



# MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TRADE SHOW ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## GUIDELINES

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM\*

This program assists Montana based companies in exploring new domestic and international wholesale markets by encouraging first-time exhibition at new trade shows outside of the state. It is not only for companies new to trade show exhibition, but can also be useful for established companies who are looking to exhibit at a show that they have never been to before. It is not intended for a company to use for a trade show at which it has previously or currently exhibits.

The assistance comes in the form of 50% reimbursement of qualified and approved expenses for trade show exhibition up to a maximum of \$3,000 (including bonus amounts).

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Private-sector, Montana based company providing a Montana based product/service or adding value to a product in Montana\*.
2. Exhibiting at a "business-to-business" (**wholesale**) trade show *outside* of the state of Montana (USA or international) or participating in the US Commercial Services Gold Key program (for export).
3. First-time exhibition in the specified trade show or if using the Gold Key service, the first time visiting a particular country for business purposes.
4. Presents documentation that the trade show or event is an appropriate venue for the company (include a copy of the show's exhibitor information including past attendance statistics).
5. The Montana Department of Commerce will make the final decision as to a company's eligibility for this program.

\* An agriculture based company eligible for the Department of Agriculture Trade Show Assistance Program (TSAP) is not eligible for this program. Visit [Agriculture's TSAP page](#) for more information.

### ELIGIBLE EXPENSES\*

1. Booth/space rental or [US Commercial Services Gold Key fee](#)
2. Booth equipment, furniture, and carpeting rental
3. Booth utility costs
4. Promotional materials (product flyer specific to show, booth signage, etc.)
5. Shipping, storage, drayage (cost of moving freight at exhibition site) and show labor

\* The ONLY eligible expense for companies using the US Commercial Services Gold Key program is the participation fee. No other expenses, including those listed above, will be allowed.

### INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

1. Expenditures directly related to the operation of the business (staff salaries, printing of generic business brochures and handouts, product samples, general advertising not related to the sales/trade event).
2. Transportation, meals and lodging

## APPLICATION & REVIEW PROCESS

Potential participants must complete and return the Trade Show Assistance application with required attachments **45 days prior to the first day of the trade show**. A review panel, consisting of Department of Commerce staff will review applications. To be eligible for reimbursement, written or electronic approval from the Montana Department of Commerce **MUST BE** received before attending the show. **No applications will be considered after an event has occurred.**

## AWARD LIMITATIONS

**This program is based on a 50% reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred during participation in an approved trade show.** Funds are not disbursed until actual receipts are submitted after the event.

A company may receive 1 award per State of Montana fiscal year (July 1- June 30). The total individual award is limited to 50% of the actual eligible expenditures not to exceed a base amount \$2,000 per company. The minimum amount is \$500. The maximum a company can receive over the life of the program is \$6,000 (\$9,000 if eligible for all bonus awards listed below). All awards are dependent on funds available.

## BONUS PROGRAM

Additional bonus monies (above the maximum \$2,000) are available if a business meets any of the criteria listed below. A total of up to an additional \$1,000 (per award) is possible if the applicant meets all of them.

1. Registered participant in the *Made in Montana* program = \$200
2. Successful completion of the NxLeveL or FasTrack Entrepreneurial Training Seminar, Department of Commerce Export Workshop/s or the MSU/CAE (Creative Arts Enterprise) Training Course = \$300
3. The trade show is held outside of the United States = \$500 ([participants using the US Commercial Services Gold Key program](#) or participating as a member of a Trade Mission/Delegation are not eligible for this bonus amount)

**The business shall function independently in performing the exhibition activity and shall assume sole responsibility of any debts or liabilities that may be incurred in regard to the applied for trade show. The award cannot be assigned.**

## REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

To receive reimbursement, the [Reimbursement Request and Survey form](#) must be completed in its entirety (with all receipts attached), as well as a completed [W9](#), and submitted to the Department of Commerce within 45 days of the last day of the trade show.

## DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION FORM

Click on the links below to download the application form:

- [Microsoft Word version](#)
- [Adobe PDF version](#)

### For more information contact:

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