

Case #7 A Canadian company facing difficulty meeting RFP requirements

A Canadian company has asked for assistance from a post in answering an RFP to build a boat hull, responding to specific technological requirements. The company has received considerable attention in the press for its innovative designs and technology, and is seeking to expand to overseas markets after having achieved success in Canada. However, after some research, and after speaking to executives of local company, the officer at post realises that, while they may be capable of producing the boat hull, they will not be able to do so within the foreign company's expected deadline. Is this company a client of the Trade Commissioner Service?

Answer: Yes

The fact that they will not be able to meet the requirements of this particular RFP does not mean that this company is not a client. It has developed an innovative product through research and development, and has commercialized it successfully in Canada. It appears committed to expanding on the international scene, and its international activities have the potential to contribute significantly to Canada's economic growth. The TCS can work with this company to help them prepare for international markets. Depending on the specific situation, the post could provide a market potential assessment and qualified contacts, or suggest that the company first work with a TC at a regional office to obtain the preparation for international markets service. The post could also remain alert for other business opportunities which fit the capabilities and interest of the client and communicate to the client any additional information/intelligence discovered later about the RFP or other business opportunities.

Case #8 The Dean of a Canadian university looking for research partners overseas

The Dean of the Faculty of Science of a major Canadian university is coming to your post to explore potential areas of research collaboration with local universities. She is particularly interested in meeting with researchers in the fields of Cognitive Science and Psychology. The Trade Commissioner at post is concerned that there is no significant economic benefit to Canada from organizing discussions regarding psychology with local academics. She wonders if the Dean can be considered a client.

Answer: Yes, the Dean (and the University) are clients of the Trade Commissioner Service

Basic research has a tendency to develop into commercial applications. As such, even when there is no specified commercial end-point in view, research institutions are considered to be clients of the TCS. In many instances, what seems to be research with no immediate commercial value when looked at from one field can be interpreted as a research result and of interest to commercialization in another field.

The post provided the Dean with a list of relevant contacts at the major local universities and institutes

It should also be added that international agreements of this type between educational institutions also often result in increased numbers of international students coming to Canada to study, which is a lucrative market (estimated \$5B per year to Canada's economy). Some missions have education officers on the PERPA side, and TCs who are only responsive for education should consult with PERPA colleagues on education promotion issues.

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