



## Rhode Island's State Trade Expansion Program (RI-STEP)

The [State Trade Expansion Program \(STEP\)](#) is a national export initiative which makes matching-fund awards to states to assist small businesses in entering and expanding into international markets. Administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of International Trade, the program's objectives are to increase the number of U.S. small businesses that export and to increase the value of exports by small businesses.

### ELIGIBILITY

- For **exporters** only.
- Be organized and incorporated in the U.S.
- Be Registered in Rhode Island as a for-profit business.
- Be Registered on [SAM.gov](#) to do business with the U.S. government
- Meet the [SBA definition](#) of a small business.
- Have been operating for at least 1 year.
- Have 51% U.S. content.

### START THE PROCESS

1. Complete both enrollment forms:
  - [SBA Self-Representation form](#)
  - [RI STEP Business Profile](#)
2. Submit a [Request for Approval](#).
3. If approved, a Letter of Approval will be Issued confirming the approved level of funding.
4. Within 45 days of project completion, submit a [Request for Reimbursement](#) including all required documentation.
5. Report on actual export sales that occurred as a result of a STEP-supported activity when requested.

### HIGHLIGHTS

RI-STEP funds support various export-focused activities, including but not limited to:

- RI led delegations (International Trade shows and missions)
- International Trade Show Participation
- Marketing Support, such as consultancy services and website development
- Export Training Programs
- Matchmaking Services

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Applications & Requests are viewed on a first-come first-served basis (funding is not guaranteed)
- Maximum of \$15,000 award/10 awards per company each grant cycle.
- Funds are on a reimbursement basis, post-completion of approved projects
- Travel expenses are NOT eligible for RI-STEP reimbursement.

**Find STEP forms here:**

[bryant.edu/chafeecenter](http://bryant.edu/chafeecenter)

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