



For Immediate Release

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Alaska Awarded Federal STEP Grants to Help Small Businesses Reach International Markets

Sept. 29, 2026 (Anchorage, AK) — The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development has been awarded funding through the U.S. Small Business Administration's State Trade Expansion Program for federal fiscal years 2025 and 2026, providing resources to help Alaska small businesses enter and expand in international markets.

STEP provides federal funding to states and territories to help small businesses overcome the costs and challenges associated with exporting. Since its creation, the program has supported businesses with activities ranging from foreign trade missions and trade shows to international marketing, market research and export training.

Through DCCED's STEP program, qualified Alaska small businesses may receive reimbursement of up to \$10,000. The program is designed to support businesses at several stages of export development. Eligible STEP activities include foreign trade missions, U.S. Department of Commerce services, international website development, international marketing media, trade show exhibitions, export training and qualifying consultancy services.

"Alaska businesses have products, expertise and ideas that can compete anywhere in the world, but entering a new international market can be expensive and complicated," said Emily Fairbanks, director of International Trade for DCCED. "STEP helps lower that barrier and help small businesses take the next step toward exporting."

DCCED will administer the FY25 and FY26 STEP grant cycles concurrently following a federal delay in the FY25 award. The FY25 grant period has been extended through Sept. 29, 2027, and eligible businesses may submit qualifying expenses incurred as far back as Sept. 30, 2025, providing an opportunity for businesses that have already invested in international market development to seek reimbursement.

Businesses interested in applying for or determining whether an upcoming or previously incurred expense qualifies are encouraged to contact DCCED's International Trade team before submitting an application.

Apply and learn more: <https://bit.ly/4jcrK3V>

For questions or assistance, contact **Emily Fairbanks** at emily.fairbanks@alaska.gov.

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About DCCED:

The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development promotes a healthy economy, supports strong communities and protects consumers in Alaska. Through its divisions, agencies and programs, the department supports economic growth, investment, opportunity and consumer protection statewide.

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