

## **Digital Champions for Small Business**

### **Call for Proposals**

The ICC, the ITC, and the WTO MSME Group, with the sponsorship of Google and Zoom, are calling for proposals to support small businesses' participation in international trade by helping them to go digital.

Industry associations, chambers of commerce and NGOs with a MSME and digitalization focus are invited to submit proposals.

### **Background**

The Covid-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of the digital economy for businesses of all sizes throughout the world. E-commerce sales were growing 10-20% before the pandemic and now more than half of consumers expect to continue shopping online, even after the fear of Covid has passed. However, MSMEs have historically struggled to enter the digital economy, be it for lack of awareness, resources or technological know-how. Bringing more MSMEs into the digital economy is instrumental to help them grow, trade and become resilient.

### **Goals of the Initiative**

- Support MSMEs' participation in international trade by helping them to go digital
- Raise awareness among businesses and policymakers of the difficulties MSMEs encounter related to digital trade, be it cyber security threats or conforming to regulatory requirements
- Highlight best practices helping small businesses go digital and promoting their participation in international trade.

### **What kind of proposals are we looking for?**

- Proposals can focus on awareness-raising campaigns, competitions, capacity building, training and mentoring programmes.
- 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, the WTO MSME Group, and the two sponsors of the initiative, Google and Zoom, will use their networks to support and promote successful proposals.

## How to submit proposals

Proposals are open to industry associations, chambers of commerce and NGOs with a MSME and digitalization focus and should:

- detail the concept, aims, timelines and other information as appropriate.
- be no longer than three pages.
- be sent to the following address in Word or PDF format: [Digitalchampions@wto.org](mailto:Digitalchampions@wto.org) by **15 September 2021**.

### Key information to be provided

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

- name of the organization
- contact person (name, telephone, email)
- short description of the organization
- short bios of the persons implementing the project
- 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 the ICC, ITC and WTO MSME Group can contribute to the implementation of the project.

## Selection process

The selection of proposals will be carried out by members of the WTO MSME Group, as well as representatives of the ICC, ITC, and WTO, and of the two sponsor organizations Google and Zoom.

Winners will be announced at the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference to be held virtually in Geneva from 30 November to 3 December 2021.

## Awards

Awards are sponsored by Google and Zoom and will be tailored to the winning proposals. The number of awards will be determined based on the proposals received.