

that choose to submit letters of support should secure them soon enough to include them as application appendices.<sup>27</sup>

e. News media are informed by the Department when it announces awards. Applicants are invited to submit a list of news media the Department can contact when it issues its press release.<sup>28</sup> The most useful information is the fax number and e-mail address of the news media contacts. These would include local newspapers, trade publications, local broadcast stations, and Internet sites. Rather than including these as "hard-copy" in the application, the Department invites applicants to submit this on floppy diskette, CD, or via email. Using the lowest version of any of the following file formats will ensure transferability: database (.dbf), Excel (.xls), Lotus 123 (.wk4), Word Perfect (.wpd), or Microsoft Word (.doc).

f. Current or past cooperators must submit a comparison between the proposed project and current or past projects. See V.A.4. *Creativity and Capacity* below.

## B. Submission of Applications

1. *Number of Pages:* The main body of the application is limited to 50 pages. There is no limit on the number of pages for appendices. The main body of the application should include the substance of the applicant's proposal as identified in IV.A.1. through IV.A.4. above. Each page of the main body should be numbered.

2. *Number of Copies:* Each applicant must submit a signed original application plus two copies. The Department encourages applicants to submit five additional copies as well for a total of seven (7) copies.<sup>29</sup> However, if submitting seven (7) copies creates a financial hardship, applicants may submit the minimum of two copies plus the original.

If an applicant submits an original and two copies or any other number of

copies greater than two and less than seven (7), the Department will make additional copies to allow all reviewers to read each application. However, the Department cannot guarantee that the copies will include features that are not easily reproduced on standard photocopy machines. For example, tabs might not be inserted, color pages might be reproduced in black and white, fold-out pages might not fold out, unusually sized (not 8.5" x 11") pages might be broken up, and the copies might be bound with staples or clips instead of the binding used for applicant-submitted material.

3. *Distinguish Between Copies and Original:* The Department needs to distinguish between the original application and copies. In order to facilitate processing of submitted applications, the Department recommends that applicants write or stamp "original" on the cover page of the original.

## C. Retention of Applications

1. *Award Winners:* Copies of winning applications are distributed to project team members for their use in managing projects.

2. *Unsuccessful and Ineligible Applicants:* For each eligible application which does not win an award, and for each ineligible application, the Department will retain the signed original of the application for seven years and will destroy the copies.

3. *Late and Ineligible Applications Returned to Sender:* Late applications are not accepted. Late applications and applications submitted by ineligible applicants are returned to the sender. However, the Department will retain a copy of the cover page or transmittal letter for seven years.

## V. Evaluation and Selection

### A. Evaluation Criteria

The Department is interested in projects that demonstrate the possibility of both significant results during the award period and lasting benefits extending beyond the award period. To that end, consideration for financial assistance under the MDCP will be based upon the following evaluation criteria:

1. *Export Success Potential:* Potential of the project to generate export success stories and/or export initiatives in both the short-term and medium-term. An export initiative is a significant expenditure of resources by the chief executive officer (CEO) of a company in the active pursuit of export sales. Examples of export initiatives include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Participating in an overseas trade promotion event;
- b. Hiring an export manager;
- c. Establishing an export department;
- d. Exploring a new market through an overseas trip by the CEO;
- e. Developing an export marketing/business plan;
- f. Translating product literature into a foreign language;
- g. Making product modifications to comply with foreign market requirements;
- h. Commissioning an in-depth market research study;
- i. Entering into a strategic alliance<sup>30</sup> with a foreign firm;
- j. Advertising in a foreign business publication;
- k. Undertaking an overseas direct-mail campaign to create product awareness;
- l. Signing an agent/distributor;
- m. Getting introduced to a potential foreign buyer; and
- n. Signing an export contract/filling an export order.

Applicants should provide detailed explanations of projected results of the project.

2. *Performance Measures:* Projected increase (multiplier effect) in the number of U.S. companies operating in the market(s) selected, particularly SMEs, and the degree to which the project will increase or enhance the U.S. industry's presence in the foreign market(s).

Applicants must provide quantifiable estimates of projected increases and explain how they are derived. See IV.A.3.b. *Performance Measures* above. Applicants must detail the methods they will use to gather and report performance information.

3. *Partnership and Priorities:* 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 IV.A.3.c. *Partnership* above.

4. *Creativity and Capacity:* Creativity, innovation, and realism displayed by the work plan as well as the institutional capacity of the applicant to carry out the work plan.

a. Creativity and innovation can be displayed in a variety of ways. Applicants might propose projects that include ideas not previously tried to

provided by the state legislature, a letter of commitment from the state's governor or comptroller certifying the availability of the funds would help the selection panel greatly in its review.

<sup>27</sup> Including these as appendices may make it easier for all reviewers to find such letters in the same place in the application. The Department's standard practice for letters of support not included as application appendices is to make them available to reviewers until the time the Selection Panel identifies the top-ranked applications.

<sup>28</sup> Including news media contacts as an application appendix is not required, but doing so will help the Department publicize the success of the award winners.

<sup>29</sup> Several copies will be needed in order for the Department to complete its evaluation. (As noted below under V.B. *Evaluation and Selection Procedures*, four selection panel members and several Department staff will review each application.)

<sup>30</sup> A collaboration of one company with another company that can provide resources to achieve corporate, economic and strategic goals. One benefit of strategic alliances is reciprocal access to more than one market. For example, firms in two different markets can agree to market each other's non-competing products in their respective "home" markets.