



## Invitation – Expression of Interest

### Virtual Export Accelerator for Youth Entrepreneurs

*Antigua & Barbuda, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique,  
Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines*

#### **1.0 purpose**

The Competitive Business Unit (CBU) of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, invites; **Youth Entrepreneurs (18 to 29)** in the OECS; who are involved in or interested in exporting goods and or services to participate in a four (4) month virtual accelerator program.

#### **2.0 Scope of the Programme**

Based on consultations with regional entrepreneurs and Business Support Organisations (BSOs), to diagnose key issues affecting the scalability of start-ups in the entrepreneurship ecosystem, a number of challenges have been identified. One of the most significant challenges facing entrepreneurs is access to experienced coaches and mentors to guide them in scaling their operations. In response to this issue facing Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, (MSMEs) and in an effort to further develop a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem, the OECS Competitive Business Unit (OECS-CBU) in collaboration with the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA) has developed a “Virtual Export Accelerator” for youth entrepreneurs.

The OECS Virtual Export Accelerator will be a medium for fostering growth in several niche sectors where opportunities exist. Among them are; Agribusiness, Creative Industries, Green Industries and Information Communication Technology (ICT). The “Accelerator” will be implemented by the OECS CBU and CEDA with funding from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). The program will provide coaching through a virtual business accelerator to young exporters by supporting them with the tools and skills to grow their businesses. The program will be delivered through the following framework:

1. **Business Diagnostics:** A business diagnostic will be undertaken on each MSME, to determine the main issues and impediments hindering the business from exporting or trading outside its domestic space.
2. **Export Development Coaching:** The business and export development coaching will focus on; Business Strategy Development, Financial Management, and Export planning and implementation.
3. **Technical Assistance & Buyer Engagement:** entrepreneurs will be guided in the use of appropriate tools to address issues in trading and exporting. This component will also facilitate virtual B2B meetings with buyers and potential partners in targeted markets.

The program will seek to incubate twenty (20) OECS businesses during the period September to December 2019 and will deliver coaching and technical assistance to increase the export potential of youth entrepreneurs in the region.

#### **3.0 Who should apply?**





Interested applicants must submit a completed application form and satisfy the following criteria:

- Eligibility criteria
  - Must be a citizen of an OECS Member State;
  - Must be between the ages of 18 to 29;
  - Business must be at least 1-3 years established;
  - Business start-ups must be registered in an OECS Members State and must have a copy of a business registration certificate;
  - An innovative business idea/model that falls within one of the following targeted sectors:
    - **Agribusiness & Manufacturing:** e.g. agriculture (fresh produce producer/suppliers), production of high valued agro products such as; sauces, spices, teas, confectionary, condiments, spa, and personal care products;
    - **Creative Industries:** e.g. Music - writing, production, recording and performing from various genres of music, Fashion - design, and production of clothing and accessories, film production and animation, feature films, documentaries, television programs;
    - **Green Industries:** e.g. renewable energy, recycling, waste and water management, sustainable eco-projects;
    - **Information Communication Technology:** e.g.: agri-technology, mobile, and web application development, software solutions, multimedia solutions, etc.;
    - **Health & wellness:** e.g. medical care products, technology, and services, nutraceuticals;

#### **4.0 How to apply?**

Interested participants are expected to indicate their interest by completing the attached online registration form by **August 19<sup>th</sup> 2019**.

[Application form Export Accelerator for Youth Entrepreneurs](#)

For further information on the application and details of the program please contact:

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