

Guidelines

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

PLEASE READ BEFORE APPLYING FOR A TAP GRANT

The rules on grant eligibility for the DiT Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) can seem complicated, so we have summarised them here. Full DiT Terms & Conditions are also sent to each exhibitor. Eligible companies can receive a lifetime global allocation of 6 TAP grants. 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 TAP 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 2018, you may do so if you did not show at the January 2018 edition.

- 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 actual “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 TAP GRANT?

The UKTI TAP grant rate is currently £1,200 for shows in Europe and the USA (whatever the size of stand).

HOW DO YOU GET THE TAP GRANT?

Demand for grants always exceeds supply so you must apply as soon as you receive the forms. Do not wait 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 TAP GRANT UNLESS you are certain that you will be able to supply 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 is available for each event, so you must apply as early as possible. The deadline for applicants new to the scheme is 8 weeks before the start of the show (5 weeks before the show if you have previously been approved for a TAP grant) but, in most cases if you leave it until then there will be no grants left! Realistically, you need to be applying 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, together with the DIT TAP grant application form, and send them both back to UKFT with your Marketing Fee. We forward the TAP form to the DIT International Trade Team Advisor (ITA) in your region. The ITA may agree with our recommendation 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. If the application is accepted, we then send your form to the UKTI 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 DIT deems you are not eligible or if you do not get space at the show (and 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 (usually 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 will need to be able to 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.**
- TAP funding 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 proof of payment for at least the amount of the grant, within 3 weeks of the exhibition closing. 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 1 month after the show, with payment following up to a month or so later, so approx. 2 and a half months after the show (this could be earlier if all participants provide proof of payment promptly).

Important note: When sending applications to show organisers, please be sure to read all their contracts and Terms & Conditions. Every season, UK companies send completed application forms to organisers without payment (or “just apply online”) without realising that they had entered into a legally binding contract. If you sign a contract 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, of course, in that circumstance, you would not be able to claim a DiT grant.

Questions? Please contact us. Your TAP grant contacts are:

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http://www.ukft.org/brits_around_the_world.php?page=about&psub=brits