

# Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)

The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a federally-funded program under the National Institute of Standards and Technology operated in partnership with a range of public, private, non-profit and academic institutions providing technical assistance and support for manufacturing firms. Many of these firms are technology/innovation focused but the MEP program has a broad mandate to promote manufacturing across the United States.

The MEP has separate operations located in all states and Puerto Rico, supporting a broad spectrum of business development activities, including:

- **Export:** supporting business expansion into global markets
- **New Product Development:** assistance with all stages from prototyping to small batch manufacturing
- **Reshoring:** providing information and assistance in bringing back manufacturing jobs from overseas facilities.
- **R&D:** supporting manufacturers with federal grants for new product development, including Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grants.
- **Market Intelligence:** providing information on technology-focused business opportunities.
- **Business Continuity Planning:** preparing businesses for threats, including natural and other disaster events.
- **Lean and Quality Management:** providing information and support for process improvement.
- **Supply Chain:** technical and business assistance in developing competitive supply chains.
- **Sustainability:** technical assistance and support in reducing environmental impacts and costs.
- **Technology Scouting:** assisting business leaders identify technology-drive solutions outside of normal within industry channels.

MEPs also serve as liaisons between manufacturers and government agencies, trade associations, and universities and research labs. A key feature of the MEP network is the reliance on local consultants, instructors and other support entities. It is held that local providers can better connect with local businesses and will better understand those businesses needs and opportunities. While this is a national program, each state MEP can focus on locally-relevant programs and initiatives.

Additional program information can be accessed at: <https://www.nist.gov/mep>

Research by the MEP and Georgia Tech found that companies with a primary focus on innovation realized 50% to 100% greater growth in sales and profits over a three year period.

