

Press Release Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment Announces Almost \$700,000 in Trade Expansion Grants

Awards will support trade and overseas marketing efforts of 46 small businesses across the Commonwealth

BOSTON — Today, the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment (MOITI) and the **Massachusetts Small Business Development/ Massachusetts Export Center** announced that 46 small businesses across the Commonwealth will receive \$666,667 in State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) grants. Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the STEP grants support export activities such as trade show participation, overseas marketing and localization services, and subscription services from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to providing opportunities for our small businesses to showcase their products and compete in the global marketplace,” said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. “The STEP Grant program provides critical funding to help small businesses increase their exposure on the global stage and drive continued business growth.”

“The SBA is committed to opening doors for new small businesses to enter international markets and to expanding opportunities for current exporters,” said SBA Massachusetts District Director Bob Nelson. “These STEP awards fund opportunities to increase the footprint of small businesses around the world. Our goal is to support them through every step of the process – connecting them to valuable resources such as the Massachusetts Export Center, U.S. Commercial Services and MOITI.”

“Over the past three years, the STEP Grant program has provided funds to more than 150 Massachusetts’ small businesses to pursue export opportunities,” said Assistant Secretary of Business Development and International Trade Nam Pham. “As the Commonwealth’s international investment and trade agency, MOITI is pleased to partner with the SBA and MEC to promote exporting for the Commonwealth’s small businesses.”

“The STEP grant enables Massachusetts businesses to engage in targeted, high-impact activities to increase export sales,” said **Massachusetts Export Center Director Paula Murphy**. “We look forward to working with this year’s awardees to ensure that they succeed in global markets.”

MOITI and the Massachusetts Export Center selected applications in a competitive process based on feasibility and export readiness, with priority given to new-to-export firms looking to expand into the global marketplace. Grantees are encouraged to utilize the market research and export assistance services provided through the Export Center to ensure the highest return on investment.

The SBA awarded \$500,000 to Massachusetts for the STEP program in September 2018. The Commonwealth has contributed \$166,667 in matching funds. Grant recipients are required to leverage private money in addition to the grant funds to ensure that taxpayer money is spent efficiently and effectively.

For more information on the STEP program and services provided by the Export Center and to apply for Round Two visit www.mass.gov/export/step.