

We are looking for mentors to help businesses internationalise

PROFIT is a programme of the Asian Development Bank to promote regional opportunities for investment and trade. It is aimed at small and growing businesses in Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam and in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in India who would like to grow their business through international trade and investment.

Businesses may have already experimented and now want to take a more strategic approach. They may have occasionally engaged in export or import and now want more advice and guidance. They may want to partner with a business in another country to develop an innovation or to enter a new market. They may be simply looking for distributors in another country. Or they may have spotted a product that they could sell in their own country and need to be able to import it. The ultimate market for their goods or services could be outside GMS and India, as long as it brings together businesses in two of the target countries.

We expect to support businesses through a capacity building programme that takes them through an introductory seminar, a training course and a trade mission to meet potential partners and network more widely. Between the training and the mission, they will be expected to prepare a draft international trade plan and we plan to offer mentoring support to do that. Following a trade mission, they will want to finalise their international trade plan, sign memoranda of understanding or contracts, secure trade permits and, if necessary, raise appropriate finance. Further mentoring support will be provided to help them through all these stages. More information about the programme is available on our website at www.profit-accelerator.com.

We are now seeking mentors to support these client businesses. Experience in international trade or investment is more important than experience in running a small business or in advising small business owners as mentor training will be available.

The role

The role of the mentor will be to provide counselling support, guidance and advice to support client businesses through all stages of their journey towards them engaging in

international trade or investment. The support will be offered on a flexible basis but will normally include one-to-one support as client businesses prepare an international trade implementation plan and financial forecast. Mentors may also be required to assist in identifying potential partners and introducing clients to sources of finance (from amongst our partner financial institutions).

Person specification

Candidates must:

- Be educated to degree level
- Be knowledgeable about all aspects of international trade, export and import, or investment

Ideally, candidates will also:

- Have good sectoral knowledge on one or more business sectors
- Have experience of working in or with small businesses and thus understand the challenges faced by businesses as they grow
- Have experience of advising or counselling small business owners
- Be able to read accounts and prepare financial forecasts
- Will be able to converse in English (both to communicate with the rest of the team and with technical advisers in the target country)

We recognise that not every mentor will have all the skills and experience to support every client so there will be scope to bring in additional expertise as and when the need arises. For example, one mentor may help a client to develop their international trade plan and prepare a strategy but a different mentor may then assist the client to prepare financial forecasts and a request for financial support.

Whilst we expect mentors to have excellent subject knowledge, we will offer training in business mentoring skills. Given the current restrictions on international travel it is likely that this will be delivered through a mix of personal learning and online webinar.

Application

To apply, please send a copy of your CV and a short letter explaining why you think you would make a good mentor to contact@profit-accelerator.com.

