EXIM (*Export-Import Bank of the United States*)

Taking advantage of the global marketplace and exporting your goods services comes with certain risks and challenges. EXIM can help alleviate the financial hurdles associated with exporting. Whether your business is concerned with the risk of buyer nonpayment, offering the competitive payment terms needed to win sales, or accessing the cashflow needed to accept large orders, EXIM helps American businesses win the future. [Talk to a specialist.](#)

For businesses counseling:

SBA (*U.S. Small Business Administration*)

Exporting is only a small part of what SBA covers—this agency supports small businesses through every step of their journey, from initial planning, launch, management, expansion, and more. They offer information on nearly any concern a small business might have, as well as in-person counseling and other programs. [Visit SBA.gov.](#)

For research and programs:

ITA (*International Trade Administration*)

This branch of the Department of Commerce deals specifically with global sales. ITA offers a variety of programs, plus a library of publicly accessible data about the exporting process, products and industries, markets, legal regulations, and more. [Learn more at trade.gov.](#)

TRADE GROUPS & ASSOCIATIONS

If you need more specialized support, smaller associations and organizations may be the right fit for your business. Some options include:

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SBDC *(Small Business Development Center)*

SBDCs aim to provide counseling to small businesses on topics such as business plans, marketing, international trade, production, feasibility studies, and more. There are over 60 networks and more than 1,000 centers across the U.S. [Find your local SBDC.](#)

02

SCORE Association

This nonprofit is made up of thousands of volunteers and retired business executives. They serve as counselors and advisors to business owners and entrepreneurs who are seeking guidance and/or have questions about how to grow their businesses. [Request a mentor.](#)

03

ELAN *(Export Legal Assistance Network)*

ELAN is one of the most underutilized assistance programs out there. This cooperative program was created to help small businesses avoid any legal situations before exporting, such as export licensing, domestic and foreign taxation, tariffs, intellectual property rights, and more. More than 250 attorneys are available in over 70 cities. [Find your local office.](#)

04

Chambers of Commerce

With over 13,000 chambers of commerce around the world, these groups are excellent ways to network in your community, stay updated on current events, and give a voice to small business owners. They also offer information and strategies to help new or struggling businesses thrive. [Find one in your area.](#)



World Trade Center Associations

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The World Trade Center Association, or WTCA, is dedicated to growing trade around the world. With over 300 locations in 90 countries, their branches are experts in the local market and offer a variety of networking opportunities, training opportunities, and materials about available resources. [Find your local WTCA office.](#)

Industry Associations

06

Joining a group dedicated specifically to your products or industry is an excellent way to access relevant information tailored to your business model. These associations also offer networking opportunities, frequently hosting conferences, trade shows, and other events for their members, as well as recommendations for other contacts.

Are You an Underserved Exporter?

If your business is owned by a person of color, woman, veteran, member of the LGBTQ+ community, a person with a disability, or located in a rural area, a variety of groups exist to support businesses like yours! EXIM's [Minority and Women-Owned Business Division](#) is committed to connecting you with relevant organizations.

BENEFICIAL PROGRAMS

While many organizations offer guidance and advice, several offer other noteworthy incentives for exporters. Specific programs your business should consider include:



To receive a grant:

STEP Program

SBA's State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) provides financial awards to small businesses across the U.S. that are looking to expand abroad. The grants can be used to participate in trade missions, design international marketing campaigns, and more. [Get more information.](#)



To connect with new partners:

Gold Key Service

After learning about your business, International Trade Administration coordinators identify, vet, and arrange meetings with potential business partners for you, then accompany you as you travel to meet them in their overseas markets. [See program guidelines.](#)



To find foreign buyers:

Trade Missions

Participating in organized trade missions abroad is a great opportunity for businesses to meet buyers in their native markets using the ITA's network and foreign industry knowledge. Missions are available for a variety of locations, industries, and more. [Check the calendar.](#)



To decrease federal income taxes:

IC-DISC Tax Incentive

As your business increases its export sales, it may become eligible for this tax incentive. IC-DISC helps reduce federal income tax for your business, offering the potential to save you a lot of money, boost your bottom line profits, and improve your competitive advantage. [Read IRS guide.](#)

LOCAL CONTACTS

Finally, there may be unique offerings for support in your area. These will vary depending upon your location, but options typically include:

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Commercial Bankers, Accountants, and Attorneys

While these services are not specific to exporting, they are pivotal in making the best decisions for your business, so it is important to hire professionals with international experience. If your current vendors do not have the necessary expertise, your local District Export Council (DEC) will likely have recommendations. [Find local DEC.](#)

02

Customs Brokers or Freight Forwarders

Booking a customs broker and/or freight forwarder is a wise decision for many businesses. These knowledgeable professionals will ensure that your shipments reach the destination country, clear customs smoothly, and help you work through any issues that may arise. [Find licensed local brokers and forwarders.](#)

03

Port Authorities

As your business becomes more adept at exporting, it's beneficial to establish connections with your local port authority. These groups manage and maintain the shipping infrastructure, so they are excellent sources of technical information.



WHAT'S NEXT?

EXIM is here to support you on your exporting journey. We offer a wide range of financing tools for your company's unique needs, as well as free consultations, educational material, exporter resources, and more. You can:



Talk to an Expert

EXIM specialists are ready and waiting in your area to give you a free consultation:

grow.exim.gov/consultationrequest



Learn Exporting Basics

The Basic Guide to Exporting, a free eBook, provides valuable insight and guidance to get you started:

grow.exim.gov/export-guide



Protect Your Business from Risk

Avoid the danger of buyer nonpayment with Export Credit Insurance:

grow.exim.gov/eci-guide



Unlock Your Business's Cash Flow

Learn how EXIM works with your lender to provide access to working capital:

grow.exim.gov/wclg-guide



This is a descriptive summary to be used only as a general introductory reference tool. The complete terms and conditions of the policy are set forth in the policy text, applications, and endorsements.