

STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM (STEP)

SC Commerce administers the STEP program in South Carolina. Funding is available for eligible small businesses to offset costs associated with entering and expanding into international markets.

Qualifying firms can apply for reimbursement of expenses associated with the following export activities:

INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOWS

Registration fees, booth space and eligible travel costs* associated with exhibiting at trade shows overseas or international trade shows taking place in the U.S.

U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS AND SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Services include Gold Key, International Partner Search, RAISE Market Research and more. A complete list of services and fees can be found [here](#).

SELECT TRADE MISSIONS

Trade mission fees and eligible travel costs* incurred while participating in a S.C. Commerce trade mission.

PARTICIPATION IN EXPORT TRAINING WORKSHOPS, IN PERSON OR VIRTUAL

WEBSITE AND MARKETING ENHANCEMENTS

- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Translations of marketing materials and/or website localization services
- Website analytics
- E-commerce services (such as adding an online payment option or a currency converter tool)

OTHER EXPORT INITIATIVES

Expenses incurred with procurement of consultancy services not offered by the U.S. Commercial Service, payment for services provided by federal agencies (such as export credit insurance policy fees, shipping samples to trade shows, compliance testing and foreign market sales trips.

*Travel Costs: Airfare ([Fly America Act](#)), Hotels ([State Dept](#) or [GSA](#) Lodging Rates), and/or Ground Transportation

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Headquartered or with a place of business in South Carolina.
- In business for no less than two years with a product/service with at least 51% U.S. content.
- Independently owned and operated.
- Organized for-profit.
- Currently has an export-ready product, a strategic plan for exporting and understands the costs associated with exporting.
- Meets the U.S. SBA's definition of a small business. See [Size Standards Table](#).

To apply, contact export@sccommerce.com.