2016 TPO NETWORK AWARDS
EXCELLENCE IN EXPORT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES
APPLICATION FORM AND GUIDELINES
TPO NETWORK AWARDS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Network Awards is to recognize institutional excellence and encourage the sharing of best practices among national export promotion agencies.

TPOs participate in the TPO Network Awards in categories defined according to the economic development status of the countries where their national headquarters are located. The applications are reviewed against specific criteria by an Adjudicating Panel composed of distinguished TPO practitioners, including a senior representative from each TPO award winner of the previous round. The panel members, based on their experience and knowledge, rate the applications according to an evaluation metric to select the winners. The award winners are announced at the TPO Network World Conference, the biennial meeting where TPOs gather together to share experiences and discuss trade-related issues.

AWARDS MODEL

To ensure a fair comparison of diverse TPO practices ITC has developed a standard approach for describing processes and procedures and for reviewing applications. The TPO Network Awards are designed to consider three types of TPO initiatives, and each year a specific type of initiative can be selected for review. The three types of initiatives are:

- **Export promotion initiatives**: activities aimed at generating sustainable exports in a relatively short term;
- **Export development initiatives**: activities aimed at building the capacities of exporting enterprises in the medium and longer term;
- **Corporate social responsibility initiatives**: activities aimed at raising awareness on issues of general interest and contribute to the public good, for example, issues such as discrimination, the environment, etc.

AWARDS MODEL 2016

The 2016 TPO Network Awards focus on outstanding performance of the TPO’s processes and practices in providing excellence in Export Development Initiatives.

A key challenge faced by exporting SMEs is to compete effectively in international markets. Export development initiatives respond to the related needs of these SMEs by building their competencies to be enduring, competitive international players in today’s volatile economic trade environment. Furthermore, TPOs must demonstrate value for money through their initiatives to ensure their own sustainability. TPOs measure and report the success of their export development initiatives through the positive changes experienced by their clients. Establishing and applying appropriate processes allow TPOs to measure such changes and the requisite outcomes.

The 2016 TPO Network Awards aim to identify and recognize those processes that have successfully contributed to strengthening the competitiveness of exporting enterprises or have made a significant and positive change towards reaching this objective.

Applicants are asked to describe one specific export development initiative that illustrates how an individual or group of SMEs were assisted in strengthening their competitiveness and, as a result, entered or re-entered the global market as strong competitors.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHICH INSTITUTIONS ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE TPO NETWORK AWARDs?

The TPO Network Awards are open to all trade support institutions that are officially recognized as the national organizations for trade promotion. These organizations are commonly known as Trade Promotion Organizations or TPOs. Some of these organizations also engage in investment and/or tourism activities.

WHAT ARE THE TPO NETWORK AWARDS CATEGORIES?

The TPO Network Awards will be granted to TPOs from three different country groupings. The countries, according to the United Nations classification system are grouped into:

- Least Developed Countries (LDCs);
- Developing Countries;
- Developed Countries;

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION?

The benefits of participating in the TPO Network Awards include:

- **Demonstrate impact**: News of your participation can be used for national public relations purposes, to demonstrate your effectiveness to policymakers and increase your influence with stakeholders;
- **Recognition**: The peer reviewed process promotes recognition of your success among the TPO Network community and beyond;
- **Visibility**: As a winner, you will be entitled to use the TPO Network Award winner logo on your corporate communications;
  
  Your achievements will feature prominently in ITC’s online and offline promotional activities.

WHAT DOES THE AWARD FOCUS ON?

The TPO Network Awards – Excellence in Export Development Initiatives – focus on key processes required to offer an effective export development initiative. The award will be granted to the TPO that demonstrates outstanding performance in the use of innovative and efficient systems and procedures for an export development initiative that has produced a demonstrable impact on the competitiveness of enterprises and/or sustainable exports.

The key areas assessed are:

- Determining the need/demand for the export development initiative;
- Confirming the consistency and compatibility of the export development initiative with the overall strategy of the TPO;
- Performance monitoring of the initiative;
- The demonstrated effectiveness of the initiative.

Part 3 of the application form and guidelines, GUIDELINES FOR CREATING YOUR APPLICATION, provide detailed information on the areas under assessment and the evaluation criteria for each area. All candidates are advised to carefully review this section before finalizing and submitting their application.

HOW MANY AWARDS CAN AN INSTITUTION APPLY FOR?

TPOs may only submit one application in the country category in which they belong: Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Developing Countries, and Developed Countries.
MAY A PREVIOUS APPLICATION BE RE-SUBMITTED BY A TPO?

A TPO may re-submit a previous application provided that the initiative is still current. The updated application must comply with the instructions in this application form and guidelines for it to be considered by the Adjudicating Panel.

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

TPOs that wish to participate in the 2016 awards competition must submit their applications by 16 June 2016 and in accordance with the application guidelines. Applications are to be sent by email to wtpo-awards@intracen.org. Full details of the application process are provided in the application guidelines (pages 4-12).

Applications are forwarded to the Adjudicating Panel for evaluation soon after the closing date.

The Application Form and Guidelines can be downloaded from the TPO Network website, http://www.tponetwork.net, or obtained in hard copy from: ITC, Trade Support Institutions Strengthening Section, International Trade Centre, 54-56 Rue de Montbrillant, Geneva 1202, Switzerland.

WHEN ARE THE RESULTS ANNOUNCED?

The awards ceremony will take place during the gala dinner at the 11th TPO Network World Conference, in Marrakech on 24 November 2016. The shortlist will be announced up to two weeks prior the event.
SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please read the application guidelines and complete your application according to the instructions provided on pages 4-11. The application consists of three parts:

PART 1: TPO CONTACT INFORMATION (page 5)
This form is also available for download at http://www.tponetwork.net

PART 2: THE CERTIFICATE (page 6)
This form is also available for download at http://www.tponetwork.net. It must be signed by the CEO or duly designated official, scanned and emailed with the rest of the application as a PDF document.

PART 3: GUIDELINES FOR CREATING YOUR APPLICATION (pages 7–11)
Applications must not exceed 7 double-sided pages (a total of 13 pages). The 7 double sided pages must include a 1-page executive summary and all other material (pictures, tables, supporting evidence and testimonials from clients etc.). Please provide both a PDF and Word version of your application.

Your application must be written in English and formatted according to the following guidelines:
Font: Arial, 11, Black;
Titles in document: Bold;
Main titles/headers: Arial 12, bold;
Line Spacing: 1.5;
Margins, all: 2.54 cm;
Length: 7 pages double-sided maximum (applications exceeding 13 sides will be disqualified).

NOTE: The Adjudicating Panel reserves the right to request further documentation to assist them in their decision-making. The request should be made through ITC and forwarded directly to the Adjudicating Panel.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

The deadline for submitting the full application is 16 June 2016. The full application must be sent, in English, by e-mail (with attachments in Word and PDF formats) to:

International Trade Centre
World TPO Awards 2010
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Email: wtpo-awards@intracen.org
Fax: +41 22 730 0576

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided to the Adjudicating Panel will be treated in strictest confidence and used only for their consideration. ITC may, with prior approval of the applicant, publicize the awards and successes of the applicants. In the spirit of the awards, ITC may use specific information concerning applicants’ best practices for capacity-building purposes.

1 Please note that English usage will not be evaluated.
OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM
2016 TPO NETWORK AWARDS

PART 1: TPO CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE BELOW AND SUBMIT TO ITC WITH PARTS 2 AND 3 OF THE APPLICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of TPO:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of CEO:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email of CEO:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year founded:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person, Name and position in TPO:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person, email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person, Telephone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR COUNTRY CATEGORY BY CHECKING ONE OF THE BOXES BELOW.

| TPO from a Least Developed Country |
| TPO from a Developing Country  |
| TPO from a Developed Country   |
PART 2: THE CERTIFICATE
THE CEO OR DESIGNATED SENIOR OFFICIAL MUST SIGN, DATE AND SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WITH PARTS 1 AND 3 OF THE APPLICATION

International Trade Centre
Geneva, Switzerland

On behalf of ………………………………………………………………………. (TPO), I hereby confirm to the best of my knowledge that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate. I certify that I have familiarized myself with the eligibility criteria, guidelines and instructions for participating in the 2016 TPO Network Awards and I will comply with these. I also certify that the information contained in this application does not violate the intellectual property rights of third parties and that acknowledgement is provided concerning all references and reference material.

I understand that the information provided in this application will be used by the Adjudicating Panel to select the winners of the 2016 TPO Network Awards. I consent to its use for that purpose and for publication, as appropriate, in a booklet on the awards winners, on the TPO Network website, in ITC’s promotional material and activities and for the sharing of practices between TPOs.

Name (Please print) …………………………………………………………………
Signature …………………………………………………………………
Position …………………………………………………………………
Date …………………………………………………………………
The 2016 TPO Network Awards aim to recognize outstanding performance in the use of TPO processes and practices.

The awards focus on the use of innovative systems and procedures in recording and reporting the effectiveness of Export Development Initiatives. One of the objectives of these types of initiatives is the building and/or sustaining of the export competitiveness of enterprises. Other objectives include: raising awareness, changing attitudes, sustaining exports, and/or changing SME managerial process and/or practices. Some organizations offer mainly export promotion initiatives, yet many of these initiatives include components aimed at developing the export capacities of enterprises. Therefore, export promotion and advocacy and lobbying initiatives that include a clearly defined and substantial export development component will also be accepted.

The applicant is invited to select one Export Development Initiative from the TPO’s service portfolio that has been offered in response to a need identified within the last two years. Beginning with the overview of the initiative (page 8, A) and finishing with the effectiveness of the initiative (page 10, D) the applicant is requested to complete all areas described of these application guidelines (pages 8-11).

The Adjudicating Panel will look for exceptional performance in the design, development and use of innovative systems and procedures in the following key areas:

- Determining the need for the initiative (page 8);
- Confirming the alignment of the export development initiative with the overall strategy of the TPO (page 9);
- Performance monitoring of the initiative (page 10);
- The demonstrated effectiveness of the initiative (page 10).

When selecting the export development initiative, the applicant should consider the following:

- An initiative that aims to build the effective export competitiveness of SMEs; and/or
- An initiative that contributes to broader changes, which lead or contribute to sustained export competitiveness such as: raised awareness, attitude change and/or changes in SME managerial practices.

The application must include: A brief executive summary of 1 page or less and supporting documents and testimonials from clients confirming the outcome and impact claimed. The presentation of the application must follow the same structure as described in Part 3 of these guidelines as follows:

Overview of the initiative
A. Determining the need for the initiative (page 8);
B. Confirming the alignment of the export development initiative with the overall strategy of the TPO (page 9);
C. Performance monitoring of the initiative (page 10);
D. The demonstrated effectiveness of the initiative (page 10).
OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

Please name the Export Development Initiative for which you seek an award and provide an overall description of the initiative to provide a context for the Adjudicating Panel to make their assessment. Your overview should provide brief answers to the following questions.

1. **Aim of the initiative:** What prompted the launch of the initiative?

2. **Features of the initiative:** What are the main distinguishing features concerning its scope, nature (training, consulting, counselling) and level of sophistication, etc.?

3. **The specific export development objectives:** What specifically did you want to change? That is, what does the initiative expect to achieve: creating awareness, attitude change, changing a specific managerial behaviour, improving competitiveness, sustaining competitiveness and/or sustainability of exports.

4. **Target clientele of the initiative:** What are the main characteristics of the target clientele (user profile, size, etc)? What prompted you to select this target group for the initiative? How were they identified, and reached?

5. **Procedures used for the design, development and delivery of the initiative:** What caused you to believe that the way the initiative was designed would enable you to achieve the objective specified in 3 (above)? How is the initiative delivered, (on/offline, one-to-one counselling, workshops, etc.)?

A. DETERMINING THE NEED/DEMAND FOR THE INITIATIVE

*Who needs the initiative and how do you know this?*

Please describe the processes you used to determine the “needs and wants” of your clientele. This description should provide good reason for the export development initiative to be offered.

The Adjudicating Panel will consider the answers to the following questions:

- **Competitive or complementary initiatives:** What processes did you use to gather information on existing initiatives available in both the public and private sector?
- **Market usage and client satisfaction:** What processes did you use to assess the use and satisfaction of the initiatives available in the market for the same clientele?
- **Need/demand assessment:** What processes did you use to identify the needs of the target clientele that were not being fully met by existing initiatives? What processes did you use to verify the demand for the initiative?

**NOTE:** Scoring for this section of your application will be done on the basis of:

- The depth and clarity of the description of the process demonstrating that it is innovative and well designed;
- How the results of the process were used to identify an unmet need and want of the target clientele;
• Whether the process is used systematically and periodically to verify and ensure that the initiative continues to meet the specified need over time.

**Note:** Innovation will be assessed in terms of what is new about the process and if the process achieves its purpose, for example, its effectiveness to achieve what it was designed to accomplish.

The panel will consider what, specifically, is different about the process or procedure compared to how other TPOs conduct the same activity, as well as how your TPO has introduced changes in its existing activities. When considering the innovativeness of the process you are also encouraged to demonstrate its efficiency.

B. CONFIRMING THE ALIGNMENT OF THE EXPORT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE WITH THE OVERALL STRATEGY OF THE TPO

*Was the initiative drawn proactively from your strategy or is it offered as a response to an ad-hoc need?*

The results of each service in the TPO’s service portfolio aim to contribute to the overall strategic goals set for the organization. TPOs need to establish processes and procedures to determine the service portfolio to be offered and the expected outcomes and impact of the strategy.

To provide background for this area under assessment by the Adjudicating Panel, please provide a brief description of the overall strategy of your TPO and the expected outcomes and impact. For brevity, this should consist of a general description of the TPO’s segmentation and positioning of its services and the expected outcomes and impact the TPO is aiming for.

Following this, please describe how the export development initiative you are submitting for evaluation aligns with the overall strategy described.

The Adjudicating Panel will consider the answers to the following questions:

• **Communicating the strategy:** What processes did the senior management use to communicate the overall strategy and goals to those responsible for the design, development and delivery of the initiative?

• **Targeted markets/segments:** What processes were used to verify that the selected target market/segments for the initiative align with the segmentation decisions of the overall strategy?

• **Positioning:** What processes were used to verify that the features of the initiative have been designed in line with the positioning of the overall strategy (content, delivery method, etc.)?

• **Monitoring:** What processes did you use to ensure that all stages for creating the initiative (design, production, marketing and delivery) were aligned with the strategy?

**Note:** Scoring for this section of your application will be done on the basis of:

• The depth and clarity of the description of the process demonstrating that it is innovative and well designed;

• Whether the process is used systematically and periodically to verify that the initiative is compatible with the overall strategy, especially following any upgrades that have been made to improve the effectiveness or efficiency of the service;

• Whether the goals designed for this export development initiative are aligned with the overall goals of the strategy.
C. PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF THE INITIATIVE

How do you know that you have achieved your objectives?

Export development initiatives are designed to strengthen the skills and knowledge of SMEs to manage and run their businesses effectively and efficiently to improve their competitiveness. A TPO must know whether the initiative is working. An effective monitoring system identifies and measures the outcomes and impact of the initiative. It also provides sufficient information on what is and is not working to enable the TPO to improve the design and delivery of the initiative to achieve the expected objectives.

The Adjudicating Panel will consider the answers to the following questions:

- **Monitoring the outcomes and impact:** What processes, methods and tools did you use for measuring the changes in awareness, attitudes and specific managerial behaviours vis-à-vis to the objectives of the initiative?
- **Competitiveness:** What processes did you use for measuring the changes in the competitiveness of the beneficiaries? For example “more and more profitable exports with more favourable negotiated deals” or the sustainability of their competitiveness.
- **Confirmation:** What processes did you use to record and analyze the data collected and to evaluate whether the changes observed align with the expected results?
- **Corrective action:** How did you use the results of the analyses to review and refine the initiative to optimize its results and impact?

**NOTE:** Answers to the questions above describe various processes. Responses to the first two sets of questions should be consistent with the objective(s) described in your response to number 3 in the Overview on page 8 (specific export development objectives). Scoring for this process will be done on the basis of:

- The depth and clarity of the description of the process demonstrating that it is innovative and well designed;
- How well the process provided useful information that could be used to improve effectiveness;
- Whether this process is used systematically and periodically to verify and ensure the initiative continues to meet the specified need over time.

D. DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INITIATIVE

What objectives did you target and to what degree was that target achieved?

Export development initiatives aim to build the effective export competitiveness of SMEs or contribute to changes in attitude and/or managerial practices. Please provide evidence that shows the relevance of the change(s) that took place and, if possible, the degree of the change(s) that took place due to the initiative.

Please note that the applicant should provide specific evidence of the following as appropriate to the objectives of the initiative (described in your response to number 3 in the Overview on page 8, specific export development objectives).

The increased competitiveness of the client companies as demonstrated by:

- The client enterprises negotiated better deals with their buyers to export, or export more, and more profitably by competing or by finding new markets where they are the most competitive player;
- The client enterprises successfully used features of their exports other than price, such as quality, timing, physical attributes (product specifications, colour material, shape, size, etc.), value added and quantity to win buyers over;
- The client enterprises improved their profit margins.

The relevance and degree of change that took place concerning:
• The changed managerial practices;
• The changed attitudes;
• The changed awareness.

NOTE: Scoring for the above is on the basis of the initiative and not the process. Assessment will be on the basis of:

• The evidence that the export development initiative helped the clients to become more competitive on the market;
• The evidence that the export development initiative significantly contributed to changes in the behaviour, awareness, and attitude and/or management practices required to build export competitiveness.

If you believe that other measures of effectiveness are more appropriate for your initiative please provide any other evidence that demonstrates its effectiveness.

This is the end of the application guidelines. Please read the instructions on the overleaf carefully before submitting your application to ITC.
CHECK LIST

Before submitting your application, please check to ensure that you have included the following:

**Part 1: TPO contact information**

**Part 2: The certificate** (signed and dated by the CEO or duly designated official and in pdf format)

**Part 3: The application must be formatted according to the guidelines under SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION (page 4). Please ensure it is presented following the structure of the application form and guidelines:**

- Executive summary: a brief executive summary not exceeding one page in length;
- The overview of the initiative;
  - A. Determining the need for the initiative (page 8);
  - B. Confirming the alignment of the export development initiative with the overall strategy of the TPO (page 9);
  - C. Performance monitoring of the initiative (page 10);
  - D. The demonstrated effectiveness of the initiative (page 10).

All documentation and supporting evidence with testimonials from clients confirming the outcome and impact claimed of the export development initiative must be included with the above.

Part 3 of the application must be no longer than **13 sides of paper (7 pages double-sided).**

**NOTE:** Applications exceeding 7 pages for Part 3 when printed double-sided will be disqualified. All three parts of the application must be submitted together, by email, to the address below. Applications missing any or all of the three Parts (Parts 1, 2 and 3) will not be accepted.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Please e-mail all 3 parts of the application form in Word and PDF formats to wtpo-awards@intracen.org at the International Trade Centre (ITC) by **16 June 2016**. Please note that the Certificate (Part 2) must be signed and dated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or designated senior official of the participating TPO and sent as a PDF version sent with your application. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by email.

If you would prefer to fax or post your completed application, please contact the awards organizers by email in advance.

**Contact information for the TPO Network Awards:**

International Trade Centre  
TPO Network Awards  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva  
Switzerland  

**Contact person: Ann Penistan**  
Tel: +41 22 730 0247  
Fax: +41 22 730 0576  
E-mail: wtpo-awards@intracen.org
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Trade Support Institutions Strengthening Section (DBIS)
T: +41 22 730 0247
F: +41 22 730 0249
wtco-awards@intracen.org
www.tponetwork.net