



Small Business Champions

2023: Helping smallholder farmers go global

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the International Trade Centre (ITC), and the World Trade Organization's Informal Working Group on Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (WTO MSME Group), with the sponsorship of Google, are calling for proposals to support smallholder farmers participate in international trade.

International trade can provide opportunities and lead to innovation for businesses of every size. Smallholder farmers and rural micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are an important demographic, comprising up to half of all MSMEs in some developing economies.

However, these businesses may face challenges in accessing information, logistics and financing. Helping these businesses access international markets and supply chains therefore has important multiplying effects.

Goals of the Initiative

- Raise awareness among businesses and policymakers of the particular difficulties smallholder farmers encounter when it comes to international trade, from infrastructure to finance.
- Highlight best practices that are helping this demographic to internationalize.
- Support smallholder farmers' participation in international trade with a view towards business innovation and resilience.

Call for proposals

The World Trade Organization (WTO) Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Informal Working Group (MSME Group), in partnership with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the International Trade Centre (ITC), is calling for proposals that help smallholder farmers to trade internationally. Small businesses, industry associations, chambers of commerce and non-governmental organizations are invited to submit proposals.

What kind of proposals are we looking for?

- Proposals can focus on awareness-raising campaigns, competitions, capacity building, training and mentoring programmes.
- Proposals should have an obvious international trade angle.

- Proposals should be designed to be delivered by the entity making the proposal and should not focus on WTO negotiations, or proposed changes to WTO rules.
- The ICC, ITC and the WTO MSME Group will use their networks to support and promote successful proposals.
- Google Hola Entrepreneurs will provide non-monetary support in the form of virtual training tailored to the winning proposal.

How to submit proposals

Proposals are open to the businesses, industry associations, chambers of commerce and non-governmental organizations and should:

- detail the concept, aims, timelines and other information as appropriate.
- be no longer than three pages.
- be sent to smallbusinesschampions@wto.org in Word or PDF format by **5 May 2023**.

Key information to be provided

When submitting a proposal, please ensure that the following points are covered:

- name of the organization
- short description of the organization
- name of the proposed project
- timeline for the project
- challenge faced/issue to be addressed
- short description of the project, including activities to be organized
- aim(s) of the project (including any specific outcomes)
- how promotion by the ICC, ITC and WTO MSME Informal Working Group can support your proposal.
- contact person (name, telephone, email)
- short bios of the persons implementing the project

Selection process

The selection of proposals will be carried out by representatives of the ICC, ITC, and WTO MSME team.

Winners will be announced in a virtual event at the WTO on MSME Day, 27 June 2023.

Award

All awards are **non-financial** in nature and no money will be provided to participants. Google is sponsoring an award of tailored training through Google Hola Entrepreneurs, to be scheduled in coordination with the winners before 2024. Winning submissions will also be promoted by the ICC, ITC and the WTO MSME Group through their communication channels and all winners will receive a certificate.

Frequently asked questions

1. How ambitious are proposals expected to be and how should I budget the project?
 - a. It is recommended to develop a proposal that is within the capacity of your organization, or partnership, to achieve. No additional funding will be provided by the organizers.
2. Can the same organization submit more than one proposal?
 - a. Yes. There is no limit to the number of proposals one organization may submit.
3. Can I submit a proposal if I am a private company?
 - a. Private companies are invited to submit proposals.
4. Can I submit a proposal if I am a government organization?
 - a. Government organizations are invited to submit proposals if they are in partnership with an industry association, chamber of commerce or non-governmental organization with a MSME focus.
5. What does "... be designed to be delivered by the entity making the proposal and should not focus on WTO negotiations, or proposed changes to WTO rules" mean?
 - a. The Small Business Champions organizers are asking that participants develop proposals that their own organizations are capable of achieving without significant external assistance and that focus specifically on MSME trade and decarbonization, not on the work of the WTO.
6. Can I expect financial support from the sponsors and organizers to implement my proposal?
 - a. Unfortunately, none of the sponsors or organizers of the Small Business Champions initiative are in a position to provide money or other financial support for a winning proposal. Awards are restricted to publicity, training, or other relevant "gifts-in-kind".
7. For any additional questions, please reach out to smallbusinesschampions@wto.org.