

Press release: Grants available for SMEs looking to export

- applications open today for SME grants to attend international trade shows.
- successful businesses are able to use grants to fund exhibiting costs at 55 events in Q1 2019
- previous successful companies have gone on to secure major contracts as a result of funding

Businesses can apply for grants of up to £2,500 to attend international trade shows through the Department for International Trade's (DIT) [Tradeshow Access Programme \(TAP\)](#), which opens for applications today (Friday 21 December).

TAP provides financial support for UK SMEs to participate in overseas exhibitions and conferences that cover a range of sectors, from education to aerospace and creative to maritime. Successful businesses can use the grants to fund direct exhibiting costs, including stand costs and conference fees.

55 events comprise the list, ranging from the Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg, to Cannes Lions Festival, to Summer Fancy Food in New York, and Mobile World Congress Shanghai.

Attending international conferences and events are an effective way for those new to exporting, or exploring new territories, to meet potential customers face-to-face and start the exporting process.

Minister for Investment Graham Stuart MP said:

Attending trade shows helps businesses gain market knowledge, forge relationships and raise brand awareness among industry professionals. That is why I'm delighted to be announcing the next raft of TAP-supported events.

TAP grants accompany a wide range of support businesses can access through the Department for International Trade. This includes dedicated teams of International Trade Advisers, sector specialists, and a network of staff across the world that are available to help businesses embark on, or develop, their exporting journey.

One business that has seen its export sales grow as a result of TAP funding is London-based popcorn manufacturer Joe and Seph's. It secured a major contract with Hong Kong Airlines after attending confectionary trade show ANUGA in Germany using a TAP grant to help fund the visit. The business predicts a 60% year-on-year increase in export sales over the next 12 months.

Latest figures from the [Office for National Statistics (ONS)] show that in

the year to October 2018, goods exports from the UK increased by 3.5% to £348 billion.

The number of businesses exporting to non-EU countries over the same period rose to 49,000. The most popular non-EU destinations for exporters include USA (19.9%), Australia (7.9%) and Switzerland (7.3%).

Earlier this year, the Department launched the [Export Strategy](#), an ambitious new plan that sets out how the government will make Britain a 21st century exporting superpower through better use of our overseas network, new online tools and building an extensive business to business network.

A government-led collaboration with business, developed after extensive engagement with a range of UK firms, the Strategy sets a new ambition from government to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%.

To be eligible for a grant, businesses must be based in the UK (excluding Isle of Man or the Channel Islands) and be a small or medium-sized enterprise, UK university, UK government funded centre of higher or further learning or UK government funded research organisation.

From 1 October 2017, the maximum number of grants available to individual companies is limited to 6. The grants can be taken in any market.

Contact your local [DIT International Trade Adviser](#) for further information about the programme.