

Internationalisation Fund - Overview

The purpose of the Internationalisation Fund is to assist 7,600 SME's in England to improve international trade performance through co-investment in approved activity. The Fund is supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) running from December 2020 to early 2023.

Who can receive funding?

SMEs in England¹ with the following characteristics:

- International High Growth Potential with prospects of employment growth or productivity improvement.
- A product or service suitable for international trade, or which could be developed for international trade and see international trade as a path for growth
- £500k+ sales/turnover (our target, but those with lower sales/turnover are eligible)

What funding is available?

- Co-investment funding between £1k and £9k - total amount of funding available varies in LEP areas
- Support tools are available to establish the amount of funding SME's can apply for
- The Fund Administrator will regularly update funding availability for each LEP area, this supports management of expectations for SME's and reduces the chance of over-committing funding.

How can the funding be used?²

- **Eligible expenditure:** Advice from third party private sector experts to help SMEs prepare for international trade, which may include:- market research, market selection and entry advice, advice on Intellectual Property Rights, cross cultural negotiation support and standards, translation and cultural advice, international trade legal advice, PR support, international social media and search engine optimisation, international marketing, routes to market/agency advice, overseas business environment, and due diligence. SME participation in Trade Fairs, Trade Missions and independent market development visits may also be eligible.

Exclusions

- **Ineligible Sectors:** Steel, Coal (primary production), Shipbuilding, Synthetic fibres, Transport and related infrastructure, Energy generation, distribution & infrastructure, Primary Agricultural Production, Financial and insurance institutions, Schools/school age educational establishments, Nuclear, Airport Infrastructure, Fisheries, Aquaculture, Tobacco
- **Ineligible companies include those:** likely to transfer operations overseas, with products that could cause offence or embarrassment to the UK Government, offering illegal products, breaching export controls
- **Ineligible expenditure:** production/operational costs, direct subsidies, routine expenditure, capital expenditure, salary/employment costs, purchase of assets
- **Activities not supported include:** DIT's OMIS Service³, Transport and Logistics, Packaging production, Export insurance, Export documentation services, Sales agent's commission, Export training leading to qualifications, Warehousing, Assets such as Intellectual Property, standards or accreditations, eCommerce platform registration fees, Production of Sales collateral

How can SMEs apply?

SMEs should initially contact [DIT's Regional Network](#) and discuss their plans with an adviser and agree an export action plan. If support from the Internationalisation Fund may be appropriate, the DIT adviser will give the company further information on how to apply.

¹ SMEs in Cornwall & Isles of Scilly are not eligible for support; they will have access to a similar scheme outside the DIT offer.

² Detailed eligibility and suitability guidance for the Internationalisation Fund should be referred to.

³ 3rd Party suppliers outside the OMIS pricing structure are eligible. The funding must not duplicate any DIT funded activity.