

International Buyer Program (IBP) Annual Open Application Period FAQs

Q: What trade events are eligible to apply?

A: All 2015 U.S. trade events are eligible to apply. International Events are not eligible. Trade shows that are either first-time or horizontal (non-industry specific) events generally will not be considered.

Q: What are the benefits of participating in the IBP?

A: Benefits of participating in the IBP include:

- Worldwide promotion of your trade show executed through the U.S. Commercial Service's global network of trade professionals in nearly 80 countries and across the United States
- Recruitment of qualified international buyers, representatives, and distributors to your show
- Dedicated pre-show and at-show support from an International Trade Administration (ITA) IBP project officer to optimize global show promotion, recruitment, logistics, and onsite IBP activities

Q: How does the IBP select shows to participate?

A: Each year, the IBP holds an annual competitive open application process that invites all interested U.S. trade events to apply for consideration. Shows are selected by the Department of Commerce (DOC) through a government wide selection and voting process. Applicants should note that selection as an International Buyer Program partner does not constitute a guarantee by the U.S. Government of the show's success. The DOC selects events that in its judgment best meet the following criteria:

Export Potential. The trade show promotes products and services from U.S. industries that have high export potential, as determined by U.S. Commercial Service sources.

International Interest. The trade show meets demand of a significant number of international markets and aligns with marketing opportunities overseas. Previous international attendance at the show may also be used as an indicator.

Delegation Incentives. The show organizer is willing to offer incentives to U.S. Commercial Service-recruited delegations, e.g., waived admission fees; special receptions; VIP briefings, meetings, and tours.

Scope of the Show. The event offers a broad spectrum of U.S. produced products and services for the respective industry. Trade shows with a majority of U.S. firms as exhibitors, particularly U.S. firms with a high degree of U.S. content, are given priority.

Stature of the Show. The trade show is globally recognized as a leading event for the promotion of its industry's products, services, and technology.

Exhibitor Interest. The trade show's U.S. exhibitors express interest in exporting and in meeting international companies during the show.

Q: Should an event apply if it is not certain whether its event wants to commit to the program?

A: Yes. There is no commitment or fee required when applying for consideration to the program. Once the open application period ends, the DOC cannot consider interested events because of the competitive nature of the program. Therefore, if an event is uncertain as to whether it will participate, it should apply

during the open application period in the fall. If an event is accepted into the program, the DOC will notify the event about its acceptance in the spring, and at that time, require a firm commitment and participation fee.

Also, if accepted into the program, applicants must be prepared to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DOC that outlines the terms of participation. A sample MOA is available on export.gov/IBP. Applicants are encouraged to review the sample MOA closely as IBP participants are required to comply with all terms and conditions in the MOA, including construction of an international trade center at the trade show and producing an export interest directory.

Q: Is there any fee to apply to the IBP?

A: There is no fee required to apply. If accepted into the program, a participation fee is required within 45 days of written notification of acceptance into the program. The DOC expects to notify accepted applicants in April 2014.

Q: What are the fees to participate in the IBP?

A: A participation fee is required upon notification of acceptance (approximately April 2014). For shows five days or less and requiring one International Trade Center, the participation fee is \$9,800. For shows more than five days, or requiring two International Trade Centers (e.g., for two or more co-located events), the participation fee is \$15,000. For trade shows ten days or more in duration, and/or requiring more than two International Trade Centers, the participation fee will be determined by DOC and stated in the written notification of acceptance.

Q: What are the requirements for applying for consideration to the 2015 IBP?

A: To be considered, interested trade events need only submit a completed application form (available on export.gov/IBP) by December 20, 2013. Show organizers submitting applications for the 2015 International Buyer Program must submit: (1) a narrative statement addressing each question in the application, Form OMB No. 0625-0143; (2) a signed statement that “The above information provided is correct and the applicant will abide by the terms set forth in this Call for Applications for the 2015 International Buyer Program (January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015)”; and (3) two copies of the application: one copy of the application printed on company letterhead, and one electronic copy of the application submitted on a CD-RW (preferably in Microsoft Word® format), on or before December 20, 2013.

Q: Where do I send my completed application?

A: Applications may be submitted by any of the following methods:

(1) mail/hand delivery service (please note regular mail is NOT recommended as it can take up to 6-8 weeks for delivery due to government screening procedures) to Gary Rand, International Buyer Program, Trade Promotion Programs, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 800M - Mezzanine Level - Atrium North, Washington D.C. 20004. Telephone (202) 482-0691;

(2) Facsimile: (202) 482-7800; or

(3) email: IBP2015@trade.gov. Facsimile and e-mail applications will be accepted as interim applications, but must be followed by a signed original application that is received by the program no later than five (5) business days after the application deadline. To ensure that applications are timely received by the deadline, applicants are strongly urged to send applications by hand delivery service (e.g., U.S. Postal

Service Express Delivery, Federal Express, UPS, etc.).

Q: Am I required to sign the MOA in order to apply to the IBP?

A: No, the MOA is not required to apply. However, applicants are encouraged to review the sample MOA closely as IBP participants are required to comply with all terms and conditions in the MOA if accepted into the program. Upon written notification of acceptance into the program, selected applicants must be prepared to sign a MOA with the DOC that outlines the terms of participation. A sample MOA is available on export.gov/IBP. Should an event be accepted into the program, the event may still choose to decline participation in the program.

Q: Can I submit an application that includes more than one event?

A: No, a separate application must be submitted for each event requesting consideration for the IBP. Selection of a trade show is valid for one event, i.e., a trade show organizer seeking selection for a recurring event must submit a new application for selection for each occurrence of the event. Even if the event occurs more than once in the 12-month period covered by this announcement, the trade show organizer must submit a separate application for each event.

Q: When will selected participants be notified?

A: The DOC expects to issue the results of this process in April 2014.

Q: What if my event is selected and I decide not to participate?

A: An applicant is under no obligation to participate when submitting an application. If notified that an event is accepted into the program, it must commit by submitting a signed MOA within 10 days of being notified of its acceptance and submit payment of the fee within 45 days of the written notification.

Q: What if my event is not selected for participation?

A: Non-selection should not be viewed as a finding that the event will not be successful in the promotion of U.S. exports. It is not uncommon for an event to apply several years before being accepted into the program. As international markets constantly are changing each year, so does the overseas demand for U.S. products and services. The IBP encourages events to apply as a summary of each event is circulated through U.S. Embassies all over the world. The application process itself can expose your event to those overseas officials that work with the local business communities. Applicants can view their applications as no-cost marketing to raise awareness of the event.

Q: How many international buyers can we expect if we are selected into the IBP?

A: Selection as an IBP partner does not constitute a guarantee by the U.S. Government of the show's success or the number of international buyers that will result from participation in the program. The number of international buyers that are recruited through the program is dependent on multiple factors including the incentives offered by the organizer, overseas demand and economic conditions, international marketing efforts and reputation of the event, and numerous other variables.

Q: What kind of information in the application will help my chances for selection into the IBP?

A: Events are selected according to several different criteria (see FAQ in Selection Criteria). One of the criteria used that is an important factor to overseas buyers is the number and type of incentives offered to international attendees to attract their participation by an event. Since international buyers invest a significant amount of money and time to visit the United States, incentives are important to maximize the

appeal of a show. In addition to waived or reduced admission fees (at least 50% discount) that are required for all trade shows participating in the program, the IBP recommends that applicants provide as many other additional incentives for international buyers recruited through the program as feasible in order to make the show as attractive as possible to overseas buyers.