

Central Sector
Market Access Initiative Scheme 2021

Scheme Guidelines

Department of Commerce
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Government of India

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Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
E&MDA Section

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Market Access Initiative (MAI) Scheme 2021

1. Background

In accordance with the core functions of the Department of Commerce to facilitate creation of an enabling environment and infrastructure for accelerated growth of exports and trade, the Market Access Initiative Scheme is in operation since the year 2003. The role of exports in creating jobs and growth has been acknowledged in various fora including the Economic Survey. Export promotion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has also been emphasized in the Union Budget 2020-21. There is a need to support initiatives towards developing and promoting Indian exports to assist the growth of Indian economy while aiming to earn foreign exchange. Accordingly, it is proposed to continue with the existing Central Sector Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI) beyond March, 2021 for a period of five years i.e. upto 31st March, 2026. The Scheme will be reviewed for changes, if any, required in promotion of exports in post-COVID 19 situation.

2. Objective

The MAI Scheme 2021 will play a catalytic role to promote exports of Indian goods and services by providing financial support to eligible agencies to undertake necessary initiatives and projects. Such initiatives will include support to micro, small and medium enterprises to enter export market; nurturing innovation; developing trade and market intelligence; building appropriate skill set; addressing the interventions required towards exploring new markets abroad.

3. Scope and Coverage

Assistance under the Scheme will be provided to the eligible agencies registered within the country to undertake initiatives and activities aimed at developing and strengthening export market for Indian goods and services. It will include all those activities that will provide impetus to meet the objective of the Scheme and ensure strong growth in Indian exports such as any direct/indirect activities for exploration of new markets as well as consolidating the existing market, development of export-oriented entrepreneurship, training in exports, market research, capacity building, branding, meeting statutory regulations in importing markets.

4. Main Focus of the Scheme

The Scheme modifies the erstwhile Market Access Initiative Scheme, 2018. The Scheme would provide assistance to eligible agencies for activities and initiatives for promotion of Indian exports, focusing on the development and promotion of exports from the MSME sector; development of districts as export hub for the identified products and services; promotion of exports of the traditional products and services like AYUSH, Yoga, Geographical Indications products and tribal products; development and promotion of exports from North Eastern Region (NER), Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and hill regions; and empowerment and promotion of export activities of people belonging to the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe, women exporters, startups and export oriented entrepreneurs, self-employed and youth.

5. Eligible Agencies

5.1. Unless otherwise defined under a specific provision, the Scheme is open to the following Organizations/ Agencies:

- Departments of Central Government, Organizations of Central/ State Governments and Indian Missions abroad;
- Export Promotion Councils recognized by Department of Commerce,
- Commodity Boards under the Department of Commerce and other Departments/ Ministries of Central Government;
- Apex Trade Bodies recognized under the Foreign Trade Policy;
- Industrial & Artisan Clusters recognized by the State/ Central Government;
- Institutions of National Importance (INIs) such as Indian Institutes of Technologies (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), National, National Institute of Designs (NIDs), National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Indian Institute of Foreign Trade etc.;
- Research Institutions/Universities/Recognized laboratories, etc., recognized by the Departments/ Ministries of Central Government.

5.2. The project proposals would be submitted to Department of Commerce by the eligible agencies as per the procedure notified from time to time. Such comprehensive project proposals should be based on the scientific analysis towards developing and sustaining Indian export market.

6. Components of the Scheme

6.1. The financial assistance under the Scheme would be given to develop new markets, to promote new products and new exporters as well as to consolidate the existing Indian exports markets. For this purpose, an indicative list of activities to be supported under the Scheme is given below:

- i. Capacity building of exporters on Standards and Regulations, Export Packaging, Export-oriented Skill Development, Training;
- ii. Marketing, Branding, Publicity Campaign and Cataloguing;
- iii. Promotion of traditional Indian products and services like AYUSH, Yoga, GI products, crafts and artisanal products including toys, tribal products, etc.;