

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Manufacturing and Services (MAS), International Trade Administration (ITA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Market Development Cooperator Program 2012

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: ITA-MAS-OPCM-2012-2003089

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.112, Market Development Cooperator Program

Dates: Public Meeting: ITA will hold a public meeting to discuss MDCP proposal preparation, procedures, and selection process on Tuesday, January 24, 2012. The ninety-minute meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. in Room 4813, at the Herbert Clark Hoover Building, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. ITA will not discuss specific proposals at this meeting. Attendance is not required in order to apply or seek an eligibility determination. Interested parties may participate via telephone conference. Instructions for participation via teleconference are available at trade.gov/mdcp or by contacting Mr. Brad Hess at 202-482-2969, or via e-mail at Brad.Hess@trade.gov.

Applications: Complete applications must be received and validated by grants.gov, or if submitted as hard-copy, received by ITA on or before 5:00 p.m. EST, February 21, 2012. Applicants should note: Validation or rejection of an application by grants.gov may take up to two (2) business days after submission. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected/returned to the sender without further consideration. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt.

Applicants whose applications have been received by the deadline will be notified via e-mail or fax within ten (10) days of the submission deadline.

Funding Opportunity Description: ITA requests that eligible organizations submit proposals (applications) for the fiscal year (FY) 2012 competition for MDCP awards. ITA creates economic opportunity for U.S. workers and firms by promoting international trade and investment, strengthening industry competitiveness, and ensuring fair trade.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

MDCP financial assistance awards help to underwrite the start-up costs of new foreign market development projects that industry organizations are often reluctant to undertake without federal government support. MDCP projects strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry by generating exports of nonagricultural goods and services produced in the United States.

Trade associations, state departments of trade and other regional associations, and other non-profit industry organizations are eligible to apply for MDCP awards. These organizations are particularly effective in reaching small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs). Through MDCP cooperative agreements ITA provides technical and financial assistance that these organizations match. Organizations compete for a limited number of MDCP awards. (See III. Eligibility Information below.)

1. Definitions

Several definitions are provided in VIII. Other Information.

2. Examples of Project Activity

Applicants should propose foreign market development activities tailored to strengthen the competitiveness of a U.S. industry. Examples from prior years are set forth below and, in greater detail, at trade.gov/mdcp. These are provided only for illustration. Applicants are not required to propose any of these activities:

- a. Encouraging the adoption of industry-developed internationally-recognized standards that ensure market access for U.S. products and services;
- b. Helping business leaders to leverage free trade agreements to the advantage of U.S. industry;
- c. Demonstration of U.S. products and services abroad;
- d. Creation of a U.S.A. pavilion at a foreign trade show;
- e. Establishment of technical servicing of U.S. products and services abroad;
- f. Establishment of a trade association office in a target market; and
- g. Training foreign staff for after-sale service of U.S. products in target markets;

B. Program Priorities

ITA strengthens the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promotes trade and investment, and ensures fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of trade laws and agreements. ITA supports the National Export Initiative (NEI) to sustain economic growth and support American jobs. With regard to the priorities listed below, each applicant must demonstrate how its proposed project will help ITA to address priority 1, and at least two of the priorities 2-6. ITA is interested in receiving proposals that:

(Required.)

1. Create or sustain U.S. jobs by increasing or maintaining exports; and

(Two (2) of priorities 2-6 are required.)

2. Increase exports to major emerging markets with rapid growth and new customers such as Brazil, India, and China as well as to other high-growth emerging markets that are not as large such as Vietnam, Turkey, Colombia, South Africa, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia and other markets in the Persian Gulf region; or

3. Increase exports by any of the following U.S. industries: aerospace, ground/marine transportation equipment, health/medical products/services, chemicals, processed foods, education services, design/construction products/services, energy/environmental products/services, information/communications technology, media/entertainment, machinery/equipment, professional services, advanced textiles, travel/tourism, and/or logistics/distribution services; or

4. Help U.S. businesses to secure export financing; or

5. Engage more U.S. businesses in major international trade shows and other significant foreign outreach activities; or

6. Help current exporters to expand to more markets.

(An applicant may also show how its project will address any of priorities 7-10; however, applicants are not required to address any of these.)

7. Address non-tariff barriers to U.S. exports such as discriminatory regulations, local content requirements, and technical requirements;

8. Secure strong intellectual property rights protection and combat counterfeiting and piracy;

9. Counter discriminatory trade policies such as "indigenous innovation;" and

10. Shape and encourage the adoption of standards outside the United States that are industry-developed, market-driven, science-based, and internationally recognized.

An applicant is not judged based on how many priorities it claims its project will address, but rather by how well its project addresses priority 1, at least two (2) of

priorities 2-6, and any of priorities 7-10 that may be relevant.

C. Program Authority

MDCP is provided for in 15 U.S.C. 4723. The program strengthens U.S. industry's competitiveness by developing, maintaining, and expanding foreign markets for nonagricultural goods and services produced in the United States.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Approximately \$2,000,000 is expected to be available through this announcement for fiscal year 2012. The total number of awards made will depend on the amounts requested by top-scoring applicants and the availability of funds. No award will exceed \$300,000. ITA anticipates concluding seven (7) to ten (10) cooperative agreements.

B. Project/Award Period

The project period is the time-span established in the award document during which federal sponsorship begins and ends. In the past, the term "award period" has also been used to refer to the project period. Each applicant proposes a project period of up to three (3) years in its application. The project period may be extended. Extensions usually do not exceed 12 months. All extensions must be approved by the grants officer.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

MDCP awards are cooperative agreements, see definition in section VIII.I.3. The awards are not grants. Accordingly, an applicant that is selected to receive an MDCP award is called a cooperator. ITA expects to have substantial involvement with a cooperator as it works on its MDCP projects. This involvement is discussed below in VIII.D. Working as a Team with ITA.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Entities that fall within the following categories are generally found to be eligible to apply for an MDCP award: trade associations; state departments of trade and their regional associations; and non-profit industry organizations, including organizations such as World Trade Centers, centers for international trade development, and small business development centers. In cases where no entity described above represents the industry, private industry firms or groups of firms may be eligible to apply for an MDCP award. Such private industry firms or groups of firms must provide documentation in their applications demonstrating that no entity in the first three categories listed below represents their industry.

1. Trade Association

A trade association is a fee-based organization consisting of member firms in the same industry, or in related industries, or which share common commercial concerns. The purpose of the trade association is to further the commercial interests of its members through the exchange of information, legislative activities, and the like.

2. Non-Profit Industry Organization

To be found eligible within this category an entity must be found to be a/an:

- a. Non-profit small business development center operating under agreement with the Small Business Administration; or
- b. Non-profit World Trade Center chartered or recognized by the non-profit World Trade Centers Association; or
- c. Organization granted status as a non-profit organization under 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), (4), (5), or (6), which operates as one of the following:
 - (1) Chamber of commerce;
 - (2) Board of trade;
 - (3) Business, export or trade council/interest group;
 - (4) Visitors bureau or tourism promotion group;
 - (5) Economic development group;
 - (6) Standards-developing or conformity-assessment organization;
 - (7) Small business development center; or
 - (8) Port authority.

3. State Departments of Trade and Their Regional Associations

To be eligible within this category an entity must be found to be a/an:

- a. Department of a state government tasked with promoting trade, tourism, or another type of economic development; or
- b. Association of the departments of trade (as defined above) of two or more states; or
- c. Entity within a state or within a region that is associated with a state department of trade, tourism, or other type of economic development including non-profit, non-private, non-commercial entities which is at least partially funded by, directed by, or tasked by a state government to promote trade, tourism, or another type of economic development.

4. Special Note Regarding Educational Institutions

Educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, and universities, are not eligible. However, organizations that are part of or affiliated with an educational institution for administrative, accounting, financial, legal, or logistical reasons may be eligible. Such organizations that are not independent legal entities, for example, an unincorporated organization, that otherwise may be classified above under III.A. Eligible Applicants, above, as a trade association, non-profit industry association, or state department of trade and its regional associations, are eligible.

In such a case, the eligible organization will include in its application a signed letter from the educational institution stating that MDCP funds will be used only by the eligible organization for the purposes outlined in its application and that no such funds will be used by or retained by the educational institution, even though the funds may need to go through the educational institution because of the eligible organization's lack of a separate accounting system or lack of status as a separate legal entity.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

A cooperator must contribute at least two dollars for each federal dollar received. The first dollar's-worth of contribution must be cash, the second dollar can be either cash or in-kind contribution worth one dollar. See VIII.B. Supplemental Explanation of Cost Share and Match.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

An applicant that fails to meet the eligibility criteria cannot receive an MDCP award even if its application is reviewed. An eligible applicant may submit more than one application.

1. Eligibility of Current or Past Cooperators

ITA seeks to foster foreign market development activities by offering MDCP financial awards to encourage new initiatives. MDCP awards are not intended to replace funds from other sources, nor are they intended to replace previous MDCP awards. A current or past cooperator may propose a new project. See V.A.4. Creativity and Capacity below.

2. Determination of Eligibility

A prospective applicant that has not been determined already by ITA to be eligible must request an eligibility determination in writing accompanied by the most current version of all of the following documents that apply:

- a. Articles of incorporation or state-level certificate of corporate good

standing;

b. Charter;

c. Bylaws;

d. Information on types of members and membership fees;

e. Internal Revenue Service acknowledgment of non-profit status;

f. Annual report;

g. Audited financial statements;

h. Documentation of ties to state trade departments or their regional associations; and

i. Letter described in III.A.4. Special Note Regarding Educational Institutions above, if applicable.

A prospective applicant should submit an eligibility determination request as soon as possible if it wishes to have a determination prior to the application deadline. Such an eligibility requester should send its determination request to Ms. Annette Henderson, via email to Annette.Henderson@trade.gov or via fax to 202-482-4462. If unable to obtain an application package via email or fax, an eligibility requester may send its determination request via mail: Attn: Ms. Annette Henderson, U.S. Department of Commerce, HCHB 3215, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20230.

The eligibility requirements above are also summarized on a table at trade.gov/mdcp. An applicant that has requested an eligibility determination should continue to work on its application while awaiting ITA's eligibility determination. An applicant may submit an application even if it has not yet received an eligibility determination.

3. Exclusion of Entities from MDCP Project Activity

As noted in I.C. Program Authority, above, MDCP projects must be designed to develop, maintain, and expand "foreign markets for nonagricultural goods and services produced in the United States." This term is defined below in VIII.H. Definitions Regarding Nonagricultural Goods and Services Produced in the United

States. Accordingly, entities that are not found to be exporters of goods and services produced in the United States will be excluded from MDCP project activity. ITA may also exclude an entity from MDCP project activity where participation in such activity would be contrary to applicable U.S. law, federal government policy, or Department of Commerce policy. For example, ITA is prohibited by law from promoting exports to Cuba, therefore, any exporter that proposes prohibited exports will be excluded based on the legal prohibition.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available at grants.gov and at trade.gov/mdcp. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via grants.gov. If unable to obtain an application package via grants.gov or trade.gov/mdcp, an applicant may request an application package via email from Brad.Hess@trade.gov or by contacting Mr. Brad Hess, U.S. Department of Commerce, HCHB 3215, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20230. Mr. Hess can be reached via telephone at 202-482-2969.

B. Content and Form of Application

In order to be able to submit an application online at grants.gov an applicant must register at grants.gov. Registration is not immediate, so applicants are strongly encouraged to register on grants.gov as soon as possible. It often takes several days between registration on grants.gov and approval to submit an application. Accordingly, in order to be able to submit via grants.gov applicants should register on grants.gov no later than February 3, 2012.

Applicants will download forms from grants.gov then complete them offline. Applicants should note that the bulk of a complete MDCP application is made up of documents other than forms. The non-form majority of the application must be drafted, assembled, and saved as .pdf files prior to attempting to submit via grants.gov. (An example of a complete MDCP application is available online at trade.gov/mdcp.) Simply downloading the forms, completing them, and posting them at grants.gov is not enough to constitute a complete MDCP application.

Any applicant that chooses to submit a hard-copy application must do so by delivering an unbound original and two bound copies to the agency contact listed below in VII. Agency Contacts. Applicants should submit electronically via grants.gov or in hard-copy, not both. An applicant that chooses to provide hard-copy must ensure that the service it uses to deliver its application can do so by the deadline. Due to security concerns, packages and envelopes sent to ITA via U.S. mail are often delayed several days. The delays affect all forms of the U.S. mail, including first-class, priority, and express. See IV.F.2.b. Hard-Copy Submissions.

An applicant organizes its application in accordance with the grants.gov filing protocols. Accordingly, the application will be organized into four parts: forms,

project, budget, and other.

Every page of the application must be easily legible. Textual documents generated by an applicant should have a one-inch margin on either side and top and bottom, and the typeface should be no smaller than 11-point. Headers and footers can lie within the margins. Pages that are not easily legible may be ignored by reviewers. The four parts of the application are set forth below.

1. Forms (page limit: the number of forms required, 9-10 for most applicants)

An applicant downloads forms from grants.gov and completes them offline. After the project, budget, and other parts are prepared, an applicant can submit the forms as well as project, budget, and other parts at grants.gov. The forms are as follows:

- a. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance;
- b. SF-424A Budget Information;
- c. SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs; and
- d. CD-511 Certifications Regarding Lobbying.

Prior to completing SF-424A most applicants find it helpful to use linked electronic spreadsheets to prepare a detailed project budget. Example spreadsheets are available in a document in the application kit at trade.gov/mdcp. Most applicants find it helpful to download this file and use it, with modifications as needed, to prepare the MDCP project budget. One of the spreadsheets in the document is an SF-424A that is automatically populated with required information as the budget detail is entered on other spreadsheets. Once the final budget information displays on the SF-424A spreadsheet in this document, applicants can enter that information on the SF-424A that they downloaded from grants.gov.

Some situations might require the use of additional forms; however, applicants must not include documents other than forms in part 1, forms. Any applicant that plans to engage in lobbying the federal government as part of its MDCP project must complete form SF-LLL "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities." Also, any applicant that plans to sub-contract work or make sub-awards may determine that it needs to complete form CD-512 "Certifications Regarding Lobbying-Lower Tier Covered Transactions." (Any applicant that determines that it needs to complete a CD-512 should complete it but should not submit it. Instead, the applicant should keep it on file.) Forms SF-LLL and CD-512 are available for download at grants.gov as well as at trade.gov/mdcp as part of the application kit, which includes explanations of the forms.

2. Project Narrative File (page limit: 25)

- a. Executive Summary

In accordance with V.B. Review and Selection Process below, ITA will

distribute each applicant's one-page summary to its experts to solicit comments. This summary should communicate the essence of the application including the following:

- (1) Applicant: entity name, headquarters city/state, and website;
- (2) Partner(s): if applicable, name of any partner organization other than ITA, that will work with applicant (omit if there are none);
- (3) ITA and other federal collaborators: names of federal staff with whom applicant has discussed the project;
- (4) Federal share: amount of federal funds requested;
- (5) Match: amount of cash and in-kind match that applicant pledges to support the project;
- (6) Project period: up to three years, proposed by applicant, to begin no sooner than the beginning day of the project period identified by applicant in its application, but not sooner than July 1, 2012;
- (7) Project exports: exports anticipated to be generated during the project period;
- (8) Post-project exports: exports anticipated to be generated during the four years following the project period;
- (9) Foreign markets targeted;
- (10) Market size: value in U.S. dollars of annual sales for the sector of the foreign market targeted by the project;
- (11) U.S. market share: size in U.S. dollars of current U.S. share of (10) above;
- (12) U.S. industry to be promoted; and
- (13) Project description: planned activities and methods.

b. Background

The applicant should make clear why it believes that the project is needed and has a good chance to succeed. Applicants should rely on solid research and address appropriate considerations that may have a bearing on how well proposed projects address I.B. Program Priorities above. The considerations to address will depend entirely on the nature of the proposed project. The list of considerations below is provided as an example. The actual considerations addressed in a given proposal may or may not include all of those listed below and may well include others. Examples include:

- (1) Current competitive position of the U.S. industry, including market potential for the industry's products and services;

- (2) Local and third-country competitors in the target market(s);
- (3) Target market economic conditions and the likelihood that potential buyers will purchase U.S. goods or services to be offered;
- (4) U.S. industry resources that can be brought to bear on developing target market(s);
- (5) U.S. industry's ability to meet potential market demand; and
- (6) U.S. industry's after-sales service capability in target market(s).

c. Project Description

The project description should include a work plan listing specific activities planned, including the different phases of the project identifying each milestone and activity in chronological order; and the location where activities will take place.

d. Performance Measurement

Each cooperator reports its performance on its own distinct performance measures as well as on ITA performance measures. The reports are due thirty (30) days after the end of each calendar quarter.

(1) ITA Performance Measures

An applicant must demonstrate that it will gather and report the effect of MDCP project activity on the value of exports of services or goods delivered or contracted. A report template is available at trade.gov/mdcp. The information requested is summarized below.

(a) Exports

Each cooperator reports the dollar value of:

- (i) Actual, verified export sales, leases, or rentals of U.S. goods or services;
- (ii) Export related developments including the value of agent contracts and other export-related agreements, loss avoided, trade complaints resolved; and/or
- (iii) Exports that are not transaction-specific that must be extrapolated from reliable sources other than MDCP-project-generated transaction-originated reports.

(b) Export class

Each cooperator reports the class of each type of:

- (i) Export transaction as new-to-market, new-to-export, or

increased-export-to-market;

(ii) Export-related development such as an agent agreement or removal of a market-access barrier; and/or

(iii) Export that is not transaction-specific such as an extrapolation of exports from other data or claiming one (1) percent of all exports of targeted products to the foreign market resulting from standards-related MDCP project activity per the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) finding that standards-liberalizing activity generally results in a one (1) percent increase in gross domestic product.

(c) Other Export-Related Information

Each cooperator reports as much of the following information as is available regarding exports: foreign market, exporter's name/city/state/email address, and names of ITA Commercial Service staff who facilitated the export.

(d) Progress indicators

For each event-recruiting campaign, each cooperator reports the date it first presented its success agreement to potential participating companies. For each event a cooperator reports the date that it first sent to its ITA-MDCP team a list of companies that plan to participate in an upcoming activity. Each cooperator reports trade decision points, instances resulting from project activity where a target-market official with authority to make trade decisions takes action. Examples of trade decision points include, but are not limited to, a potential buyer meeting with a U.S. exporter, or a foreign official making a standards determination that will allow U.S. exporters to better determine conformity of their products to be exported.

(2) Applicant-Designed Performance Goals

In its application an applicant should develop and utilize performance goals that reasonably gauge project success. All applicants selected as cooperators report on ITA performance measures; therefore, an applicant should not duplicate ITA performance measures in its discussion of applicant-designed goals.

(3) Estimate Performance in the Application

In the application each applicant must estimate the performance level that it believes it will achieve for each of the measures and explain how it arrived at the estimates. Export performance estimates must be listed in the executive summary for both project period exports and post-project period exports (those exports anticipated to be generated during the four years immediately following the project period).

For applicant-designed performance goals, an applicant selected as a cooperator must be able to measure progress during the award period. For example, a cooperator that plans to average a trade mission every six (6) months during a three (3) year project would have a performance goal of six (6) for trade missions, two (2)

per year for three (3) years.

(4) Performance Measure Recording and Reporting System

Each applicant describes its recording and reporting system in its proposal. Ultimately, it is the success of individual companies that demonstrate an industry's strengthened competitiveness. Therefore, each applicant should demonstrate how it plans to get success information from participant companies and any other relevant sources.

e. Partnership

In order to obtain the maximum market development impact, each applicant should display in its application the imagination and innovation of the private sector working in partnership with the government. As noted under VIII.D.1. Project Team below, each cooperator will work with a project team leader and other ITA-MDCP team members. Team members from other federal agencies also may be invited to participate. Each applicant must describe in detail how it plans to work with ITA.

f. Credentials

Each cooperator must ensure adequate development, supervision, and execution of project activities for itself and for each non-federal partner with significant involvement in the project. Therefore, for itself and each such partner, each applicant must:

- (1) Address its ability to provide a competent, experienced staff and other resources;
 - (2) Describe its structure and composition;
 - (3) Discuss the degree to which it represents the industry in question;
 - (4) Describe the role, if any, foreign membership plays in its affairs;
 - (5) Provide a resume for the project director and professional personnel;
- and
- (6) Project the amount of time each professional will devote to the project.

g. Evidence of Support from U.S. Firms Interested in Participating

Perhaps the best indication of whether or not an MDCP project will generate exports is the level of interest among the companies of the U.S. industry that would export. Each applicant should document the interest of potential U.S. exporters in leveraging the proposed MDCP project to generate exports.

h. Use of ITA Emblem

Each applicant must provide at least one mock-up example indicating how the

applicant anticipates using the ITA emblem in the course of the project. Use of the ITA emblem is a graphic reminder that the project is backed by a partnership with ITA. The example will help secure formal clearance for use of the emblem by applicants that are selected for MDCP awards. An example of the proposed use of the ITA emblem is available at trade.gov/mdcp.

i. Success Agreement

Any applicant that plans to solicit export or other performance measurement data from companies participating in project activity must append a draft success agreement. Such an agreement generally includes a list of the benefits that participants will receive and a notice that participants are obligated to report performance measurement information. An example is available at trade.gov/mdcp.

j. Eligibility Letter

No applicant needs to submit letters they have received from ITA regarding determination of eligibility. ITA already has determinations of eligibility on file.

3. Budget Narrative Attachment Form (page limit: 20)

Each applicant must provide a detailed budget for the project including the elements listed below.

a. Budget for Project Award Period

This spreadsheet breaks down the budget into the categories used on the SF-424A and apportions it over the award period. This spreadsheet should allow an applicant to identify all of the figures needed to complete the SF-424A, which is submitted separately as described in IV.B.1 Forms above. An applicant is free to create its own way of accomplishing this, but an example spreadsheet is available for download at trade.gov/mdcp.

b. Supporting Worksheets and Explanations;

The figures summarized on the budget for project award period are derived from more detailed spreadsheets that must be provided. Applicants may organize these supporting spreadsheets in whatever manner supports the figures on the budget for project award period and SF-424A, and do so in a way that explains the details of the budget. For example, total travel expenses should be derived from adding up the cost of individual trips that take into account destination, number of travelers, and length of time. Most applicants find that it is helpful to group their supporting explanations on three worksheets: personnel, non-personnel direct expenses, and indirect expenses. Example spreadsheets are available for download at trade.gov/mdcp.

c. Financial Systems

Each applicant should include a discussion of financial systems and projections that identify how, when, and from what sources the matching funds will

be or have been raised. This discussion should address any of the following items that are relevant:

(1) Source of funds as documented in applicant's financial statements or annual budget if the financial statements do not allow a sufficient level of specificity;

(2) Proof of past performance generating program income; and

(3) Letters of commitment from partners and others who have pledged to provide cash donations or in-kind resources.

d. Other Financial Assistance Awards

Each applicant sums the grants and similar financial assistance awards that it has received over the last five years. Only awards of \$20,000, or more need to be considered when summing the amounts. If the total of such awards exceeds \$100,000, the applicant must provide a summary of each award in excess of \$20,000. The summary should include the following information about each award-making organization: award reference number, contact name, title, telephone number, current email or fax, and mailing address. Awards of less than \$20,000 should neither be included in the sum of awards nor in the summary of awards.

e. Financial Statements

Each applicant must include in its application its most recent audited financial statements, even if the applicant has recently submitted them as part of an eligibility determination request. If the applicant is a sub-unit of an audited entity, in addition to the financial statements of the audited entity, the applicant should provide financial statements at the most specific level available, whether or not these are audited. If the applicant's most recent financial statements are not audited, it should submit the most recent un-audited financial statements and a statement indicating whether it currently has an auditor and when it plans to issue audited financial statements.

f. Evidence Committing Cash or In-Kind Support

If a significant source of cash or in-kind support is coming from any entity other than the applicant, then the applicant must provide evidence that such support will be forthcoming in the event that the applicant wins an MDCP award. Examples of evidence of such support include a letter from an official in a position to pledge support, line items in official budget documents, and public laws.

g. Any Additional Evidence of Financial Responsibility

In the event that none of the methods described above are sufficient to demonstrate its financial responsibility, an applicant may choose to provide other suitable proof of same.

4. Other Attachment (page limit: 10)

Although the term of art in grants.gov is "mandatory other attachment," for

many MDCP applicants, this part will not be mandatory. This part should only be attached to the application in grants.gov if one or more of the elements listed below is relevant to an MDCP project application.

a. Project Comparison Table

Only applicants that are current or past cooperators are required to provide a table comparing the proposed project to current or past projects. See V.A.4.b. Table Comparing Application to Current or Past MDCP Project, below.

b. Letters of Commitment from Partner Organizations

If an applicant's proposed MDCP project will rely upon input or support from a partner organization other than ITA, the applicant should provide a letter of support from each partner confirming the amount of support that it will provide.

c. Letters of Support from Public Officials

Letters of support from public officials are not required or expected. However, the one exception as noted under IV.B.3.f. is a public official who has pledged financial or in-kind support for the proposed project. A letter of support from such a person is directly relevant to the viability of the project. An applicant that chooses to submit a letter of support should secure it soon enough to include it in the "other" attachment. This will ensure that the merit review panel and other reviewers will see the letter. It also reduces administrative burden because ITA does not respond to letters appended to MDCP applications.

In order to include a letter of support in its application, an applicant should request that any authors of letters of support send the original or a copy to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to include a copy of the letter in its application.

ITA officials are instructed not to provide letters of support for MDCP applications. ITA officials have the opportunity to comment on applications as part of the review and selection process as set forth in V.B.

d. Other Documentation

An applicant may include anything else it feels is relevant for ITA reviewers to consider. There may be documents relevant to an application that are not specified under IV.B.1., 2. or 3. above, nor under IV.B.4.a. through c. above. An applicant may include any such documentation within the "other documents" section. Any documentation provided should support or explain the other portions of the application and should be labeled so as to identify its relevance to the application. Other documentation provided under this section will be considered to constitute part of the application. As such it will undergo the same type of review as the rest of the application.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Complete applications must be received and validated by grants.gov or if submitted as hard-copy received by ITA on or before 5:00 p.m. EST, February 21, 2012. Applicants should note: Validation or rejection of an application by grants.gov may take up to two (2) business days after submission. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected/returned to the sender without further consideration. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt.

Applicants whose applications have been received by the deadline will be notified via e-mail or fax within ten (10) days of the submission deadline.

D. Intergovernmental Review

There are no intergovernmental review requirements beyond those already noted.

E. Funding Restrictions

1. Non-Construction Project

Neither an MDCP award nor matching funds is to be used for construction projects.

2. Pre-Project-Period Activities

There is no obligation on the part of ITA to cover pre-award costs. Except as noted above in VIII.G. Approved Pre-Project-Period Expenditure, if an applicant incurs any costs prior to an award being made, it does so solely at its own risk of not being reimbursed by the government.

3. Joint Ventures

Entities may join together to submit an application as a joint venture; however, only one eligible organization can be the designated cooperator. For example, two trade associations may pool their resources and submit one application, but only one of the two will be the cooperator. Foreign businesses and private groups also may join with eligible U.S. organizations to submit applications and to share project costs. Applicants should pay special attention to VIII.B.2. Supplemental Explanation of Cost Share and Match, below, when formulating a partnership or joint venture.

F. Other Submission Requirements

1. Number of Pages

Each of the four parts of the application has a page limit. The maximum number of pages for an entire application is 55 plus the number of pages for all required forms as identified in IV.B.1. Forms, above. These page limits are summarized below.

- a. Forms: limited to the number of required forms (typically 9 or 10 pages)
- b. Project: 25 pages
- c. Budget: 20 pages
- d. Other: 10 pages

The page limits are not fungible. Over-limit pages from one section cannot take the place of under-limit pages from another. For example, if an applicant has 15 pages in the project part, ten (10) less than the limit, it is not allowed to submit 30 budget part pages, ten (10) over the 20-page limit for the budget part.

Every page counts towards the limit including cover pages. In order to stay within the page limits, applicants may need to omit irrelevant pages from financial statements, label the tops of pages instead of using cover pages, or omit reports and promotional brochures that aren't really necessary. Another way to reduce the number of pages in an application is to send eligibility determination documents directly to ITA rather than include them in the application. This can be done even after the deadline for submitting an MDCP application has passed.

2. Method of Submission

In order to expedite the application evaluation process, ITA posts the applications electronically to ITA reviewers and distributes them to each of the merit review panelists.

a. Electronic Submissions

In order to facilitate the electronic access to applications by reviewers, applicants should submit their applications via grants.gov.

b. Hard-Copy Submissions

If, instead of submitting via grants.gov, the applicant submits hard copy, ITA will scan the unbound original with a pass-through scanner to create an electronic copy which can be easily transmitted to ITA reviewers. Any applicant that chooses hard-copy submission must present a signed unbound original application in addition to the two copies. It is important that the original be unbound in order to facilitate scanning.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure prompt delivery of its application to ITA. Applicants should not rely on first-class mail because this service has no guaranteed delivery time. Even if an applicant chooses an express delivery service, it must use one that represents that it can deliver the application to ITA by the deadline.

In the event that the guaranteed delivery time is not fulfilled, the applicant should contact the official listed in VII., below, as soon as the delivery delay or failure is known. If the applicant can document that the chosen delivery service should have delivered the application on time, ITA will grant a reasonable amount of time to receive the application or allow the applicant to resend it in the event that the previously sent application was lost, destroyed, or mutilated. Otherwise, ITA will reject the application as untimely.

3. Retention of Applications

Copies of winning applications are made available to ITA-MDCP teams for use in coordinating project work with the entire MDCP project team. ITA will keep the winning application on file for at least seven (7) years.

For each eligible applicant whose application is not selected for MDCP funding ITA will retain the signed original or its electronic equivalent for seven (7) years.

Late applications are not accepted. ITA may choose to retain a copy of the cover page, transmittal letter, or electronic equivalent of a late application. In such cases ITA's policy is to keep such documentation for seven years. Otherwise, late applications and applications submitted by ineligible applicants are destroyed if submitted as hardcopy and erased if submitted electronically. In no event will ITA be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not obligate ITA to award funds for any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

Applicants should apply online at grants.gov. If unable to apply electronically, hard copy submissions will be accepted. Hard copy submissions must be addressed to: Mr. Brad Hess, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Ave., N.W., Room 3215, Washington, DC 20230.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

ITA is interested in projects that demonstrate the possibility of both significant progress during the award period and lasting benefits extending beyond the award period. To that end, the merit review panel reviews each application for MDCP financial assistance based upon the evaluation criteria listed below.

1. Potential to Strengthen Competitiveness (20 points)

Each applicant must demonstrate the effects the project proposed in its application will have on U.S. employment. An applicant that fails to demonstrate how project-generated exports will sustain or create U.S. jobs cannot earn more than ten (10) points under this criterion. For example, a project to generate exports of U.S.-manufactured widgets strengthens U.S. industry competitiveness better than a project to facilitate the sale of widget manufacturing technology abroad because the sale of widget manufacturing technology abroad is likely to decrease U.S. employment in the widget industry. Such a technology-transfer approach would likely result in a short-term windfall to a U.S. exporter selling the technology, but would ultimately fail to translate into U.S. job growth, rather it may cause the loss of U.S. widget jobs to newly-enabled foreign competitors. This is just one example. Each applicant must consider the ramifications of its project on exports and U.S. jobs and MDCP objectives when it applies for an MDCP award.

Given that the primary performance metric for MDCP projects is exports generated, an applicant will demonstrate competitiveness-enhancement in the likelihood that it will get U.S. companies, particularly SMEs (small- and medium-size enterprises), to engage in activities that will result in exports. As noted above in I.A.2. Examples of Project Activity, many different kinds of activity can strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry; however, an applicant can earn the maximum number of points under this criterion only by demonstrating how its proposed project is expected to result in increased export initiatives by individual U.S. firms and exports by those firms.

2. Performance Measurement (20 points)

Applicants must provide quantifiable estimates of exports to result from project activity and explain how the estimates are derived. No application that lacks an estimate of exports can receive a performance measurement score that exceeds ten (10). Applicants must detail the methods they will use to gather and report performance information.

Merit review panelists will consider the relative significance of the projected exports. The total value of exports projected when compared to the amount of MDCP award requested is one measure of export significance that the merit review must consider. However, merit review panelists may also consider other measures of export significance, including, but not limited to, the extent to which the industry to be helped has already engaged in exports and the ITA priorities listed in I.B. Program Priorities, above.

3. Partnership and Priorities (20 points)

The merit review panel will consider the degree to which the project initiates or enhances partnership with ITA and the degree to which the proposal furthers or is compatible with ITA's priorities stated under I.B. Program Priorities above.

4. Creativity and Capacity (20 points)

The applicant must demonstrate creativity, innovation, and realism in the work plan as well as its institutional capacity to carry out the work plan.

a. Demonstrating Creativity

Creativity may be illustrated by seeking to develop new ideas not previously developed or by promoting a particular industry in a market. Creativity may also be demonstrated in ways that are less straight-forward, such as the client groups served by the proposed project or by the manner in which techniques are customized to meet the specific needs of certain client groups.

b. Current or Past MDCP Projects

An applicant that has received an MDCP award in the past must submit a table comparing its current or past MDCP project(s) to its proposed project. As noted above in I. Funding Opportunity Description, MDCP awards are designed to help underwrite the start-up costs of new projects. Accordingly, a current or past cooperator can earn the maximum number of points under this criterion only if it proposes a project that is entirely new.

In determining the number of points under this criterion, the merit review panel will consider the level to which a particular applicant has incorporated elements of its previously funded MDCP projects. To do this, a current or past cooperator must submit a table wherein it estimates the amount of resources devoted to each project element for each project. See VIII.C. Table Comparing Application to Current or Past MDCP Projects. A current or past cooperator that proposes a project that is not entirely new will receive fewer points under this criterion than it would receive otherwise.

c. Institutional Capacity

ITA measures institutional capacity by what each applicant submits. An applicant that is a current or past cooperator should not assume that success with a prior MDCP project will be taken into account automatically by the merit review panel when reviewing its application. Each applicant must document its institutional capacity in its application.

One indicator of institutional capacity that the merit review panel will take into account is the extent to which the applicant abides by the MDCP application parameters stated in this notice. For example, in order for an applicant to score as high as possible with regard to institutional capacity, an applicant must stay within the page limitations and submit an application that is easily legible.

5. Budget and Sustainability (20 points)

This criterion encompasses the reasonableness of the itemized budget for project activities, the amount of the cash match that is readily available at the beginning of the project, and the probability that the project can be continued on a self-sustained basis after the completion of the award. Each applicant, even if it is a current or past cooperator, must show how the proposed project will achieve self-sustainability. ITA does not assume that completed or ongoing projects undertaken by current or past cooperators are self-sustaining. As noted in V.A.4.c., above, ITA assesses each application based on what each applicant includes in its application.

Each of the above criteria is worth a maximum of 20 points. The five (5) criteria together constitute the application score. At 20 points per criterion, the total possible score is 100.

B. Review and Selection Process

The applicant is responsible for submitting a complete application by the application deadline. Prior to selection, each complete application receives a thorough evaluation as set forth below.

1. Eligibility Determination

No applicant may receive an MDCP award until it has first been found to be eligible as defined under III.C.2. Determination of Eligibility, above. Staff of the Office of Planning, Coordination and Management (OPCM) in ITA's Manufacturing and Services (MAS), in consultation with the Department's Office of General Counsel, reviews all applications to ensure that each applicant has received a determination that it is eligible to receive an MDCP award. Each applicant should ensure that it has an eligibility determination from ITA before submitting its application. Nevertheless, ITA accepts applications from entities that have not yet requested an eligibility determination. An applicant may request an eligibility determination after submitting its application, but not later than ten (10) days after the application deadline. Eligibility determination requests should be submitted separately from the MDCP application. See III.C.2. Determination of Eligibility, above, for more information. Eleven (11) days or more after the application deadline has passed, ITA will decide which applications are from eligible entities and which are not. If ITA lacks sufficient evidence for making an eligibility determination it reserves the right to determine that an entity is not eligible.

2. Program Area Review

Relevant program areas, including ITA's MAS, Market Access and Compliance (MAC), and Commercial Service, have the opportunity to review the submitted applications. These reviewers provide comments based on the evaluation criteria identified above. This allows experts in the industry sector or geographical region to assess applicant claims. These reviewers provide insights into both the potential benefits and the possible difficulties associated with the applications. However, the merit review panel is free to consider or disregard the comments as it

sees fit.

3. OPCM Review

One or more of OPCM staff reviews and comments on applications using the evaluation criteria identified above. Other ITA staff may also participate in this OPCM review. OPCM prepares for the merit review panel a review packet including the applications and reviewer comments. The OPCM staff and program area comments afford the merit review panel the insights and breadth of experience of ITA professionals, however, the merit review panel is free to consider or disregard them as it sees fit.

4. Merit Review Panel Composition

The MDCP Director forwards all of the eligible applications, along with all related materials, to the merit review panel of at least three senior ITA managers. This panel is chaired by the OPCM Director and typically includes three other members, one each from MAS, MAC, and the Commercial Service. Panel members are office directors or higher.

5. Merit Review Panel Scoring

Comments generated from the program area review and OPCM review are made available to the merit review panel. Each merit review panel member reviews each eligible application and assigns a score for each of the five (5) criteria in V.A., above. The scores of each panel member for each application reviewed are maintained in ITA's files for seven (7) years. The individual criteria scores are averaged to determine the total score for each application. The evaluation criteria scores assigned by the panel determine which applications are recommended for funding.

6. Ranked Recommendation

Applicants are ranked based on the scores assigned by merit review panel members. The panel forwards top-ranked applications, those with the highest total scores, to the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services and recommends which of the top-ranked applications should receive funding. The number of top-ranked applications will be great enough that the amount of funds requested will exceed the pool of funds available, therefore, funding would not be available for all of the top-ranked applications. Notwithstanding this provision, the minimum number of top-ranked applications to be forwarded is ten (10).

The merit review panel's recommendation will not deviate from the rank order. This means, for example, that the panel cannot recommend funding for the application ranked seventh without recommending funding for applications ranked first through sixth. The merit review panel recommendation includes the panel's written assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the top-ranked applications.

C. Selection Factors

From the top-ranked applications forwarded by the merit review panel, the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services selects those applications that will receive funding. In addition to the criteria in V.A. Evaluation Criteria above, the Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing and Services may consider the selection factors listed below:

1. Merit review panel's written assessments;
2. Degree to which applications satisfy the ITA priorities established under I.B. Program Priorities above;
3. Geographic distribution of the proposed awards;
4. Diversity of industry sectors and overseas markets covered by the proposed awards;
5. Diversity of project activities represented by the proposed awards;
6. Avoidance of redundancy and conflicts with the initiatives of other federal agencies;
7. Availability of funds; and
8. Past performance.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Applications are reviewed simultaneously. ITA anticipates announcing the awards by July 2012.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Award winners will be notified via electronic mail. This e-mail notification from ITA includes log-in information to access Grants Online, ITA's web-based financial assistance management system that the award winner will use to officially accept the award. Within ten (10) days of the award winners' formal acceptance of awards, ITA will notify unsuccessful applicants via e-mail and invite them to receive an MDCP debriefing.

A universal identifier is used to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. Any award made in response to this announcement will be required to use the Central Contractor Registration and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, unless exempt under 2 C.F.R. 25.110 and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Part 25, Appendix A (2011):

2 C.F.R. Part 25: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title2-vol1-part25.pdf>

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

MDCP awards are made pursuant to the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. These are available at trade.gov/mdcp. In addition, each MDCP award has special award conditions. An example of special award conditions is available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/archive/GMD_grantsPolicy.html or at trade.gov/mdcp or by contacting the agency contact listed in VII., below.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7967) are applicable to this solicitation. These are also available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/archive/GMD_grantsPolicy.html.

C. Reporting

1. Quarterly Performance Report

Throughout the award period, each cooperator reports its performance quarterly for periods not to exceed three (3) months of activity ending on March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. These quarterly performance reports are due thirty (30) days after the last day of the quarter. Much of the content of the report is discussed above in IV.B.2.d. Performance Measurement. A copy of the template used for filing the report online is available at trade.gov/mdcp.

2. Quarterly Financial Status Report

Following the same time periods and deadlines as those set forth above for performance reports, each cooperator files a quarterly Federal Financial Report, SF 425, electronically in the Grants Online system.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. L. 109-282) includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000. See also 2 C.G.R. Part 170, Appendix A, "Award Term."

VII. Agency Contacts

The agency contact is Mr. Brad Hess, Director, Market Development Cooperator Program, Manufacturing and Services, ITA, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 3215, Washington, D.C. 20230. The email and telephone contacts are as follow: Brad.Hess@trade.gov and 202-482-2969.

VIII. Other Information

A. Pre-Application Counseling

Applicants with questions should contact ITA as soon as possible, while continuing to prepare their applications. ITA will not extend the deadline for submitting applications.

From the date of publication of this opportunity notice until applications are due, ITA does not counsel potential applicants regarding the merits of projects they may propose in their applications. During this competition period, ITA may respond to potential applicants' questions regarding eligibility, technical issues, procedures, general information, and referral. For example, during the competition period ITA may refer a potential applicant to sources for research on a foreign market identified by the potential applicant. However, to continue the example, ITA may not comment on the merits of including that market in an application or suggest an alternative market.

B. Supplemental Explanation of Cost Share and Match

1. Cash Contribution

Cash contribution is a new outlay of cooperator funds for project activity. The term describes only the amount of a cooperator's own funds that it spends as match. By definition, MDCP award funds are never part of cash contribution or any other portion of the match. Any expenditure for project activity by an organization other than the cooperator is in-kind contribution, not cash contribution. The cooperator can only use its own funds, not the funds of a partner or of any other entity, as cash contribution. In-kind contribution is not part of cash contribution.

a. One Dollar of Match Must Be Cash

One dollar of a cooperator's minimum two-dollar match must be cash contribution. The other dollar of minimum match may be either in-kind contribution or cash contribution or a combination of both.

b. Program Income

Program income, including project fees generated under the award, must be used for project-related purposes during the award period. An applicant should explain any such fees and include projected income in its budget.

(1) Project Benefits and Reasonable Fees

Benefits from the project must be made available to all companies in the industry whether or not a company is a member or constituent of the cooperator or its partner(s). In some situations, a cooperator may charge lower fees to one class of companies than to another. For example, a trade association could charge a lower participation fee to a member company than it does to a nonmember. This is permitted as long as the difference in fees is reasonable.

(2) Program Income Claim as Cash Match Only If Value Added

Program income expended on project activity may be counted as cash match if it represents value added by the cooperator for project activity. For example, a cooperator could claim as program income fees paid to it by the prospective exporter for technical seminar participation if these fees are paid in recognition of the value added by the cooperator's project. In this example, the value could be evident in the technical-seminar participation package that the cooperator creates. This might include organizing pre-seminar training, finding optimal hotel accommodations, securing group airfare, meeting with seminar organizers beforehand, and organizing a reception. Such a cooperator package helps determine project success. When companies seeking to export pay fees for such a package to the cooperator, they are doing more than getting themselves to a technical seminar; they are agreeing that the project itself has value. Because the cooperator's package adds value and furthers project goals, the cooperator could charge fees, use the fees to pay for the project package, and claim the fees paid as cash match.

Payment by a prospective exporter to a cooperator may only be claimed as program income and cash match if the payment is for a project participation package created or facilitated by the cooperator. If it is a prospective exporter that makes the arrangements, then the cooperator has not added value that the exporter is paying for and the cooperator cannot claim any program income. This can be illustrated in the example of a prospective exporter that attends a technical seminar as part of a cooperator's project. If the prospective exporter negotiates amounts for its own arrangements with vendors, pays the total amount to the cooperator, then has the cooperator pay the amount to the vendors, the cooperator has not added value that the exporter is paying for. Except for the final payment to vendors, it is the prospective exporter, not the cooperator, that has made all of the arrangements. The prospective exporter's payment to the cooperator is not in recognition of any value that the cooperator had added with its project. Accordingly, it could not be claimed as program income.

When structuring participation packages designed to elicit program income an applicant may include expenses that a prospective exporter might otherwise arrange and pay by itself. Common examples include hotel accommodations and exhibition hall booth rental. By grouping such expenses together, negotiating more favorable group rates, and adding additional activities that a prospective exporter is unlikely to arrange on its own, the cooperator adds value. The prospective exporter's payment to the cooperator for the full amount of the participation package recognizes this value. Accordingly, it is program income to be counted as cash match.

(3) Third Party Contributions

In order for a cooperator to outlay cash contributed by a third party, the third party must transfer the funds to the cooperator. Otherwise, expenditures for goods and services contributed by a third party are considered to be in-kind contributions.

2. In-Kind Contribution

An in-kind contribution is a match other than a cash contribution. Examples include the value of staff time of a partner organization, airfare donated by a U.S. airline, and cash paid by partner organizations for project expenses. An applicant can claim only the value of donated property or services. In a proposed budget, applicant should list all in-kind contributions separately from cash contributions. An applicant must describe these in-kind contributions in sufficient detail to determine that the requirements of 15 CFR Part 14.23(a), or 15 CFR Part 24.24 (a) and (b) are met.

An applicant should structure its budget carefully when expenditures by companies that benefit from project activity are involved. An expenditure by such a company that primarily benefits only that company cannot be claimed as in-kind match.

For example, a company may have made and paid for its own arrangements to attend an industry exhibition that a cooperator has included in its project. The cooperator could not claim the amount paid by the company as in-kind match. The company incurs airfare and other expenses for its own benefit, but not necessarily to accomplish project objectives. Such expenditures are more self-serving than are true in-kind contributions to project success. Compare this proposed in-kind contribution with VIII.B.1.b.(2) Program Income Claim as Cash Match Only If Value Added, above.

This policy should not deter applicants from proposing in-kind match. For example, a cooperator can claim the value of airfare donated by a U.S. airline. Although the airline benefits from goodwill associated with donating the service, it is the cooperator's project that benefits directly when the airfare is used to achieve project objectives. Unlike the company in the example above, the airline does not use the donated airfare itself and thereby benefit directly from it. (Airfare donated by non-U.S.-flag air carriers cannot be claimed as a match.)

3. Minimum Match

An example illustrates the minimum match. An applicant requesting \$100,000 of federal funds must supply, at a minimum, \$100,000 of cash contribution. The remaining \$100,000 of the required match can be made up of additional cash or in-kind contribution.

4. Cost Share Ratio (Reimbursement Percentage)

ITA will use the MDCP award funds to reimburse the cooperator for no more than 33 percent of claimed project budget expenditures. Therefore, at a minimum, the cooperator assumes 2/3 of the total cost. The example in VIII.B.3. Minimum Match, above, establishes a cost-share ratio of two-to-one: two cooperator dollars for each federal dollar. In other words, 67 percent of the funding is provided by the cooperator and 33 percent by the federal government. This means that the cooperator will receive one (1) dollar for every three (3) dollars in project expenditures.

5. Additional Match

Cooperators may contribute more than two (2) dollars for each federal dollar received; however, doing so will lower below 33 percent the share of project costs reimbursable by MDCP award funds. For example, a cooperator with a federal share of \$100,000 that contributes \$100,000 cash and \$200,000 in-kind has a total match of \$300,000. This is \$100,000 more than the \$200,000 minimum. Including this additional match in its budgets decreases the reimbursement percentage from 33 percent to 25 percent. In other words, 75 percent of the funding (\$300,000) is provided by the recipient and 25 percent (\$100,000) by the federal government. This means that in order to receive one (1) dollar of federal reimbursement, the cooperator must expend four (4) dollars. ITA will use the MDCP award funds to reimburse the cooperator for no more than 25 percent of claimed project budget expenditures.

6. Documentation of Match (Cost-Sharing Commitments)

An applicant must demonstrate how it will meet match requirements (cost-sharing commitments) if an award is made. Here are two examples of providing such documentation; there may be many other ways to accomplish this. First, if matching funds are to come from cash on hand, the applicant should explain, in reference to its financial statements and/or annual budget, where such funds will come from. Second, if matching funds are to come from a state appropriation, the applicant should provide an authoritative statement from the state government that the amount of matching funds are or will be available.

C. Table Comparing Application and Current or Past MDCP Projects

An applicant that has received one or more MDCP awards in the past must include a table in its application. In this table the applicant provides a column for each MDCP project, the one(s) previously funded as well as the one that is subject of its current application. It breaks out each project by significant elements. These should not exceed six (6) per project. The applicant lists these in the appropriate column along with a very approximate dollar value for each element. The per-element dollar values must sum to the total project budget; however, as they are rough approximations only, they do not need to reconcile to the detailed project budget. The table is not part of the budget. The purpose of the table is to determine the similarity of the projects.

D. Working as a Team with ITA

As noted below in VIII.D.4. Team Participation in Project Activities, ITA will have substantial involvement with the cooperator. This involvement results primarily from the activities of the project team.

1. Project Team

To administer each cooperative agreement, ITA establishes a project team including key personnel from the cooperator, key partners, and ITA officials who can help the cooperator achieve MDCP project objectives. If needed, officials from other federal agencies may be invited to participate in the project team. Each project team acts as the project's "board of directors," establishing direction, recommending

changes when necessary, and working on project activities. The federal officials who are part of the project team are referred to as the ITA-MDCP team.

2. Fiscal Year Operating Plan

Each year during the award period, the project team formulates an operating plan based on the work plan submitted in the application. The plan identifies events, projected dates, team responsibilities, and a rough cost estimate for each event and ongoing activity scheduled during the fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). An applicant does not submit a fiscal year operating plan in its application. An operating plan is developed only after receipt of an award and designation of the ITA-MDCP team.

3. Regular Team Meetings

Project teams should meet in-person every six (6) to twelve (12) months. In between these meetings, project teams should meet via telephone or video conference and communicate regularly via email and other methods.

4. Team Participation in Project Activities

Project team members, including the ITA-MDCP team leader and other members of the ITA-MDCP team, participate as appropriate in project activities. For example, in the past, ITA-MDCP team members have recruited for technical seminars, delivered presentations at seminars, and attended meetings where international standards are discussed. As noted above in VIII.D.2. Fiscal Year Operating Plan, ITA-MDCP team members normally draw on separate government-administered funds to pay the costs associated with their participation.

5. Fees for Some Government Services

The Commercial Service participates on each ITA-MDCP team. Applicants should understand that the Commercial Service is required to charge fees to cover costs for many of the services it provides. The policy set forth below applies to Commercial Service resources that are provided as part of MDCP cooperative agreements.

The Commercial Service will provide, as part of the cooperative agreements, a limited amount of reasonable assistance to MDCP cooperators at no charge. Such assistance does not extend to a cooperator's constituent member companies or to any other for-profit enterprises. These will pay the Commercial Service normal user-fees as applicable.

For assistance that goes beyond the "limited amount of reasonable assistance" as defined below, an applicant should make provision in its budget. To determine fees for services provided by the Commercial Service, an applicant should contact the U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs) or overseas Commercial Service offices. These may be identified by choosing "International Offices" at export.gov.

There may be situations that prevent the Commercial Service from providing no-charge services to cooperators. Perhaps the most common example is another event to which the Commercial Service office has already committed its resources.

The definitions below will guide the domestic or overseas Commercial Service offices in implementing this policy.

a. Overseas Commercial Service Offices

(1) Limited Amount of Reasonable Assistance

Cost-free assistance will not exceed two days' Commercial Service effort per cooperator, per country, per fiscal year. Depending on the availability of resources at the time that it is needed, the assistance could include briefings on market conditions, temporary use of Commercial Service office space, help in making appointments and hotel reservations, and organization of seminars and conferences. Direct costs and specially-prepared market research are not included in the cost-free assistance.

(2) No Charge

No charge means that no fees are collected. The term applies only to indirect costs such as time expended by Commercial Service employees. Cooperators should always expect to pay direct costs, such as hiring an interpreter or transportation.

b. U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs)

USEACs can generally implement the policy as a no-charge extension of normal client support. Most USEAC service to cooperators is provided as part of long-term relationships developed in local exporting communities throughout the United States.

E. Anticipated Start Dates

Each applicant should plan its MDCP project so that its proposed award period begins no sooner than July 1, 2012, and no later than January 1, 2013. ITA cannot guarantee that it will be able to notify award recipients by July 1, 2012; an applicant that begins award activity prior to the official award date assumes the risk of pre-award activities not receiving funding. ITA is not required to pay unauthorized pre-award costs, see VIII.G., below. Approved Pre-Award-Period Expenditure, below, for more details on pre-award costs.

F. Existing Projects

ITA is soliciting only new applications for new projects. ITA does not renew or supplement existing MDCP awards. See V.A.4.b. Creativity and Capacity, above.

G. Approved Pre-Project-Period Expenditure

As a general matter, a cooperator can request reimbursement only for project costs incurred during the project period. However, a cooperator may expend project

funds to attend a cooperator orientation meeting, even if it precedes the beginning of the project period.

H. Definitions Regarding Nonagricultural Goods and Services Produced in the United States

Definitions in this part shall guide MDCP applicants, U.S. exporters wishing to participate in MDCP project activity, ITA, and any other relevant entities in determining what constitutes exporters of "nonagricultural goods and services produced in the United States" to be included in MDCP project activity. The definitions are provided in an order most likely to be helpful in determining "goods and services produced in the United States."

1. Goods

Tangible goods.

2. Services

Economic activities whose outputs are other than tangible goods.

3. Non-Agricultural Goods and Services

The term "Non-agricultural goods and services" means goods and services other than agricultural products as defined in 7 U.S.C. 451. This definition includes "agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, and dairy products, livestock and the products thereof, the products of poultry and bee raising, the edible products of forestry, and any and all products raised or produced on farms and processed manufactured products thereof transported or intended to be transported in interstate and/or foreign commerce."

4. Produce

To manufacture or create economic goods and services; to create by physical or mental effort a service which has value.

5. Product

The term "product" refers to a U.S. nonagricultural good.

6. Manufacture

To make or process a material into a different product; to make or process a product with industrial machines.

7. United States Exporter

This term, which may appear abbreviated as "U.S. exporter" or simply as "exporter," means an entity that:

- a. Is one of the following:

(1) United States citizen;

(2) Corporation, partnership or other association created under the laws of the United States or of any State within the United States; or

(3) Foreign corporation, partnership, or other association, more than 95 percent of which is owned by persons described in (1) and (2) above; AND

b. Exports or seeks to export, goods or services produced in the United States.

8. Goods and Services Produced in the United States

Goods and services produced in the United States must be either:

a. Produced or manufactured in the United States (of United States origin as defined in VIII.H.); or,

b. If produced or manufactured outside of the United States, marketed under the name of a U.S. firm and have U.S. content representing at least 51 percent of the product or service being exported.

For any special considerations, the cooperator works with members of its ITA-MDCP team, including Commercial Service staff, to determine whether or not the product or service should be considered as having been "produced in the United States."

9. United States Origin

In defining goods and services produced in the United States, "United States origin" describes goods or services produced in the United States that are:

a. Goods that are produced or manufactured in the United States, including technology and software;

b. Commodities of foreign origin that have been changed in the United States, including changes made in a U.S. Foreign Trade Zone, from the form in which they were imported, or that have been enhanced in value or improved in condition by further processing or manufacturing in the United States; or

c. Services that are provided:

(1) From the territory of the United States into the territory of another country;

(2) In the territory of the United States to a service consumer of another country; or

(3) By a United States service supplier, through the presence of United States natural persons in another country.

10. Goods and Services That Have at Least 51 Percent U.S. Content But Not of United States Origin

If goods and services cannot be found to be "of United States origin" as defined above under VIII.H.9. they may be found to be goods and services produced in the United States if they have at least 51 percent U.S. content as set forth below in VIII.H.11. Alternative U.S. Content Policy of 51 Percent.

11. Alternative U.S. Content Policy of 51 Percent

Goods and services can be found to have U.S. (United States) content of 51 percent based on the following definitions.

a. U.S. content for manufactured goods = (ex-factory price of a good) - (aggregate value contributed by non-U.S. or foreign sources). For example, non-U.S. or foreign sources include costs or payments to foreign suppliers/providers/employees not resident in the United States.

b. U.S. content for services = (contract value of the service whether delivered in the United States or abroad) - (aggregated value contributed by non-U.S. or foreign sources). For example, non-U.S. or foreign sources include costs or payments to foreign suppliers/providers/employees not resident in the United States.

c. The "ex-factory price of a good" and "contract value of the service" should reflect the actual price paid or payable for the goods or services. No additions to ex-factory price or contract value based on costs or other expenses are therefore appropriate.

12. Self Certification

Whether an entity seeking to participate in MDCP project activity is eligible should be determined using the required self-certification which appears on every MDCP success agreement. The wording of this self-certification is set forth below.

I certify that I am, that my company is, or that I or my company represents: (a) a United States citizen; (b) a corporation, partnership or other association created under the laws of the United States or of any State; or (c) a foreign corporation, partnership, or other association, more than 95 percent of which is owned by persons described in (a) and (b) above; AND I am, my company is, or the entity I or my company represents is, exporting, or seeks to export goods or services produced in the United States, or goods or services that contain at least 51 percent U.S. content.

I understand that this certification is a requirement to participate in the MDCP project activity described above and that an intentionally false certification may result in termination of participation in such activity.

Information provided to the International Trade Administration (ITA) is intended solely for internal use. ITA will protect business confidential information to the full extent permitted by law and Administration policy. U.S. law prohibits U.S.

government employees from disclosing trade secrets.

13. Self Certification: Participation Agreement versus Success Agreement

In its participation agreements the Commercial Service uses a self-certification regarding goods and services produced in the United States. This is similar to the self-certification required in an MDCP success agreement, however, for the participation agreement, the purpose of the self certification is to determine the eligibility for receiving fee-based export promotion services. In the MDCP success agreement the purpose is to determine eligibility for participation in MDCP project activity.

14. United States Goods and Services

This term, which may appear abbreviated as "U.S. goods and services," is the same as "goods and services produced in the United States" defined under VIII.H.8.

I. Other Definitions

Several definitions are provided below to assist readers in preparing MDCP applications. These definitions are specific to the context of applying for an MDCP award and carrying out the MDCP project work once an award has been made. These definitions are provided below in alphabetical order.

1. Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO)

ITA's official publication of an MDCP competition appears in the form of a federal funding opportunity (FFO) notice. The complete FFO is posted on grants.gov and at trade.gov/mdcp.

2. Commercial Service

Commercial Service is the unit of ITA with domestic and international offices that promotes exports of goods and services from the United States, particularly by SMEs; and protects U.S. business interests abroad. Commercial Service professionals participate on MDCP project teams.

3. Cooperative Agreement

This legal instrument used for MDCP awards reflects a relationship between ITA and a recipient whenever:

a. The principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer money, property, services, or anything of value to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by federal statute and

b. Substantial involvement (e.g., collaboration, participation, or intervention by ITA in the management of the project) is anticipated between ITA and the recipient during performance of the contemplated activity.

Cooperative agreements are subject to the same Office of Management and

Budget (OMB), Treasury, and other federal laws and policies as grants. See 31 U.S.C. 6305. See VIII.D. Working as a Team with ITA above for additional information about ITA's involvement.

4. Cooperator

An applicant organization (see definition below) that receives an MDCP financial assistance award. A cooperator is a "recipient" (see definition below) of federal financial assistance. Cooperator status is accorded for the term of the MDCP project period.

5. Cooperator Event

This term applies to an export promotion, market development, or other competitiveness enhancement activity undertaken as part of an MDCP project. Other examples include, but are not limited to, those listed above in I.A.2. Examples of Project Activity.

6. Current or Past Cooperator

An organization that currently has or previously had an MDCP financial assistance award is referred to as a current or past cooperator.

7. Direct and Indirect Costs

Generally, direct costs are readily identifiable with a particular project, function, or activity. Examples include salary/benefits of personnel engaged in accomplishing project work, project travel, and payments to contractors for project work. Federal funds may be used only to cover direct costs. The applicant must pay direct costs incurred that equal or exceed the amount of federal funds.

In contrast to direct costs, indirect costs (also known as facilities and administration or F&A costs), while necessary to the general operation and activity of an organization, are not readily identifiable with a particular project, function, or activity. These are often referred to as "overhead" and usually include such costs as depreciation, administrative salaries, general telephone expense, and operation and maintenance of buildings and equipment. An applicant may claim indirect costs. ITA will determine allowable costs on the basis of the applicable cost principles and definitions in OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122 and in 48 CFR Part 31.

If claimed, the allowable indirect costs constitute part of the cash match. Indirect costs are calculated by multiplying the indirect cost rate by the total direct costs of the project. To claim indirect costs, an applicant must prepare an indirect cost proposal providing a basis for review audit and negotiation leading to the establishment of the organization's indirect cost rate, see VIII.H.10., below. This rate is then applied to the total direct costs of the project. The resulting figure is then included in the project budget as cash match.

8. Domestic Commercial Service Office

Offices of the Commercial Service located in the United States are known as U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs).

9. Fiscal Year (FY)

The fiscal year of the federal government is the twelve-month period from October 1 through September 30.

10. Indirect Cost Rate

The indirect cost rate is the ratio, expressed as a percentage, of an organization's total indirect costs (numerator) to its direct cost base (denominator). The base can be defined as salaries and wages, modified total direct costs or some other financial number that provides for an equitable distribution of indirect costs to the benefiting activities. When a rate is established for a specific cost center, the rate represents the ratio of the total allowable indirect costs allocated to the activity to the direct base costs of the activity. Any indirect cost rate claimed must be approved by the federal agency that is the cooperator's single biggest source for federal financial assistance.

11. Manufacturing and Services (MAS)

MAS is one of ITA's major program areas that focuses on trade and competitiveness of U.S. industries from an industry perspective. MAS's Assistant Secretary makes the final selection of MDCP award winners. ITA-MDCP teams are led by MAS professionals.

12. Market Access and Compliance (MAC)

MAC is one of ITA's major program areas dealing with trade negotiations, compliance with trade agreements, and trade policy. MAC professionals usually serve on project teams.

13. Office of Planning, Coordination and Management (OPCM)

OPCM is the MAS office that administers MDCP.

14. Orientation

MDCP orientation is usually held in August after MDCP awards are announced. An applicant should include travel to the orientation in its application budget. The financial assistance award that a successful applicant receives from ITA via Grants Online serves as official approval to expend project funds for this purpose, even if the orientation precedes the beginning of the award period. This expenditure is limited to allowable expenses (e.g., air fare, ground transportation, lodging, etc.) associated with attending the orientation.

15. Overseas Commercial Service Office

These offices are part of the Commercial Service with ITA employees based

in U.S. embassies, consulates, and other locations abroad. Also included is a U.S. State Department post with which the Commercial Service partners in certain locations where ITA does not have a presence.

16. Priority Market

Foreign markets of particular interest to ITA are identified in the priorities listed under I.B.2., above.

17. Project

A project is a series of activities proposed in an MDCP application or, after an MDCP award is made, in an amendment request, and approved by the Department, which occurs during the award period.

18. Project Team Leader

A project team leader is an ITA employee who leads the ITA-MDCP team, coordinates MDCP project activity with a cooperator, and serves as the cooperator's primary point of contact with ITA. (See VIII.D.1. Project Team above.)

19. Recipient

A recipient is a cooperator, the applicant organization that receives an MDCP award.

20. Small- or Medium-size Enterprise (SME)

SMEs are U.S. companies with fewer than 500 employees.

21. Target market

A foreign market that an applicant identifies in its application as a focus of MDCP project activity is a target market. The markets targeted in an MDCP project do not have to include a "priority market" described under I.B.2. above.

22. Team Meetings

A cooperator has regular conference calls and face-to-face meetings with members of its ITA-MDCP team. An ITA-MDCP team leader usually requests and receives sufficient ITA administrative funds to pay for travel to the cooperator's location for project team meetings once or twice a year as needed. A cooperator usually makes provision in its project budgets to travel to Washington, D.C. for at least one or two meetings per project period in order to familiarize itself with all of the resources available, both federal and non-federal. The first team meeting usually happens as part of the MDCP orientation.

23. Third Party Contributions

A third party's direct expenditure for project activity is counted as in-kind contribution. However, if the third-party contributes funds to the cooperator, the

funds are no longer those of the third party. They become the cooperator's funds, which, when expended on project activity constitute cash contribution.

24. U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC)

"USEACs" are part of the Commercial Service. They are sometimes referred to as domestic Commercial Service offices because they are located across the United States rather than abroad.

25. Value of Donated Property

This term describes the monetary limit to in-kind contribution of property. Property does not include land, buildings, or any other real estate. Only the value of the property that could reasonably be charged in the marketplace can be claimed. The value of donated property is governed by the relevant cost principles.

26. Value of Donated Services

This term describes the monetary limit to in-kind contribution of services. Only the value that could reasonably be charged in the marketplace can be claimed. For example, a consultant who donates their time to a cooperator as in-kind contribution cannot attach a monetary value to their contributed time that is greater than the amount they would actually be paid if they were to charge a paying client for the same type of work. The value of donated services is governed by the relevant cost principles.

Some terms are best understood in the context of a more detailed discussion. For terms that do not appear above, refer to the FFO section where the term is discussed.