# IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE OVERVIEW

As the lead economic development agency for the State of Idaho, the mission of Idaho Commerce is to foster a business-friendly environment to aid in quality job creation, support existing companies, strengthen communities, promote innovation and market Idaho domestically and internationally.

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

The Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) team's primary role is supporting the growth and expansion of more than 57,000 businesses across Idaho. The BRE team works closely with Idaho companies to identify opportunities and overcome barriers to growth, providing personalized service and customized solutions. The BRE team assists businesses in leveraging incentives, benefiting from state and federal programs, understanding financing options, exploring federal contracting, and connecting to other resources and tools for success.

Our team assists cities and counties identify funding sources for needed infrastructure projects and manages the Gem Grant program. BRE expands its statewide reach and amplifies its economic development efforts through the Rural Economic Development Professionals grant program, partnering with 18 experts located in Idaho's seven regions. BRE educates investors and other stakeholders about Opportunity Zones, HUBZones, Private Activity Bonds and Opportunity Funds to encourage projects that will produce large capital expenditures and positive employment impacts.
Learn more at commerce.idaho.gov/idaho-business

Our team supports the Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP) that joins diverse public and private resources in innovative collaborations to strengthen communities and improve life in rural Idaho. The IRP Board is established by state statute and has 36 members who work together to improve economic and social conditions in rural Idaho. Board members are appointed by the Governor, representatives from federal and state agencies, and for-profit and non-profit entities.
Learn more at irp.idaho.gov

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development team provides financial and technical assistance via the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Rural Community Investment Funds (RCIF) to Idaho's cities and counties for construction and rehabilitation of public infrastructure and facilities necessary to support lower income communities, job creation, business expansion and a sense of community.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides states with CDBG funds to use for projects that benefit low and moderate-income people, help prevent or eliminate blight conditions, and address damage caused by natural disasters. Projects include public facilities construction and infrastructure improvements, economic development projects, senior and community centers, and public parks

RCIF helps rural communities improve public infrastructure in support of economic expansion via job creation. Eligible activities include construction or expansion of infrastructure or new construction and renovation of an industrial building owned by an eligible grantee that will be leased to a business. Funding recommendations for CDBG and RCIF are made by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC).
Learn more at commerce.idaho.gov/communities

## BUSINESS ATTRACTION

The Business Attraction team, in coordination with local economic development partners, serves as the state's single point of contact for businesses looking to expand or locate in Idaho. The team offers expertise in Idaho's business environment, serves as the lead for Idaho's incentives, and are customer representatives and subject matter experts for Idaho incentives.

The Idaho Tax Reimbursement Incentive (TRI) took effect July 1, 2014, as a tool to encourage businesses to grow or expand in Idaho with jobs that pay above the average county wage. This post-performance incentive offers a maximum refundable tax credit of up to 30% on income, payroll and sales taxes for up to 15 years.

Since its inception, the Idaho Economic Advisory Council (EAC) has approved over 88 TRI projects. When completed, these projects' investments are estimated to create over 17,000 new jobs above the statewide average annual wage, and pay nearly $11 billion in new wages to Idahoans. The awards have assisted both rural and urban communities, with 47 going to rural communities and 41 to urban communities. Recommendations for any TRI are made by EAC.
Hear from companies that recently expanded or located to Idaho at commerce.idaho.gov/silvershovel

The Economic Advisory Board 's (EAC) main purpose is to advise the Governor and Idaho Commerce on goals and objectives that further economic development within Idaho.

### EAC COUNCIL MEMBERS

**JEREMY GRIMM** - Region 1, Whiskey Rock Planning
**PAUL KIMMELL** - Region II, Avista Corporation
**BRIAN WONDERLICH** – Region III, Blue Cross of Idaho
**RANDY BAUSCHER**- Region IV, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service
**RICK PHILLIPS** – Region V, Simplot Agribusiness Group
**JOHN RADFORD** - Region VI, Accendero Software
**DAVE WILSON** - Region VII, Wilson Construction
**EVE KNUDTSEN** - At-Large, Knudtsen Chevrolet Co.

## BROADBAND

The Idaho Commerce Office of Broadband's mission is to improve broadband access across the state. Stable, reliable broadband infrastructure positions Idaho communities to attract business and enhance quality of life for Idahoans. In 2020, the office was established and was approved up to $50 million to fund projects across Idaho to improve broadband infrastructure and service for Idaho households, businesses, libraries, healthcare clinics, hospital facilities, public safety organizations and local governments. The initial Broadband Grant Program, awarded $38 million and provided broadband service to nearly 30,000 households in 147 communities.

The Idaho Broadband Advisory Board and Broadband Fund were formed by statute in 2021. The board consists of three members each from the Idaho House of Representatives, the Idaho Senate and the private sector, appointed by the Governor. The board develops the statewide plan for structuring, prioritizing and dispersing grants to provide financial assistance for broadband infrastructure in Idaho.

In 2021, the Idaho Broadband Fund received $35 million in state appropriation for broadband projects and $10 million in CARES Act funding. The latter funds financed 13 broadband projects across Idaho to improve opportunities to telework, telehealth services, distance learning and public safety. The 13 projects serve more than 20 rural communities and nearly 2,400 Idaho households.
Learn more at commerce.idaho.gov/broadband

## BROADBAND BOARD MEMBERS

**REPRESENTATIVE JOHN VANDER WOUDE**
**SENATOR TREG BERNT**
**REPRESENTATIVE BARBARA EHARDT**
**REPRESENTATIVE MEGAN BLANKSMA**
**SENATOR JAMES RUCHTI**
**SENATOR DOUG RICKS**
**MARGIE WATSON** - JC Watson & Company
**ANDY EMERSON** - MH Solutions
**MITCH WATKINS** - Watkins Distributing

# INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Idaho Commerce International Business team assists businesses that are ready to discover international markets. The team helps businesses navigate foreign markets by helping business owners identify prospects in international markets, analyze target markets, find financing and match you with local resources that can provide export services.

Our team also offers State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Grant funds to qualifying businesses. STEP is funded in part through a grant with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and is administered by Idaho Commerce. The goals of STEP are to increase the number of small businesses that export, increase the value of exports and increase the number of small businesses exploring significant new trade opportunities.

Additionally, Idaho supports international trade offices in Taiwan (covering South East Asia), China, and Mexico. Idaho's international trade office managers are there to guide business owners through all the steps for expanding into foreign markets.
Learn more at commerce.idaho.gov/idaho-business

# IDAHO GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURIAL MISSION

The IGEM-Commerce (IGEM) program is a state-funded program, receiving $1 million annually for commercialization grants. IGEM's investment in emerging technologies is an important economic development tool.

By connecting Idaho businesses with university research capabilities, IGEM is helping to develop new products, grow companies and attract investment, while elevating research capabilities at Idaho's public research universities. Thus far, the IGEM-Commerce program has funded 40 projects, investing almost $9 million in university and industry research partnerships.
Learn more at igem.idaho.gov

Funding decisions for IGEM are made by the IGEM Council. The IGEM Council is a 12-member council appointed by the Governor to preside over the IGEM program and evaluate IGEM grant proposals for innovation and maximum return on investment.

## IGEM COUNCIL MEMBERS

**DR. DAVID HILL** - State Board of Education
**DR. MARIANNE WALCK** – Idaho National Laboratory
**RICK STOTT** – Superior Farms
**JUAN CARLOS DUQUE** - Galena Capital Partners
**DAMOND WATKINS**- Stelvio Strategies
**DR. CHRISTOPHER NOMURA** – University of Idaho
**DR. NANCY GLENN** – Boise State University
**DR. DONNA LYBECKER** – Idaho State University
**SENATOR KELLY ANTHON**
**REPRESENTATIVE** - VACANT
**TOM KEALEY** – Director, Idaho Commerce

# IDAHO TOURISM

Idaho attracts millions of visitors each year. The influx of tourism dollars is a huge boon to our state economy, directly supporting businesses that offer diverse recreation, lodging, dining, experiential activities, and more. Tourism is Idaho's third largest industry, and the Idaho Commerce Tourism Development team takes the lead in showcasing recreation opportunities in the Gem State through advertising, public relations, social networking, curating statewide information on our main tourism website, visitidaho.org, and more.

Idaho Tourism's marketing is funded by a 2% lodging tax paid by travelers and collected by various lodging owners. From the 2% lodging tax, the Idaho Travel Council (ITC) distributes the Idaho Regional Travel and Convention grants to nonprofit, incorporated organizations within Idaho's seven travel regions. Learn more at visitidaho.org

The Idaho Travel Council meets across the state in January, March, May, July, and October. The public is encouraged to attend these meetings about the Tourism team's marketing program.

## TRAVEL COUNCIL MEMBERS

**KAYOKO MAGNUS** - Region I, Coeur d'Alene Resort
**ARTHUR MCINTOSH** - Region II, Lindsay Creek Vineyards
**PAT MORANDI** – Region III, Roaring Springs Water Park, Wahooz Family Fun Zone and Pinz
**VACANT** - Region IV
**JEFFERY GLISSENDORF** - Region V, Towneplace Suites by Marriott Pocatello
**LONNIE ALLEN** - Region VI, Three Rivers Ranch Fly Fishing Lodge
**TIM JOHNSON** - Region VII, Limelight Hotel
**EARL SULLIVAN** – At-large, Telaya Wine Co.

## ITC GRANT RECIPIENTS

- Coeur d'Alene Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce
- North Idaho Tourism Alliance (NITA)
- Post Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Visit Lewis Clark Valley
- Moscow Chamber of Commerce
- North Central Idaho Travel Assoc. (NCITA)
- Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Southwest Idaho Travel Assoc. (SWITA)
- McCall Area Chamber of Commerce
- Nampa Chamber of Commerce
- Cascade Chamber of Commerce
- Southern Idaho Tourism
- Pocatello Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Southeast Idaho High Country Tourism
- Bear Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Yellowstone Teton Territory (YTT)
- Sun Valley Marketing Alliance Inc.
- Hailey Chamber of Commerce
- Lemhi County Economic Development Assoc. (LCEDA)
- Stanley-Sawtooth Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Salmon Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Challis Chamber of Commerce
- Idaho Outfitters & Guides Assoc. (IOGA)
- Idaho Ski Areas Assoc. (ISAA)
- Idaho RV Campgrounds Assoc. (IRVCA)
- Idaho Lodging & Restaurant Assoc. (ILRA)

# CYBERSECURITY

In August of 2021, Governor Little convened the Cybersecurity Task Force to focus on promoting improved infrastructure, business, government, and personal cybersecurity. The task force also focused on ensuring secure, transparent, and resilient election infrastructure and enhancing the educational pipeline for cybersecurity workforce needs.

The members of the task force, co-chaired by Idaho Department of Commerce Director Tom Kealey and Idaho National Laboratory Associate Laboratory Director Zach Tudor, represent a diverse range of expertise and experience in cybersecurity initiatives. The task force developed 18 recommendations which can be found in detail in the Governor's Cybersecurity Task Force Report.
Learn more and find the full report at commerce.idaho.gov/cybersecurity