

Spotlight:

Small Business Champions initiative

The WTO and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) declared the UK's Institute of Export and International Trade as the second ICC-WTO Small Business Champion. Google was named as the first in 2017. Encouraging micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to trade internationally and raising awareness about the difficulties they face was the motive behind launching the Small Business Champions initiative.

MSMEs play vital roles in national economies, particularly in terms of providing innovation, growth and job creation. Yet their share in international trade is relatively small. The initiative, launched in August 2017, called on companies and private sector organizations around the world to come up with innovative and practical proposals for encouraging and assisting MSMEs to do business across borders.

The Institute of Export and International Trade's proposal was to run a competition – “Open to Export International Business Award” – aimed at encouraging small businesses around the world to begin trading internationally. It provided support, training and the online tools to help small businesses put together a “global growth action plan”.

During the Public Forum, 12 finalists pitched their “export action plans” to a panel of judges for the chance to win a package of financing and assistance from the Institute. The competition was launched in May and attracted plans from small businesses worldwide. “Running this competition and working with inspiring MSMEs from around



the world has been both humbling and truly inspirational. Thank you to the WTO and ICC for supporting it,” said Lesley Batchelor, Director General of the Institute of Export and International Trade, in announcing the result.

The winner was Dytech Limited, a Zambia-based honey producer. “I’m flabbergasted,” said Alan Chanda, co-founder and CEO of the social enterprise. “There were so many people with interesting ideas from around the world, and I’m extremely thankful that I’ve been chosen to go back home with a smile on my face.”

About 10 per cent of Dytech’s eco-friendly honey is bottled, branded and sold in 150 shops across Zambia while the rest is sold in bulk. The company has sold to customers in South Africa to the tune of 90 tons a year. It is now targeting new markets and will soon export to Germany and China for the first time.

Besides the Institute, the other three successful proposals in 2018 were from eBay, Brazil’s National Confederation of Industry and the Asian Association of Business Incubation.

Alan Chanda, CEO of Dytech Limited, a Zambia-based honey producer, won the Export Business Award.



The UK's Institute of Export and International Trade was announced as an ICC-WTO Small Business Champion.



Winners of a competition launched by Google, the first Small Business Champion, attended a masterclass at Google headquarters.



The “eBay Emerging Markets Initiative” aims to help motivated MSMEs in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa leverage the eBay marketplace to reach developed market consumers. The project aims to provide training on key online commerce issues, a package of promotional eBay services and support and showcase successful project participants.

Under its project “Small Business Without Barriers”, Brazil’s National Confederation of Industry has conducted a range of activities, including surveying more than 400 small businesses to identify the difficulties they face in trading internationally, conducting capacity-building roadshows and providing training through brochures, online courses and videos.

The proposal by the Asian Association of Business Incubation aims at helping small businesses in Asia’s technology sector by matching them with

partners to assist them in areas such as cross-border technology transfer and identifying new trading opportunities.

The call for proposals for the business champions initiative closed in December 2018, with seven proposals having been accepted. They will be recognized as small business champions following the successful conclusion of their project.

A video competition launched by Google in partnership with the WTO and the ICC was the first successful proposal under the Small Business Champions initiative. The three small business winners of the competition were invited by Google to its headquarters in Mountain View, California, in May 2018 to participate in a “master class” in digital skills for export. Following the successful completion of its project, Google was confirmed as the first Small Business Champion.