



STEP Tennessee

STEP TENNESSEE READINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

The Tennessee Export Initiative (TEI) at Belmont University, in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the Tennessee District Export Council, and the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Commercial Service Tennessee, is offering eligible Tennessee small businesses the opportunity to participate in the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP). Belmont University has been awarded the STEP grant, which is a federal grant administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) whose goal is to create economic growth by expanding Tennessee's export trade. Under the grant, TEI offers eligible Tennessee small businesses a variety of services and programs to help new companies become exporters and help existing exporters expand their international business.

To be eligible to receive financial assistance under the STEP Tennessee grant, companies are required to complete the following forms, including the SBA Self-Representation Form.

Please review the program guidelines before starting your application. This application should take about 15-20 minutes to complete, and we only need 1 or 2-sentence answers when required.

If you have questions or need help, please contact:

Jeffrey Overby, Director, Tennessee Export Initiative, TEI@belmont.edu

CONTACT INFORMATION

Company Legal Name *

DBA or Other Company Name (Optional)

Company Contact Name *

First Name

Last Name

Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State / Province

Postal / Zip Code

Company Contact Title *

Company Contact Email *

Company Contact Phone *

Telephone

STEP GRANT ELIGIBILITY

2. Are the products or services offered by your company of U.S. origin or do they have at least 51% U.S.A. content? If you are unsure about this requirement, please use this guide: "How To: Calculate U.S. Content for Small Business Products": <https://grow.exim.gov/blog/how-to-calculate-us-content-for-small-business-products-part-1> *

Yes

No

3. Has your company been in business for more than one (1) year? *

Yes

No

4. Is your company headquartered in Tennessee (if company is not eligible in Tennessee, it may apply through the state in which its headquarters is located)? *

No

5. Is your company registered and in good standing as a Tennessee for-profit business? *

Yes

No

6. Is your company's executive leadership committed to exporting and willing and able to dedicate staff and resources? *

Yes

No

1. Does your company meet the SBA definition of a small business (per 13CFR Part 121)? If you are unsure about this requirement, please use this guide: <https://legacy.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide/size-standards/size-standards-tool> *

Yes

No

7. Do you export or seek to export a good or service? *

Yes

No

8. Does your company have the financial resources to actively support the marketing of your products/service in targeted overseas markets along with the costs of packaging, shipping and distribution? *

Yes

No

9. Does your company maintain a website? *

Yes

No

10. If you answered "Yes" to having a website, list your website address:

If you answered "No" to any of eligibility questions 1-9 you are NOT eligible for the STEP program. If you are not yet export eligible, we encourage you to contact your nearest Small Business Administration (SBA) office or Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

If you believe you are eligible for the STEP program, please continue with the application.

Is this business physically located and operational in Tennessee and in good standing under the laws of the State of Tennessee?

Yes

No

Is this business registered as an active for-profit business entity with the Tennessee Secretary of State and in good standing?

Yes

No

If yes please list the name of the parent company and location below:

BUSINESS PROFILE

Is this business an affiliate or subsidiary of another company? *

Yes

No

Does your company have office locations or business operations outside the state of Tennessee? *

Yes

No

Is the owner of this business is a U.S. Citizen or is otherwise legally authorized to reside and operate a business in the U.S.?

Yes

No

Year company established: *

How many employees does your company have inside the state of Tennessee? *

How many employees does your company have in all locations, including Tennessee? *

Approximate annual sales in U.S. Dollars: *

Why is your company interested in starting to export or increasing your current level of exporting (choose as many as apply)? *

- ☐ Increase sales volume/profits
- ☐ Maximize current manufacturing capacity
- ☐ Diversify risk
- ☐ Level out cyclical demand for products
- ☐ Expand to new international markets
- ☐ Keep up with competition
- ☐ Satisfy customer demand from abroad
- ☐ Other

Please provide a full description of your main products or services *

Industry NAICS Code: *

Has your company had contact with any of the organizations listed below about exporting? Please select Yes or No and the latest year of communication. Note: these are Tennessee Export Initiative (TEI) partners.

YES NO Years

U.S. Commercial Service Export Assistance Center (Memphis or Nashville)

U.S. Small Business Administration

Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development

Tennessee Department of Agriculture or SUSTA

Tennessee Small Business Development Center

By clicking Yes below, applicant acknowledges that the information provided herein may be shared with Tennessee Export Initiative (TEI) partners listed above. *

Yes

No

Please indicate whether you consider your company to be NTE or ME as defined below. *

NTE – New to Export: Your company is new to exporting or has had limited experience exporting within the past 24 months.

ME – Market Expansion: Your company currently exports to one or more foreign markets and is seeking to expand into new country market(s), new market segment(s), and/or with a new product line within existing market(s).

EXPORT ASSESSMENT

Please select this company's level of exporting expertise and capabilities. (0 = none; 5 = very experienced)

0 1 2 3 4 5

Identifying foreign markets

Connecting with international buyers

Shipping products overseas

Identifying and selecting international freight forwarders

Freight pricing

Export controls – export licenses, export laws and regulations

Export payment mechanisms

What statements reflect your company's export readiness (choose as many as apply)? *

Our company management is committed to developing export markets and willing and able to dedicate staff, time and resources to the process.

We are committed to providing the same level of service given to our domestic customers.

We have a product or service that has been successfully sold in the domestic market.

We have or are preparing an international marketing plan with defined goals and strategies.

We have sufficient production capacity that can be committed to the export market.

We have adequate knowledge in shipping products overseas by being able to identify and select international freight forwarders and freight costing.

We have adequate knowledge in modifying product packaging and ingredients to meet foreign import regulations and cultural preferences.

We have adequate knowledge of export payment mechanisms, such as developing and negotiating letters of credit.

We have access to sufficient resources to bear the costs associated with exporting, including the costs of packing,

We could promptly fill any new export orders from present inventory or other sources.

Please briefly describe your company's current export strategy

If ME (Market Expansion):

How long have you been exporting?

- < 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- > 5 years

What percent of your sales are through export?

- <15%
- 15% - 49%
- 51% - 75%
- >75%

Export Strategy

PERMISSIONS & CERTIFICATION

SBA Opt In

The US Small Business Administration (SBA) would like to give eligible small businesses the opportunity to expand your knowledge and resources of other programs that are offered by the agency. May we share your company's name and contact information with other programs offered by SBA? *

- Yes
- No

Approval

The authorized representative **MUST** be a member of the senior management team. With this signature, the information presented in this document is accepted as an accurate representation of the company's activities for the purpose of evaluating the success of the activities as they relate to the STEP Program.

The applicant certifies that:

- To the best of my knowledge, the data in this application is correct and supporting documentation will be available to TEI for review upon request. I understand that submitting false or misleading information may result in being found ineligible for reimbursement and permanent disqualification from any future participation in this program.
- I understand that information in this application will be shared with the TEI Office, District Export Councils of Tennessee, and the U.S. Commercial Service Tennessee.

Do you agree? *

I agree

I do not agree

Date *

Month Day Year

For more information or assistance, please contact:

Jeffrey Overby, Director, Tennessee Export Initiative, TEI@belmont.edu

Thank you for your interest. Please hit the "Submit" button.