

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM

(**APPLICANT NAME**)

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL TEMPLATE STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM

INSTRUCTIONS:

All applicants must submit a Technical Proposal using this standard template format. The template must be in the same order as the requirements of Section 4.2 and the evaluation criteria in Section 5.2 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement. The Technical Proposal may not exceed **ten (10) double-spaced pages in length**, excluding this title page and cover page, using 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper with a one inch margin and pagination on all pages. A minimum Times New Roman 12 point font is required. **Only 10 pages will be reviewed and evaluated. Any additional pages submitted other than the 10 pages will be eliminated without consultation of applicant and will not be reviewed.** Non-Federal entities do NOT need to address every allowable statutory export activity (identified in Section 1.4). Non-Federal entities are strongly encouraged to prepare focused proposals including performance measures and supporting activities that can realistically be achieved within the 24 month award period. To use this template:

1. Read directions in each section,
2. Delete all content (including notes in yellow highlight) in each section,
3. Type or copy your content directly into empty block,
4. Update page numbers as needed in Table of Contents (on this title page),
5. **Do NOT put any additional information on this page.**

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INTRODUCTION

Start the Technical Proposal with an ‘**Introduction**’ section on page one (not on the title page) that summarizes in no more than one (1) paragraph, your organization’s requested Federal and Non-Federal award amount, targeted number of eligible small business concerns, brief description of proposed statutory activities that will be achieved with STEP funds, the total expected export sales, and anticipated return on investment that is realistic and achievable.

CRITERIA#2 – Exporting Experience

In an estimated 1-2 pages, Non-Federal entities will be evaluated according to their organizational capability to achieve success to increase the number of small business exporters, export sales, and significant new trade opportunities: labeled with the main heading ‘**Organizational Competency**’, this section includes:

- **Program Management** - The proper management capability to execute STEP activities including, overseeing contracts (if any) to support the proposed STEP project; sufficient facilities and locations to conduct the proposed export activities;
- **Key Personnel** – The non-Federal entity demonstrated its key personnel (especially STEP Project Director) has the adequate level of knowledge and experience in both administering a Federal award and executing the proposed export activities throughout the performance period.
- **Exporting Experience**– The organizational capability to achieve success in the past and/or present to increase the number of small business exporters, export sales, and significant new trade opportunities.

CRITERIA#3 – Directly Benefit ESBCs

In an estimated 1-6 pages, Eighty-five percent (85%) of the proposed Federal award is the minimum percentage required to directly benefit ESBC export activities. The proposal must demonstrate the non-Federal entity’s capacity to recruit, prepare and assist new small business exporters, specifically:

- a. Building a pipeline and developing small businesses into new exporters (e.g., recruiting, preparing, and assisting NTEs participate in export activities); and
- b. Building a pipeline of existing small business exporters and expanding their markets (e.g., recruiting, preparing, and assisting MEs participation in export activities).

Part II – Direct Benefit to ESBCs – provide an explanation to reflect the total amount and percentage of your proposed Federal request that directly benefits ESBCs in the format provided below so that it is easily identifiable.

- **\$ AMOUNT OF FEDERAL AWARD DIRECTLY BENEFITTING ESBCs**
- **PERCENT OF FEDERAL AWARD DIRECTLY BENEFITTING ESBCs**

CRITERIA#4 COLLABORATION

Part I - Collaboration. This section should outline the Applicant’s specific plan of action for directly benefiting ESBCs (**at least 85%**) through the execution of allowable export activities (identified in Section 1.4) and collaborative efforts that is expected to result in tangible and measurable outcomes (e.g., producing new small business exporters, expanding ESBC markets, and

increasing ESBCs export sales). Non-Federal entities are expected to establish and leverage collaborative partnerships with relevant organizations to accomplish the proposed performance measures and supporting export activities. Based on information contained in the Technical Proposal, non-Federal entities will be evaluated on how well they will collaborate on proposed export activities with each of their identified partners, drawn from the following entities:

- a. SBA's District Offices, SBA's Office of International Trade Export Finance Managers and SBA's resource partners such as Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), SCORE, Women's Business Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers, Small Business Investment Companies, Certified Development Companies, SBA lenders, and other SBA award recipients;
- b. Other Federal, State, local and tribal government agencies. SBA is particularly interested in demonstrated collaboration with the U.S. Commercial Service;
- c. Institutions of higher education (colleges & universities), trade and vocational schools; and
- d. Private organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, trade and industry groups, and associations.

CRITERIA#5- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PLAN

In an estimated 1 page, labeled with the main heading '**Financial Assistance Plan**', this section must outline the eight elements (detailed in section 1.4 Allowable Statutory Activities Guidance) for ESBCs seeking assistance with award funds. Non-Federal entities Financial Assistance Plan should address criteria and policies for the following elements. This Plan must conform to the STEP parameters as described below. Non-Federal entities may not build in discretion to use STEP funds for other purposes not approved by SBA.

- a. **Application Process:** Non-Federal entities application process for eligible small business concerns seeking STEP assistance including the following:
 - Criteria and selection process to become a STEP client;
 - Organization and title of the selection panel or committee members (SBA employees cannot be members).
- b. **Internal Controls:** The non-Federal entities financial management structure and systems – a clearly defined and documented internal control process that will ensure compliance related to the *timely* and *reasonable* expenditure of Federal funds.
 - A specific response time (such as, 30-45 days) for issuing financial assistance awards to STEP clients, processing payments, and submitting reimbursement requests in order to expend and report STEP funds in a timely manner must be outlined.
 - The non-Federal entities' process for ensuring that STEP funding is distributed in a manner that allows diversity of ESBC participation and encouraging support to new STEP clients and to small business communities.

Non-Federal entities are strongly encouraged to develop requirements for 'building the pipeline' so that companies can 'graduate' from the program after a reasonable duration and amount of funding. STEP clients should not become dependent on receiving Federal STEP funds.



- c. **Threshold Amounts:** Non-Federal entities ability to develop reasonable thresholds for ESBC reimbursement and participation in STEP activities. This includes: thresholds to define the total amount of Federal funding assistance STEP clients may apply for and the total number of export activities they are eligible to participate in during the two year period of performance.
- Maximum dollar amount of financial assistance available to a STEP client.
 - Total number of activities that a STEP client can participate in during the STEP award performance period.