

## **EXPORT FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR CONNECTICUT SMALL BUSINESSES**

### *DECD Accepting Applications for Grants*

The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) announced today it is inviting companies to apply for grants of up to \$7,000 for a wide range of export-related activities. Funding is from the Small Business Administration (SBA), which awarded Connecticut a \$244,000 grant to help increase state exports and the number of small businesses that export.

"These investments are helping Connecticut's small businesses compete in the global economy," said DECD commissioner Catherine Smith. "For example, grants have been provided to companies to help offset the costs of attending the Farnborough Air Show, one of the most important air shows in the world. Without these grants many of the suppliers and component manufacturers in Connecticut's supply chain could not attend, missing a key opportunity to establish important contacts and build relationships with the leading aerospace contractors across the globe."

The SBA created the State Trade and Expansion Program (STEP) grant initiative in 2011 to provide grants to state export offices. States must apply each year for funding. DECD administers the program and directs funds to companies that participate in eligible export activities including trade shows, trade missions, marketing and internationalization projects, U.S. Department of Commerce services, export training, and matchmaking opportunities.

DECD has been awarded more than \$1,479,000 since the STEP program's inception. The agency has provided more than 350 grant awards allowing Connecticut companies to participate in Medica, the leading international medical device trade show in Dusseldorf, Germany; Hannover Messe, the world's largest industrial technology trade show in Hannover, Germany; and the international air shows in Farnborough, U.K. and Paris. Additionally, companies can request reimbursement for trade shows, trade missions and other export activities specific to their industry.

Businesses seeking export assistance should visit [www.stepgrant.fluidreview.com](http://www.stepgrant.fluidreview.com) to review the STEP Program Guidelines and Application or e-mail Aaron Knight in DECD's Office of International and Domestic Business Development at [aaron.knight@ct.gov](mailto:aaron.knight@ct.gov).

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