

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****International Trade Administration****[Docket Number 960611170-6170-01]****RIN 0625-XX07****International Buyer Program (Formerly Known as the Foreign Buyer Program); Support for Domestic Trade Shows****AGENCY:** International Trade Administration, Commerce.**ACTION:** Notice and Call for Applications for the FY 1998 International Buyer Program (October 1, 1997, through September 30, 1998).

**SUMMARY:** This notice sets forth objectives, procedures and application review criteria associated with the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Buyer Program (IBP) to support domestic trade shows: Selection in the International Buyer Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998.

The International Buyer Program was established to bring international buyers together with U.S. firms by promoting leading U.S. trade shows in industries with high export potential. The International Buyer Program emphasizes cooperation between the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) and trade show organizers to benefit U.S. firms exhibiting at selected events and provides practical, hands-on assistance to U.S. companies interested in exporting such as export counseling and market analysis. The assistance provided to show organizers includes worldwide overseas promotion of selected shows to potential international buyers, end-users, representatives and distributors. The worldwide promotion is executed through the offices of the Commerce Department's Commercial Service of the United States of America (formerly referred to as United States and Foreign Commercial Service) in 70 countries representing America's major trading partners, and also in U.S. Embassies in countries where the Commercial Service of the United States of America does not maintain offices.

The Department expects to select approximately 22 shows for FY 1998 from among applicants to the program. Shows selected for the International Buyer Program will provide an avenue for U.S. companies interested in expanding their sales into international markets. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that sets forth the specific actions to be performed by the show organizer and the DOC. The MOU constitutes a participation agreement between the DOC and the show

organizer specifying which services are to be rendered by DOC as part of the IBP and, in turn, what responsibilities are agreed to be performed by the show organizer. Anyone wishing to apply will be sent a copy of the MOU along with the application package. The services to be rendered by DOC will be carried out by the Commercial Service of the United States of America unless otherwise indicated.

**DATES:** Applications must be received by August 5, 1996. A contribution of \$6,000 for shows of five days or less in duration is required. For shows of more than five days in duration or with multiple International Business Centers (IBC's) the contribution is \$8,000. Contributions are for shows selected by the IBP for inclusion in the FY 1998 program.

**ADDRESSES:** Export Promotion Services/ International Buyer Program, Commercial Service of the United States of America, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 2116, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230. Telephone: (202) 482-0481 (Facsimile applications will not be accepted.)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO APPLY:** Contact Jim Boney, Product Manager, International Buyer Program, Room 2116, Export Promotion Services, U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230. Telephone: (202) 482-0148 or Fax: (202) 482-0115.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The International Trade Administration (ITA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce is accepting applications for the International Buyer Program (IBP) for events taking place between October 1, 1997, and September 30, 1998.

Under the IBP, the Department seeks to bring international buyers together with U.S. firms by selecting domestic trade shows in industries with high export potential and promoting them in international markets. Selection of a trade show is one-time, i.e., a trade show organizer seeking selection for a recurring event must submit a new application for selection for each occurrence of the event. If the event occurs more than once in the 12-month period covering this announcement, the trade show organizer must submit a separate application for each event.

The Department will select approximately 22 events to support during this 12-month period. The Department will select those events that,

in its judgment, most clearly meet the Department's objectives and selection criteria mentioned below.

Selection indicates that the Department has found the event to be a leading domestic trade show appropriate for promotion in overseas markets by U.S. Embassies and Consulates. Selection does not constitute a guarantee by the U.S. Government of the show's success. Selection is not an endorsement of the show organizer except as to its International Buyer Program activities. Non-selection should not be viewed as an indication that the event will not be successful in the promotion of U.S. exports.

**Exclusions**

Trade shows will not be considered that are either first-time or horizontal (non-industry specific) events. Annual trade shows will not be selected for this program more than twice in any three-year period (e.g., shows selected for fiscal years 1996 and 1997 are not eligible for inclusion in this program in fiscal year 1998, but can be considered in subsequent years). Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information, subject to the requirements of the PRA, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements of the application to this program under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) (OMB control no. 0625-0151).

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Reports Clearance Officer, International Trade Administration, Room 4001, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230 and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0625-0151), Washington, D.C. 20503.

**General Selection Criteria**

Subject to Departmental budget and resource constraints, those events will

be selected that, in the judgment of the Department, most clearly meet the following criteria:

(a) *Export Potential*: The products and services to be promoted at the trade show are from U.S. industries that have high export potential, as determined by U.S. Department of Commerce sources, i.e., best prospects lists and U.S. export statistics. (Certain industries are rated as priorities by our domestic and international commercial officers in their Country Commercial Guides.)

(b) *International Interest*: The trade show meets the needs of a significant number of overseas markets covered by the Commercial Service of the United States of America and corresponds to marketing opportunities as identified by the posts in their Country Commercial Guides (e.g. best prospects lists). Previous international attendance at the show may be used as an indicator.

(c) *Scope of the Show*: The trade show offers a broad spectrum of U.S. made products and/or services for the subject industry. Trade shows with a majority of U.S. firms will be given preference.

(d) *Stature of the Show*: The trade show is clearly recognized by the industry it covers as a leading event for the promotion of that industry's products and services both domestically and internationally and as a showplace for the latest technology or services in that industry.

(e) *Exhibitor Interest*: There is a demonstrated interest on the part of U.S. exhibitors in receiving international business visitors during the trade show. A significant number of these exhibitors should be new-to-export or seeking to expand sales into additional international markets.

(f) *Overseas Marketing*: There has been demonstrated effort made to market prior shows overseas. In addition, the applicant should describe in detail the international marketing program to be conducted for the event, explaining how efforts should increase individual and group international attendance.

(g) *Logistics*: The trade show site, facilities, transportation services and availability of accommodations conform

to the expected norms of an international-class trade show.

(h) *Cooperation*: The applicant demonstrates a willingness to cooperate with the Commercial Service of the United States of America to fulfill the program's goals and to adhere to target dates set out in the Memorandum of Understanding and the event timetable, both of which are available from the program office (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO APPLY**). Past experience in the IBP will be taken into account in evaluating current applications to the program.

Authority: The statutory authority allowing the Department to provide the type of assistance contemplated under the International Buyer Program is 15 U.S.C. 4724.

John Klingelehut,

*Deputy Director, Office of Public/Private Initiatives, The Commercial Services of the United States, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.*

[FR Doc. 96-15587 Filed 6-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-FF-P