

Fast Track Programme – Food and Drink



Exporting, what's in it for me?

You're right to ask.

When you're working hard to make your business a success, you need to know that every decision you make is the right one for you, your business and your future.

Every company's experience of exporting is different. But the good news is that – whatever your size – the rewards from selling your products and services overseas can be huge.

Trading abroad can boost your profile, credibility and bottom line. That goes whether you're trading with established partners, such as the EU and USA, or high-growth markets like Brazil, China, India, Colombia and Vietnam.

International markets like these offer you access to new customers, revenue and ideas. Crucially, they enable you to spread your business risk, increase the commercial lifespan of your products and services and secure economies of scale which is not always possible at home.

And research confirms that exporting companies are more productive, innovative and resilient to economic downturns than non-exporters.

You're already competing successfully with international companies here in the UK. So why not take that leap to markets overseas?

Food and Drink. The demand is out there, you could be too

According to the Food & Drink Exporters Association (FDEA) the total food and drink export sales in 2015 equalled £12.3bn with Ireland, France, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, USA, Belgium, Italy, China and Denmark in the top ten export markets.

It doesn't matter how big or small your company is, there are some amazing opportunities to get your brand out into the global market. Right now, there are hundreds of live opportunities available through the Exporting is Great site, including ready meals for the Polish market, cheese for the Danes, and marmalade for the Brazil market.



Fast Track. Get ready, set, go!

What is the Fast Track Programme?



Fast Track is a structured yet flexible programme, providing new and inexperienced exporters with training and ongoing support – all designed to help you to improve and grow your business.

As a new initiative within the West Midlands, the service is designed to provide food and drink producers with one point of access to expert assistance for all export related issues, helping to simplify your journey, maximise available support and save you time by offering a fast track to sales opportunities and buyers from around the global.

After signing up, as a new or inexperienced exporter you will have unqualified access to training, planning and support to help kick-start your overseas venture.

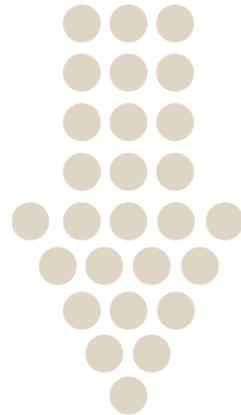
The first step will involve connecting you to a dedicated Adviser who will review your business and export readiness. From this you will put together and agree an action plan which will provide a very comprehensive guide to the steps and actions which need to be taken, as a living document it will be continually reviewed and updated in sessions with your Adviser.

Now we have the journey mapped out you will be plugged into training and have access to support on an unprecedented level to fast track the export readiness of your business. Take a look at our five step plan to gain further insight which outlines the journey and how we will be working with you.



Your journey

In five steps we can help you achieve your exporting goals...



Getting prepared

Step one...

How to get connected

Like any other business project, you will need to research and plan, pulling together the essential know-how, resources and team to export successfully.

The experience and expertise you've gained so far, setting up and running your business, as well as a passionate belief in your product or service, will be invaluable.

Within the West Midlands we have a local network of specialist International Trade Advisers (ITA) who will act as your first and dedicated point of contact to take you through every step of your journey.

Your dedicated ITA will be able to:

- highlight the best opportunities to pursue and facilitate conversations with the right people
- discuss next steps and plan relevant marketing activity
- give you advice on IP, import tariffs, documentation and trading regulations

To get in contact with your local Adviser please call or email to Central Support Team on: enquires@uktiwm.co.uk or 0345 222 0159.

Alternatively you can request a call back by completing a short questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/fooddrinkfasttrack.

Getting prepared

Step two...

Check if you are ready

Developing an action plan



Following an initial conversation with an ITA, you will most likely be recommended to join an Export Essentials Masterclass which is free of charge and will help you to form the foundations of your journey on this bespoke programme.

During the session, experts will help you develop and build a tailored action plan which will map key actions and considerations and highlight how you can work with your ITA to help fast track your growth.

You will also be granted access to a number of online training tools, which are an invaluable source of information and reference to help sense check your plans. These include:

ExportSavvy – Understand exporting through an online learning tool and series of interactive training modules.

www.exportsavvy.co.uk/eig

Open to Export – A wealth of advice and guidance to start new exporters on their journey to exporting success.

www.opentoexport.com

Getting prepared

Step three...

Prepare the way

Where do you want to go?

The best place to start is with research and by working us you will have access to multiple sources of market intelligence.

As a starter for ten your ITA will help steer your market selection process using their many years of experience and expertise in the field of selling into overseas markets but there are a number of tools to help validate your decisions.

We would also recommend visiting Exporting is GREAT where you will find live export opportunities accompanied with country guidance:
www.exportingisgreat.gov.uk

The basics you need to understand are:

- how do things work in that market?
- the market's culture
- your competition
- your market niche
- any modifications you need to make to sell your product, such as packaging and labelling
- any overseas events, trade fairs or trade missions which could be a useful way to familiarise yourself with your target market before you fully commit

Don't worry this task may look very complex but your ITA will work with you throughout the process.

Getting prepared



The importance of culture

If you are going to export successfully, you need to understand the language, traditions and ways of doing business in your new markets.

By making this a central part of your research, you can help to build your new customers' trust and confidence in your company and also make sure your business stands out amongst the crowds of competitors all looking to win their business.

Within the West Midlands we have an International Communications expert who will meet with you and undertake an International Communications review of your business. This will help you to build a better understanding of the key considerations and the potential demands this will place on your business. For example, how to negotiate during business meetings, managing your brand successfully, handle enquiries of foreign clients, translation and internationalisation of your website, flyers / brochures just the name a few.

Even the biggest organisations get it wrong, which could damage your reputation and also be very costly to correct. It could be as simple as a particular phrases or words having a very different meaning in a different language.

You will also have access to a number of market specific masterclasses, which you can join free of charge to learn more about business culture,

Getting prepared

language, traditions and ways of doing business in your chosen market(s). Simply book online at <http://uktimasterclasses.eventbrite.com>.

Let us know in advance of any independent business trip where you are likely to meet with foreign buyers, we can arrange for our International Communication expert to touch base with you in advance to offer some practical advice and guidance.

Masterclasses

Joining a free Masterclass is a great way of forming the foundations of a successful export journey. With topics such as market research, logistics, e-commerce, intellectual property rights, sales and marketing, finance, routes to market, international exhibition skills and web strategy. You can view more and book online at <http://uktimasterclasses.eventbrite.com>.

Sorting your finances



If you are looking to grow your business overseas, then you need to find the finance to fund it, e.g. extra investment for customisation, advertising, research and other essentials.

Talk to your accountant and bank manager as soon as you can to discuss your options.

It's important to take a long-term view. This includes being realistic about the time it will take you to get established and make a profit in your planning, so you have the resources you need to keep going.

UK Export Finance (UKEF) can also help with specialist support and advice about export finance. UKEF provides insurance to exporters, guarantees to banks to share the risks of supplying export finance and, in certain cases, makes loans to overseas buyers of goods and services from the UK.

Getting prepared

Fulfilling orders



Planes, Trains, Ships and Automobiles.

You'll need the right transport to get your product or service where it needs to be, when it needs to be there.

Most companies use specialist freight forwarders to handle transport. It's good to look for someone who exports regularly to your target destination. This offers you the chance to consolidate your goods with other consignments in a single container to reduce costs.

In all instances, your goods will need the appropriate packaging and labelling for transportation.

Crucially, if you work with a supplier, you need to clarify in advance who will be responsible for organising UK customs procedures, freight, insurance and customs clearance in your target market.

Order fulfilment should be a key consideration when looking at the pricing of goods as increased costs in transportation and factors such as tariffs and duties can make the difference between making a profit and selling at a loss.

You can find out more about freight forwarders, Incoterms and other export-related issues at: www.gov.uk/starting-to-export or by asking your ITA.

Ready to get started?

Step four...

Getting noticed

Join the UK Exporter Directory



Register your business in a new export directory that aims to promote British goods on an unprecedented scale.

Potential overseas customers and buyers from global markets will be able to search for UK companies and organisations that will supply the products, services and skills they need.

The Directory is supported by international marketing activity to increase and sustain the ongoing demand for UK goods and services. The Directory heralds an incredible opportunity for the UK economy and is part of wider government plans for a digital service that will provide a world-leading platform for British businesses.

Register your interest in joining the UK Exporter Directory at <https://directory.exportingisgreat.gov.uk/>.

Ready to get started?

Go digital



Assess the pros and cons of having a bricks and mortar presence vs. an omni-channel, digital presence within your new market.

It's not just about sales. E-marketplaces such as Tmall in China are an effective way to secure consumer behavioural data before you even launch your product. The Department for International Trade holds information on over 400 e-marketplaces worldwide. Each of which can enable you to trade across multiple countries via one online platform.

Our E-Exporting Programme accelerates your global growth via online channels. It enables you to meet with a Digital Trade Adviser to discuss export plans, receive help and advice on building your online and e-commerce presence, increase the reach of your brand globally, identify new e-marketplaces around the world, set up on e-marketplaces quickly and attend events and webinars about retail/e-commerce opportunities.

Use social media to your advantage. Satisfied customers will be your biggest, loudest advocates online. Work with them to raise your profile and build relationships through recommendations, offers, newsletters and other online content.

Exporting is GREAT website

The Exporting is GREAT website is an invaluable source of information on upcoming events, advise and also home to a free sales leads service. International sales leads are the lifeblood of any business, which is why our staff overseas in British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates around the world are always looking for opportunities for UK businesses.

Register today at www.exportingisgreat.gov.uk and access real-time business opportunities for your business.

Ready to get started?

Step five...

Securing overseas sales

Meet your buyers



As a Fast Track client we will send you news on the latest opportunities to meet with potential buyers as and when they arise. We will work to ensure that we connect you to relevant overseas buyers as often as possible, this could be face to face meetings at events and major expos or enabling you to make initial contact via a Skype call.

Expos, Events and Trade Missions

Throughout the year we have a presence at various large expos where you can meet buyers and market specialists. We also run events on hot topics, most of which are free to attend and happen all over the West Midlands.

Perhaps you'd like to visit a market that you're looking to do business in? Why not join a DIT led trade mission where you will have a programme and the chance to network and meet with local buyers.

To find out more about any of this activity simply follow this link:
<http://uktiwestmidlands.eventbrite.com>.

Ready to get started?

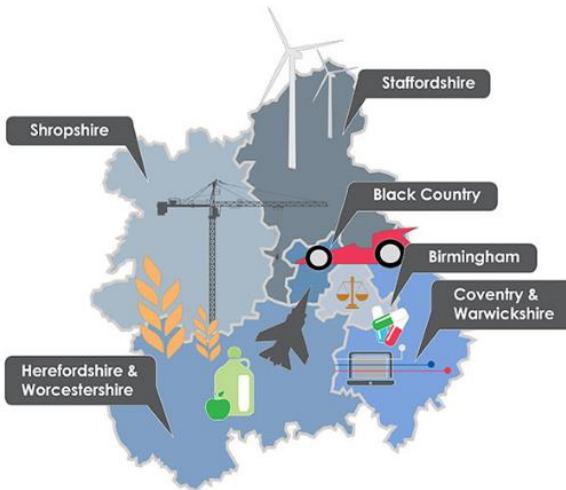


We are ready to support you with this great step into international trade.

Please complete this short survey which asks a few key questions and an ITA will be in touch shortly after to discuss joining the programme:

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/reg_fastrack.

Connect to our network:



E: enquiries@uktiwm.co.uk

T: 0345 222 0159



Department for
International Trade

gov.uk/dit

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Production

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Published September 2016

By: Department for International Trade