



U.S. Trade and Development Agency  
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1600  
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Phone: 703.875.4357 • Fax: 703.875.4009  
Email: [info@ustda.gov](mailto:info@ustda.gov) • Website: [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov)

A large, semi-transparent globe is the background for the right side of the page. Overlaid on the globe is a map of the Americas, with labels for "COLUMBIA" and "BRAZIL".

U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

# U.S. Business Guide to USTDA



## OUR MISSION



**T**he U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment.

USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. Operating at the nexus of foreign policy and commerce, USTDA is uniquely positioned to work with U.S. firms and host countries in achieving the agency's trade and development goals. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.



# What is USTDA?

USTDA is an independent U.S. Government foreign assistance agency that is funded by the U.S. Congress.

## What are USTDA's objectives?

Our aim is a win-win scenario: promoting economic growth in developing and middle-income countries, while simultaneously helping American businesses to export their products, thereby creating jobs. In addition, USTDA supports U.S. policy objectives related to development and capacity building activities. Since 1981, USTDA has been associated with more than \$31.5 billion in exports—or approximately \$35 in exports for every dollar invested in our activities.

## What types of projects does USTDA support?

USTDA provides grant funding for the planning of projects that support the development of a modern infrastructure and an open trading system.

While USTDA projects span a wide variety of sectors, many focus on energy and power, transportation, mining and minerals development, telecommunications, information technology, environmental infrastructure and services, and healthcare.

## What are the requirements for USTDA funding?

USTDA evaluates projects primarily based on:

- Their priority to the project sponsors and the countries where they are located and their likelihood of receiving implementation financing or, in the case USTDA's trade capacity building work, advancing trade liberalization efforts; and
- Whether they offer mutual economic benefit for the host country and the United States, including opportunities for commercial cooperation with U.S. firms, thereby supporting U.S. jobs.

## With whom does USTDA work?

USTDA provides grants directly to overseas project sponsors who, in turn, select U.S. companies to perform USTDA-funded activities.

An overseas project sponsor is the local entity with the decision-making authority and ability to implement a project. The sponsor may be a government institution at the national, state/provincial, or local level, or it may be a local private sector company.

USTDA is open for business in more than one hundred countries around the world. In certain nations, statutory, resource and policy constraints limit the availability of USTDA programs.

## What types of activities does USTDA support?

USTDA accomplishes its mission by funding:

- 1) trade capacity building and sector development; and
- 2) project definition and investment analysis.

Trade capacity building and sector development assistance supports the establishment of industry standards, rules and regulations, trade agreements, market liberalization and other policy reform. Project definition and investment analysis involves activities that support large capital investments related to overseas development.

## Trade Capacity Building and Sector Development

### SECTOR DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

USTDA provides technical assistance to help with the development of sector strategies, industry standards, and legal and regulatory regimes. This assistance helps to create a favorable business and trade environment. Transportation safety and security are particularly important sectors for USTDA's technical assistance work.

### TRADE AGREEMENT SUPPORT

USTDA trade capacity building technical assistance is normally associated with the negotiation of trade agreements, and compliance with important international market access requirements. Areas of assistance may include customs processing and valuation, intellectual property rights, government procurement, technical barriers to trade, and trade in services.

### TRAINING

USTDA provides training for foreign decision-makers in economic sectors where there are opportunities for the sale of U.S. equipment and services. The training is normally focused on technology or regulatory issues and is designed to give project sponsors a better understanding of U.S. experience and capabilities. Training can be conducted in the United States and/or in the host country.

### TRADE AND INDUSTRY ADVISORS

Foreign government entities may obtain USTDA grants for trade and industry advisors. These advisors are typically located in ministries or municipalities, where they can help with capacity building activities relevant to trade regulations, standards or the import of technology and additional expertise.

## Project Definition and Investment Analysis

### FEASIBILITY STUDIES

USTDA provides grants for overseas infrastructure project planning assistance, such as feasibility studies. These studies evaluate the technical, financial, environmental, legal, and other critical aspects of infrastructure development projects that are of interest to potential lenders and investors.

### ORIENTATION VISITS

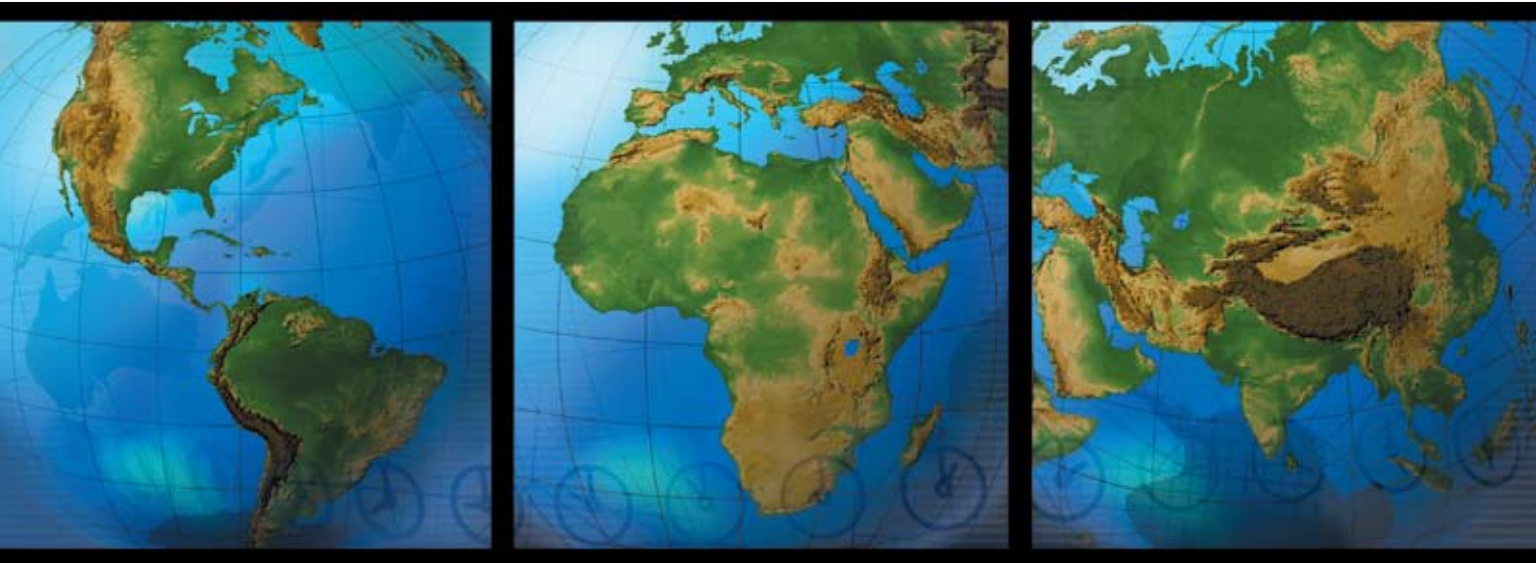
Orientation visits bring foreign project sponsors to the United States to observe the design, manufacture, demonstration and operation of U.S. products and services that can potentially help them to achieve their development goals.

### WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

USTDA organizes workshops, conferences and technical symposia worldwide. These events are sector or project oriented and connect overseas project sponsors with U.S. firms and entities that supply project finance, technology and industry expertise that may be useful in project implementation.



Due, in part, to USTDA-funded technical assistance to the Honduran national port authority in recommending upgrades to computer networks and software at the Port of Cortés, the port became the first in Central America to be certified under the Container Security Initiative. The designation has positioned the port to play a key role in the expansion of trade relations under the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement. USTDA has followed this success with a grant to assist in developing a new dry bulk terminal at the port.



### PROCUREMENT ASSISTANCE

To promote project transparency and integrity, USTDA provides grants to assist in the establishment and oversight of international project procurement activities. Support can take the form of developing appropriate bidding procedures, assisting in the evaluation of technical proposals, and identifying potential suppliers or bidders.

#### How is a project brought to USTDA for consideration?

If you are developing a project or initiative that you would like USTDA to consider for possible grant funding, you should begin by:

1. Contacting the appropriate USTDA Regional Director or Country Manager (see *How Do I Contact USTDA?*); or,
2. Communicating with the commercial or economic officer, or USTDA representative, at the U.S. Embassy in the country where the project is located.

To formally initiate USTDA consideration of a proposal, the host country project sponsor should direct a request to USTDA. In cases where a specific U.S. company has been identified

as a partner or preferred supplier on the project, the U.S. company submits a separate, detailed proposal to USTDA. There is no set deadline for proposals to be considered.

#### How does the approval process work?

USTDA's due diligence review of a proposal involves two steps. First, USTDA staff conducts an internal review to determine whether the proposal represents an appropriate opportunity for USTDA support. Second, proposals that satisfy this internal analysis are independently assessed by USTDA-funded definitional mission (DM) and desk study (DS) consultants.

A DM provides a detailed evaluation of a particular proposal, involving travel to the designated region. A DS provides quick analysis of a proposal and is produced within the United States. Both DMs and DSs are carried out exclusively by small U.S. firms.

Because of the high demand for USTDA funding, not all proposals that meet USTDA funding criteria can be supported.



## How does the grant process work?

If USTDA approves funding, it signs a Grant Agreement with the foreign project sponsor. The grant recipient then signs a contract with the U.S. company it selects to carry out the USTDA-funded activity. Both the Grant Agreement and the contract contain the terms of reference that outline the parameters of the activity.

## Is there any cost-sharing or reimbursement required?

In cases where an overseas project sponsor would like to sole source a USTDA-funded activity to a specific U.S. firm, USTDA and the U.S. firm share the cost of the activity. USTDA's contribution varies according to a number of factors, including the size of the firm, the costs the firm has incurred in developing the project, and the risks associated with the project. In addition, USTDA may require the U.S. firm to reimburse

part or all of USTDA's funding if the project is implemented and the firm receives substantial economic benefit. These commitments are included in a letter agreement between USTDA and the company.

## How much money is available?

Each year, USTDA funds approximately 125 grant activities. The average USTDA grant is \$400,000.

On average, contracts to perform desk studies range from \$2,500–\$5,000 and definitional missions range from \$25,000–\$35,000.

## How can small businesses learn about opportunities from USTDA?

Current USTDA procurement opportunities and business opportunities with agency grant recipients are posted to the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website at [www.fedbizopps.gov](http://www.fedbizopps.gov). Links to the opportunities on FedBizOpps associated with USTDA's program are posted to the agency's website at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov).

Small U.S. firms that wish to be considered for desk study solicitations should register on-line with USTDA's consultant database at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov). All firms interested in potential contracting opportunities with USTDA should register with the U.S. Government's Central Contractor Registration website at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov).

In addition, USTDA's biweekly eNewsletter is your best source to learn about agency procurements, business opportunities with overseas grant recipients and upcoming events. A free subscription is available at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov).



## What is USTDA's relationship with International Financing Institutions and Multilateral Development Banks?

USTDA works closely with the MDBs to co-finance technical assistance and feasibility studies that lay the groundwork for project financing. Since MDBs finance many of the capital projects in the developing world, USTDA's close relationship with them is advantageous for the U.S. business community. In addition to the valuable project information that is gained through the MDBs, working on bank projects ensures that a potential funding source has been identified.

## How does USTDA work with other Trade Promotion and Commercial Development Agencies?

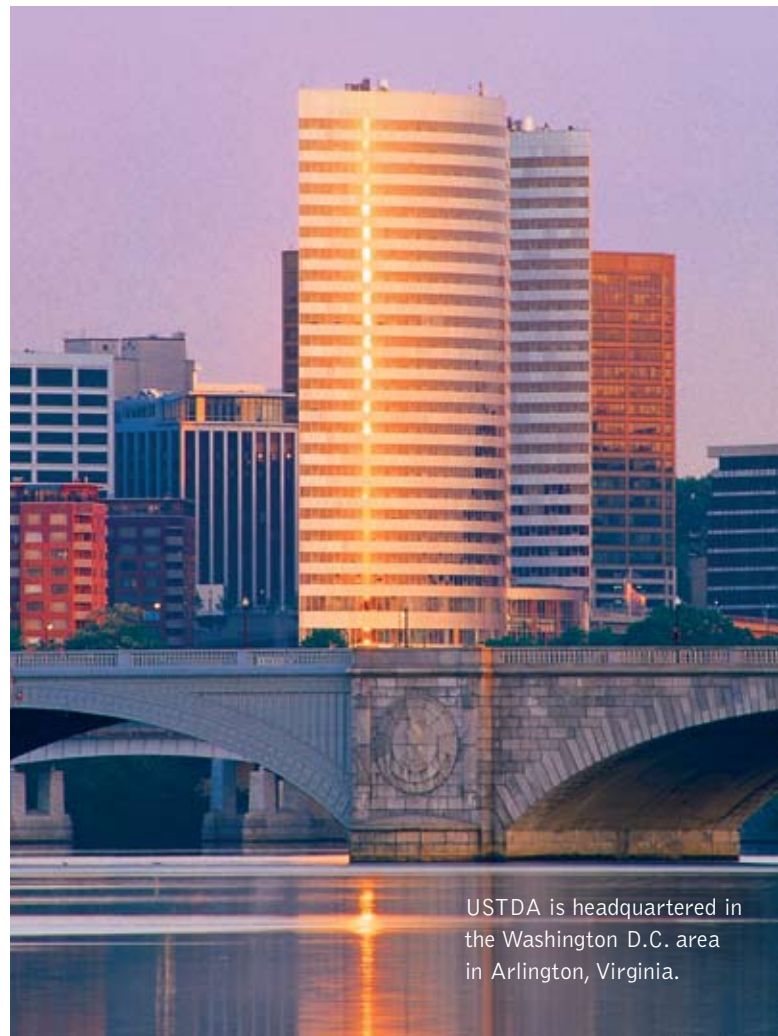
As a member of the inter-agency Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, USTDA works with a wide variety of other U.S. Government agencies to support opportunities for U.S. commercial involvement overseas. USTDA learns of many viable projects from the Commerce Department's Commercial Service and the State Department's economic and commercial officers. USTDA works closely with these agencies to identify projects and gauge the likelihood of their implementation.

## Where is USTDA located?

The agency is headquartered in the Washington, D.C. area in Arlington, Virginia. In addition, USTDA has representatives in South Africa and Thailand to promote the Agency's program throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

## What other U.S. Government Trade Partners can I contact?

- Overseas Private Investment Corporation  
[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)
- Export-Import Bank of the United States  
[www.exim.gov](http://www.exim.gov)
- Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
[www.ustr.gov](http://www.ustr.gov)
- U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service  
[www.usatrade.gov](http://www.usatrade.gov)
- Millennium Challenge Corporation  
[www.mcc.gov](http://www.mcc.gov)
- U.S. Department of State  
[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)



USTDA is headquartered in the Washington D.C. area in Arlington, Virginia.



## HOW DO I CONTACT USTDA?

More information about USTDA is available at [www.ustda.gov](http://www.ustda.gov). General inquiries about USTDA's program can be made by calling (703) 875-4357, sending a fax to (703) 875-4009 or an e-mail to [info@ustda.gov](mailto:info@ustda.gov), or completing the Contact Form on USTDA's website.

To contact USTDA's program staff, send an e-mail to your region of interest:

- East Asia:  
[East\\_Asia@ustda.gov](mailto:East_Asia@ustda.gov)
- Europe and Eurasia:  
[Europe\\_Eurasia@ustda.gov](mailto:Europe_Eurasia@ustda.gov)
- Latin America and the Caribbean:  
[LAC@ustda.gov](mailto:LAC@ustda.gov)
- Middle East and North Africa:  
[MENA@ustda.gov](mailto:MENA@ustda.gov)
- South and Southeast Asia:  
[South\\_Southeast\\_Asia@ustda.gov](mailto:South_Southeast_Asia@ustda.gov)
- Sub-Saharan Africa:  
[Africa@ustda.gov](mailto:Africa@ustda.gov)