

Important note: When sending applications to show organisers, please be sure to read all their contracts and Terms & Conditions. Every season, UK exhibitors send completed application forms to organisers without payment (or “just apply online”) without realising that they have entered into a legally binding contract. If you sign up to show, and then pull out, you will be liable not only for the deposit, but for the full cost, (whether or not you show) and in that circumstance, you would not be able to claim a DIT grant.

Guidelines

Applying for a grant under the Department for International Trade (DIT) Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) - from June 2017 onwards

PLEASE READ BEFORE APPLYING FOR A DIT TAP GRANT

The Department for International Trade rules on grant eligibility for the DIT Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) can seem complicated, so we have summarised them here. Full DIT Terms & Conditions accompany your grant application.

Under the current TAP scheme, eligible companies can receive a lifetime global allocation of 6 TAP. If you received a TAP grant before April 2009, you may be eligible again, as the slate was wiped clean at that time, please check with UKFT.

Who qualifies for a grant?

Eligible companies must:

- be a UK based business (a limited company, a partnership or a sole trader)
- own the brand they are selling or prove that they have permission to export the brand
- be a small or medium sized enterprise (SME) as defined below at *
- be a New Exporter **OR** have exported for no more than 10 years, as defined below at **

HOWEVER, If you have been exporting for more than 10 years and have total exports above 25% of your turnover, you may still qualify for a grant if you did not show at the previous edition of the event.

For example, if this applies to you, and you would like to apply for a grant to show at Pitti Uomo in June 2016, you may do so if you did not show at the January 2016 edition.

To qualify for a grant, you may be a limited company, a partnership or a sole trader. You must:

- not have received grants/state aid of any kind totalling more than €200,000 over any rolling 3 year period
- not be in receipt of any other contributions from public funds towards the costs of exhibiting at the event
- not have been fully committed to showing prior to seeking the DIT grant (*we can explain how this works*)
- demonstrate (if required) that they are selling products originating substantially in the UK, or that they are adding significant value to a product of non-UK origin, or are enhancing their competitiveness and providing tangible economic benefit to the UK from this trade development activity.
- take up any non-chargeable offers of assistance made by the Trade Association or the DIT regional network that are intended to be complementary and additional to the offer of trade show support.

A Special Note for start ups: There is no “minimum turnover rule” within the TAP scheme which relates to support for brand new businesses (“start ups”), but some DIT International Trade Advisers are reluctant to agree to grants for complete start ups (if the company has no sales, or if the ITA deems the turnover too small). Some regions may take prior commercial experience in the industry into account, others may not. If your business is new, please contact us before filling in your grant application, as you may need to put together a strong case for support, including a business plan.

DEFINITIONS (Please call us if you have any questions about these)

* **An SME** (Small or Medium Sized Enterprise)

a) Has fewer than 250 employees

b) Has an annual turnover not exceeding 50m Euros or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43m Euros.

DIT reserves the right to review the eligibility of businesses that are distinct and independently operated, but are part of or owned by an organisation itself larger than an SME.

****NEW EXPORTERS** are defined as having less than 10% of turnover resulting from proactive exports during the last 12 months (i.e. sales to new overseas customers that have been actively identified by the business), and no more than 25% of turnover resulting from a combination of proactive and reactive exports. Reactive exports would normally result from unplanned approaches from potential overseas customers and from UK-based third parties, or from overseas responses to UK-focused web sites.

HOW MUCH IS THE GRANT?

The UKFT DIT TAP grant rate for shows in “Developed Markets” (Europe and the USA) is currently £1,200.

The UKFT DIT TAP grant rate for shows in “Developing Markets” (BRICS markets) is currently £2,500.

HOW DO YOU GET THE GRANT?

Demand for grants always exceeds supply so you must apply as soon as you receive the forms.

Do not wait to apply until you have confirmed space in an exhibition; by then it may be too late to apply for a grant!

You will need to provide UKFT with evidence of eligible expenditure amounting to at least the amount of the grant. If the stand payment alone is less than the amount of the grant, related expenses, such as transportation of samples, ATA Carnet, stand and display items, furniture, stand design, display aids/graphics, promotional material etc. may also be taken into consideration. Accommodation and personal travel expenses are not allowable “related expenses”. Please ask us for clarification if you are uncertain.

DO NOT APPLY FOR A GRANT UNLESS you are certain that you will be able to supply copies of invoices and proof of payment for at least the amount of the grant. If you are offered a free stand at a show, you should not apply for a grant.

HOW DOES THE SYSTEM WORK?

Apply for a grant as soon as you know you want to show. At the same time, apply to the show/showroom organisers for space.

- A strictly limited number of grants are available for each event, so you must apply as early as possible. The deadline for applicants new to the scheme is usually 8 weeks before the start of the show (and 5 weeks before the show if you have previously been approved for a TAP grant) but if you leave it until then there will be no grants left! Realistically, you need to apply for a grant (and for show/showroom space) shortly after the previous season’s event has ended.
- At each event, UKFT promotes the presence of British exhibitors, and a Marketing Fee of £250 + VAT is charged. This enables us to promote British exhibitors at overseas shows with a staff member or representative at the show, the costs of any information stand, Britsin video loops, printed handouts and group mailings to UKFT contacts and our Instagram and Twitter campaigns under the hashtag #britsaroundtheworld (this includes #britsinparis #britsinnewyork #britsinberlin #britsinflorence #britsinmoscow #britsinshanghai etc).
- Complete the UKFT application form, the UK Trade & Investment TAP grant application form and the TAP Terms and Conditions (where indicated), and send them both back **to UKFT** with your Marketing Fee. We forward the TAP form to a DIT International Trade Team Advisor (ITA) in your region. The ITA may approve your application on the basis of the form alone or they may contact you to discuss your eligibility. If they contact you, you **MUST** reply to them right away, as the process is time-sensitive. The ITA will then give us a “no”, or a provisional “yes”. We then send your form to the DIT Head Office in Glasgow who will double check your eligibility and let us have a definitive answer.
- No applications can be processed without the UKFT Marketing Fee. However, if UK Trade & Investment deems you are not eligible or if you do not get space at the show (and you let us know, by e-mail, at least 7 weeks before the event), this fee will be returned to you.
- **If you pull out of an event without informing us in good time (within 5 weeks of the show), or if you fail to exhibit for the full duration of the event for any reason, UKFT reserves the right to charge a Cancellation Fee instead of the Marketing Fee. When this happens your grant will have been lost, and promotional work will be underway.**
- A TAP grant cannot be transferred to another company or another event. Wasted grants put the viability of the whole grant scheme in jeopardy – please take account of this when you apply for a grant.
- **You must confirm to UKFT no later than 5 weeks before the show that you have confirmed space at an exhibition. If you are unable to do this, your grant may be cancelled.**
- Government support takes the form of a reimbursement. This means that you must pay for your stand in full in advance, and claim the grant through us after the show. After the exhibition you must provide us with copies of invoices and proof of payment for at least the amount of the grant, within 2 weeks of the exhibition. You may also be required to complete a DIT questionnaire on-line and, possibly, a UKFT questionnaire. We urge you to complete these accurately and quickly. At our end, the reimbursement will be processed no later than 2 months after the show, with payment following usually no later than 3-4 months after the show (this could be earlier if all participants provide proof of payment promptly).

Any Questions? Please contact UKFT. Your TAP grant contacts are:

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