

Exclusions

The mission fee does not include any personal travel expenses such as lodging, most meals, local ground transportation (except for transportation to and from meetings, and airport transfers during the mission), and air transportation. Participants will, however, be able to take advantage of U.S. Government rates for hotel rooms. Business or entry visas may be required to participate on the mission. Applying for and obtaining such visas will be the responsibility of the mission participant. Government fees and processing expenses to obtain such visas are not included in the participation fee. However, the Department of Commerce will provide instructions to each participant on the procedures required to obtain necessary business visas.

Timeframe for Recruitment and Application

Mission recruitment will be conducted in an open and public manner, including publication in the **Federal Register**, posting on the Commerce Department trade mission calendar (<http://www.export.gov/trademissions/>) and other Internet Web sites, press releases to general and trade media, direct mail, broadcast fax, notices by industry trade associations and other multiplier groups, and publicity at industry meetings, symposia, conferences, and trade shows.

Recruitment for this mission will begin immediately and conclude no later than January 8, 2017. The U.S. Department of Commerce will review applications and make selection decisions on rolling basis. Applications received after January 8, 2017 will be considered only if space and scheduling constraints permit.

Contact Information

U.S. Contact

Ashish Vaid, International Trade Specialist, US & Foreign Commercial Service, 290 Broadway, Suite 1312, New York, NY 10007, t: 646-385-4503, ashish.vaid@trade.gov.

Dylan Daniels, International Trade Specialist, US & Foreign Commercial Service, 22 N. Front St., Suite 200, Memphis, TN 38103, t: 901-544-0930, dylan.daniels@trade.gov.

Singapore

Swee Hoon Chia, Senior Commercial Specialist, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Embassy Singapore, Tel: +65 6476-9037, Direct: +65 6476-9403, Fax: +65 6476-9080, Email: sweehoon.chia@trade.gov.

Vietnam

Stuart Schaag, Senior Commercial Officer, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Consulate Embassy Hanoi, Tel: 84-4-3850-5199, Email: Stuart.Schaag@trade.gov.

Frank Spector,

Trade Mission Programs.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

Trade Mission to Central America in Conjunction With the Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference, March 26–31, 2017

AGENCY: International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration is organizing a trade mission to Central America that will include the Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference in San Jose, Costa Rica on March 26–28, 2017.

U.S. trade mission participants will arrive in Costa Rica on or before March 26 to attend the opening reception for the Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference, which is also open to U.S. companies not participating in the trade mission. Trade mission participants will attend the Conference on March 27. Following the morning session of the conference, trade mission participants will participate in one-on-one consultations with U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service (US&FCS) Commercial Officers and/or Department of State Economic/Commercial Officers from the following U.S. Embassies in the region: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Nicaragua, and Panama. The following day, March 28, trade mission participants will engage in business-to-business appointments with companies in Costa Rica. A limited number of trade mission participants will then have the option to travel to: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Nicaragua or Panama (choosing only one market) for optional additional business-to-business appointments based on recommendations from the US&FCS in those markets. Each business to business appointment will be with a

pre-screened potential buyer, agent, distributor or joint-venture partner.

The Department of Commerce's Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference will focus on regional-specific sessions, market entry strategies, legal, logistics, and trade financing resources as well as pre-arranged one-on-one consultations with US&FCS Commercial Officers and/or Department of State Economic/Commercial Officers with expertise in commercial markets throughout the region.

This trade mission is open to U.S. companies from a cross section of industries with growing potential in Central America, but is focused on U.S. companies representing best prospects sectors such as construction equipment/road building machinery, renewable energy, automotive parts and accessories, and safety and security equipment.

The combination of the Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference and this trade mission, including its business-to-business matchmaking opportunities in Costa Rica and one other optional Central American country, will provide participants with access to substantive information on strategies for entering or expanding their business across the Central American region.

Schedule

March 26 Travel Day/Arrival to Costa Rica

Registration, Market Briefings, and Networking Reception

March 27 Costa Rica

Morning: Registration and Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference

Afternoon: U.S. Embassy Officer Consultations

Evening: Ambassador's Networking Reception

March 28 Costa Rica

Business-to-Business Meetings

March 29 Travel Day

Optional

March 30 Business-to-Business

Meetings in (Choice of one market):

Option (A) Honduras

Option (B) Guatemala

Option (C) El Salvador

Option (D) Belize

Option (E) Nicaragua

Option (F) Panama

March 31 Return to the U.S.

Web site: Please visit our official mission Web site for more information: http://export.gov/trademissions/eg_main_023185.asp.

Participation Requirements

All parties interested in participating in the U.S. Department of Commerce Trade Mission to Central America must complete and submit an application package for consideration by the Department of Commerce. All applicants will be evaluated on their ability to meet certain conditions and best satisfy the selection criteria as outlined below.

A minimum of 30 companies and/or trade associations will be selected to participate in the mission from the applicant pool on a first-come, first-served basis. The total number of U.S. companies that may be selected for each country will be limited as follows: 30 companies for Costa Rica, 10 companies for Guatemala, 10 companies for El Salvador; 4 companies for Belize; 12 companies for Honduras; 10 companies for Nicaragua; and 15 companies for Panama.

Additional participants may be accepted based on available space. U.S. companies and/or trade associations already doing business in or seeking business in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama for the first time may apply.

Fees and Expenses

After a company has been selected to participate in the mission, a payment to the Department of Commerce in the form of a participation fee is required.

- For business-to-business meetings in Costa Rica only (not traveling to an additional trade mission country), the participation fee will be \$2,100 for a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME)* and \$3,300 for a large firm.*

- For business-to-business meetings in Costa Rica and one other market, *i.e.* El Salvador OR Honduras OR Guatemala OR Belize OR Nicaragua, OR Panama, the participation fee will be \$3,100 for a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME)* and \$4,300 for a large firm.*

* An SME is defined as a firm with 500 or fewer employees or that otherwise qualifies as a small business under SBA regulations. Parent companies, affiliates, and subsidiaries will be considered when determining business size (See <https://www.sba.gov/content/what-are-small-business-size-standards>).

The above trade mission fees include the \$450 participation fee for the Trade Americas—Business Opportunities in Central America Conference to be held in San Jose, Costa Rica on March 26–28, 2017.

An additional representative for both SMEs and large firms will require an additional fee of \$450.

Application

All interested firms and associations may register via the following link: <https://emenuapps.ita.doc.gov/ePublic/TM/7ROM>.

Exclusions

The mission fee does not include any personal travel expenses such as lodging, most meals, local ground transportation (except for transportation to and from meetings, and airport transfers during the mission), and air transportation. Participants will, however, be able to take advantage of U.S. Government rates for hotel rooms. Electronic visas are required to participate on the mission, which are easily obtainable online. Applying for and obtaining such visas will be the responsibility of the mission participant. Government fees and processing expenses to obtain such visas are not included in the participation fee. However, the Department of Commerce will provide instructions to each participant on the procedures required to obtain necessary business visas.

Timeline for Recruitment and Applications

Mission recruitment will be conducted in an open and public manner, including publication in the **Federal Register**, posting on the Commerce Department trade mission calendar (<http://export.gov/trademissions>) and other Internet Web sites, press releases to the general and trade media, direct mail, broadcast fax, notices by industry trade associations, and other multiplier groups and announcements at industry meetings, symposia, conferences, and trade shows.

Recruitment for the mission will begin immediately and conclude no later than January 31, 2017. The U.S. Department of Commerce will review applications and make selection decisions on a rolling basis beginning 14 days after publication of this **Federal Register** notice, until the minimum of 30 participants is selected. After January 31, 2017, applications will be considered only if space and scheduling constraints permit.

Conditions for Participation

- An applicant must submit a completed and signed mission application and supplemental application materials, including adequate information on the company's products and/or services, primary market objectives, and goals for participation. Applicant should specify in their application and supplemental materials which trade mission stops they are interested in participating in. If

the Department of Commerce receives an incomplete application, the Department may reject the application, request additional information, or take the lack of information into account when evaluating the applications.

- Each applicant must also certify that the products and services it seeks to export through the mission are either produced in the U.S., or, if not, marketed under the name of a U.S. firm and have at least 51% U.S. content of the value of the finished product or service. In the case of a trade association or trade organization, the applicant must certify that, for each company to be represented by the trade association or trade organization, the products and services the represented company seeks to export are either produced in the United States, or, if not, marketed under the name of a U.S. firm and have at least 51% U.S. content.

The following criteria will be evaluated in selecting participants:

- Suitability of a firm's or service provider's (or in the case of a trade association/organization, represented firm or service provider's) products or services to these markets.
- Firm's or service provider's (or in the case of a trade association/organization, represented firm or service provider's) potential for business in the markets, including likelihood of exports resulting from the mission.
- Consistency of the firm's or service provider's (or in the case of a trade association/organization, represented firm or service provider's) goals and objectives with the stated scope of the mission.

Diversity of company size, sector or subsector, and location may also be considered during the review process.

Referrals from political organizations and any documents containing references to partisan political activities (including political contributions) will be removed from an applicant's submission and not considered during the selection process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jessica Gordon, International Trade Specialist, U.S. Export Assistance Center—Jackson, MS, Jessica.Gordon@trade.gov, Tel: 601–373–0784.

Diego Gattesco, Director, U.S. Export Assistance Center—Wheeling, WV, Diego.Gattesco@trade.gov, Tel: 304–243–5493.

Aileen Nandi, Regional Senior Commercial Officer, U.S. Commercial Service—El Salvador, Aileen.Nandi@trade.gov.

Abby Daniell, Commercial Director,
U.S. Commercial Service—Costa Rica,
Abby.Daniell@trade.gov.

Frank Spector,
Trade Missions Program.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

[Docket Number: 160603485–6485–01]

Award Competitions for Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers in the States of Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, South Carolina and Wyoming

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce (DoC).

ACTION: Notice of funding availability.

SUMMARY: NIST invites applications from eligible organizations in connection with NIST's funding up to eleven (11) separate MEP cooperative agreements for the operation of MEP Centers in the designated States' service areas and in the funding amounts identified in the Funding Availability section of this notice. NIST anticipates awarding one (1) cooperative agreement for each of the identified States. The objective of this announcement by the MEP Program is to provide manufacturing extension services to primarily small and medium-sized manufacturers within the States designated in the Funding Availability section of this notice. The selected organizations will become part of the MEP national system of extension service providers, currently located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

DATES: Electronic applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, September 27, 2016. Paper applications will not be accepted. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered. The approximate start date for awards under this notice and the corresponding FFO is expected to be April 1, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov. NIST will not accept applications submitted by mail, facsimile, or by email.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Administrative, budget, cost-sharing,

and eligibility questions and other programmatic questions should be directed to Diane Henderson at Tel: (301) 975–5105; Email: mepffo@nist.gov; Fax: (301) 963–6556. Grants Rules and Regulation questions should be addressed to: Matthew Jones, Grants Management Division, National Institute of Standards and Technology, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1650, Gaithersburg, MD 20899–1650; Tel: (301) 975–3698; Email: matthew.jones@nist.gov; Fax: (301) 975–6368. For technical assistance with *Grants.gov* submissions contact Christopher Hunton at Tel: (301) 975–5718; Email: grants@nist.gov; Fax: (301) 975–8884. Questions submitted to NIST/MEP may be posted as part of an FAQ document, which will be periodically updated on the MEP Web site at <http://nist.gov/mep/ffo-state-competitions-04.cfm>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic access: Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the corresponding FFO announcement available at www.grants.gov for complete information about this program, including all program requirements and instructions for applying electronically. Paper applications or electronic applications submitted other than through www.grants.gov will not be accepted. The FFO may be found by searching under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Name and Number provided below.

System Award Management registration required: When developing your submission timeline, please keep in mind that (1) all applicants are required to have a current registration in the System for Award Management (*SAM.gov*); (2) the free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (*SAM.gov*) may take between three and five business days, or as long as more than two weeks; (3) applicants submitting electronic applications are required to have a current registration in *Grants.gov*; and (4) applicants will receive a series of email messages from *Grants.gov* over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received its application. Please note that a Federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in the *SAM.gov* is not current at the time of the award.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 278k, as implemented in 15 CFR part 290.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Name and Number: Manufacturing Extension Partnership—11.611.

Webinar Information Session: NIST/MEP will hold one or more webinar information sessions for organizations that are considering applying to this opportunity. These webinars will provide general information regarding MEP and offer general guidance on preparing proposals. NIST/MEP staff will be available on the webinars to answer general questions. During the webinars, proprietary technical discussions about specific project ideas will not be permitted. Also, NIST/MEP staff will not critique or provide feedback on any specific project ideas during the webinars or at any time before submission of a proposal to MEP. However, NIST/MEP staff will provide information about the MEP eligibility and cost sharing requirements, evaluation criteria and selection factors, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive MEP proposal during this webinar, and by phone and email. The webinars will be held approximately fifteen (15) to thirty (30) business days after posting of the corresponding FFO. The exact dates and times of the webinars will be posted on the MEP Web site at <http://nist.gov/mep/ffo-state-competitions-04.cfm>. The webinars will be recorded, and a link to the recordings will be posted on the MEP Web site. In addition, the webinar presentations will be available on the MEP Web site. Organizations wishing to participate in one or more webinar(s) must sign up by emailing mepffo@nist.gov. Participation in the webinars is not required in order for an organization to submit an application pursuant to this notice and the corresponding FFO.

Program Description: NIST invites applications from eligible organizations in connection with NIST's funding up to eleven (11) separate cooperative agreements for the operation of MEP Centers in the designated States' service areas and in the funding amounts identified in Section II.2. of the corresponding FFO. NIST anticipates awarding one (1) cooperative agreement for each of the identified States. The objective of this announcement by the MEP Program is to provide manufacturing extension services to primarily small and medium-sized manufacturers within the States designated in the Funding Availability section of this notice. The selected organizations will become part of the MEP national system of extension service providers, located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

The MEP program is not a Federal research and development program. It is not the intent of the program that awardees will perform systematic research.