

KENT EXPORT MANAGER PILOT SCHEME (KEMPS) – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Exporting is an effective way for businesses to grow. Businesses that export are more resilient, show higher productivity and tend to be more innovative than non-exporters. Selling products or services overseas can be a challenging and complex process but is also very worthwhile. Many companies wishing to explore export markets, however, have told us that they do not have the resources required to tackle exporting challenges due to a lack of personnel with specific expertise. At the same time, identifying people with the right professional expertise to start exporting or to grow overseas trade can be a challenge in itself.

This pilot scheme will provide a limited number of Kent businesses with funding to source and place an ‘export manager’¹ in order to help them develop their internationalisation potential.

Aims & Objectives of KEMPS

KEMPS provides your business with the opportunity to source and work with a person to help you implement part of your internationalisation plan or on an export-specific challenge, be it a specific technical export-related issue or capitalising on an existing overseas opportunity. The pilot scheme will support Kent businesses which currently lack the internal expertise or capacity to tackle export challenges.

How can KEMPS benefit my company?

KEMPS is being launched in order to assist Kent companies with increasing their international sales by providing funding in order to engage an export professional or dedicated member of staff who can provide expertise and practical support on a specific, time-limited export-related challenge or project and therefore address a problem faced by the company that couldn’t previously be tackled due to a lack of resource.

The main benefits of the Kent Export Manager programme are:

- The opportunity to secure additional resource with export-related expertise, skills, and knowledge
- The ability to help you work on a specific export activity or challenge
- Become more export-ready and grow your international sales
- Receive intensive support and advice from the Kent International Business Programme partners

What type of export-related challenges are eligible for the scheme?

Applicant companies will have a variety of different export-related challenges that they are facing, and the scheme is open to both first-time exporters as well as to existing exporters with potential to do more. The challenges can cover a wide selection of sectors, technical issues or geographical markets. The scheme recognises that the export challenges or projects will be individual to the applicant companies and therefore it will fund a variety of projects, from needing support with selecting a target export market, to generating leads and developing international sales activity.

Examples of the type of work that can be carried out by an export manager/professional:

Market insight / understanding	Facilitated exploration of markets, resources, competition etc. or In-depth international market research
Staying ahead	Facilitated exploration of how the company can compete and differentiate itself, define a USP or a marketing strategy.
Working with in-market contacts	Working collaboratively with in-market contacts to identify and secure international sales opportunities
Protecting Ideas	Review of company’s intellectual property management strategy for

¹ An ‘Export Manager’ could be a staff member or external expert working with a business on a specific element of export activity from international marketing to market research and lead generation.

	international markets
International Communication	Review of the company's use and effectiveness of all forms of communication for international marketing and aftercare purposes including international digital strategy implementation, raising brand awareness internationally
Legal Framework	Developing trade and payment terms, contracts suitable for international sales etc.
Prospecting and client identification	Targeted lead generation work to identify sales opportunities in selected international markets
Innovation	Working on product (or service) adaptation for international markets

How much funding can I apply for?

Grant funding is available for a maximum amount of €10,000. The value of the grant provided to the Recipient complies with the State Aid rules by applying the De Minimis exemption under EC Regulation 1407/2013.

How do I identify the right 'export manager'?

The scheme makes provision for the following options:

1. The Kent International Business (KIB) partners can provide you with a list of potential external consultants with extensive experience of supporting companies in achieving their exporting ambitions
2. You could carry out a direct recruitment exercise in order to find a new staff member with the right experience in terms of sector, technical knowledge, or specific geographic expertise who can address your specific export challenge.
3. You could appoint an export professional of your own choice.

For any of the above options, the company would need to agree and justify its selected approach with Kent County Council and the KIB partners prior to the project commencing.

Who can apply?

Applicant companies need to be Kent-based and need to meet the European definition of an SME². Companies applying to the scheme need to be successfully trading domestically, have a product or service that is suitable for international markets, and have the available capacity to meet any potential increase in export orders/clients.

Please note that you will be required to fill in an Application Form to be considered for the scheme. The KIB partners will review all applications and will notify companies of their decision within 10 working days after the application deadline.

When does the scheme end and what period of time can the export manager be sourced for?

The pilot scheme will be run until October 2020, by when the selected companies will need to have completed their export related challenges or projects.

For the pilot scheme, the company should work with its export manager for 6-9 months.

Please note that due to 'KEMPS' being a pilot scheme, the funding is limited and only a few Kent companies will be selected to benefit from the scheme.

² Fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50 million