



International Soft Landing Toolkit

Ann Arbor SPARK can assist in growing your business in the United States. We can help you eliminate the challenges faced when starting a business in a foreign country. This step-by-step informational guide is only the beginning – Ann Arbor SPARK can provide customized services as you move into the U.S. and Michigan markets.

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Mission:

Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.



Phase One: Getting Started

What are the first things that should be on your list when considering starting a new business in Ann Arbor? What about expanding your business to include an office in Michigan? Ann Arbor SPARK can help you navigate these waters, starting with the legal necessities:

1. Determine the [legal structure](#) of your business
2. Register the business name with the [state](#) and [county](#)
3. Register for a federal [Employer Identification Number](#) (EIN)
4. Register for payment of [federal taxes](#)
5. Register for payment of [Michigan taxes](#)
6. Do you need help starting your business? The [Michigan Small Business Development Center](#) provides counseling, training, research and advocacy for start-ups, existing small businesses and innovative tech companies.
7. Check out [Ann Arbor Visitor Information](#) to plan your visit

Phase Two: Getting Connected

Federal, state, and local governments understand the benefit and value of international investment and offer business assistance in a variety of ways. As you establish a U.S. presence, the following organizations can be useful to you as you learn about U.S. business practices.

- The [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) (800-827-5722) offers a wealth of information about starting, operating and growing a business.
- The [Michigan Economic Development Corporation](#) (MEDC) (888-522-0103) can answer questions related to the state of Michigan, including financing options and information on incentives, help connecting your company with Michigan firms seeking your product or services, and serving as a liaison to other Michigan governmental departments.
- The [Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC) (734-477-8768), housed at Washtenaw Community College, can answer export questions, help with market research, assist with business planning and financial strategy, and more.

Located in the heart of downtown Ann Arbor, [SPARK Central Innovation Center](#) offers an ideal location for launching, developing and growing your innovation-based technology. Tenants receive access to mentoring, networking and educational events. Marketing, recruiting, legal and other professional services are also available through the SPARK Business Accelerator.

If you need space, [search available buildings and land here](#).

Since our region is very diverse with many different cultures represented, there are many opportunities to connect with local community groups:

- [Asian American Student, Cultural, and Professional Development Groups](#)
- [German Club](#) at the University of Michigan
- [European Horizons](#) at the University of Michigan

Phase Three: Talent Services

Hiring Employees – When you begin hiring employees, you need to be aware of certain [state and federal employment laws](#), including interview questions to ask and avoid, employee benefit packages, worker compensation insurance, and more.

Immigration Assistance – Need assistance in your transition to the region and the United States? These professionals provide high-quality, responsive service in regards to employment-based immigration:

- [Suzanne K. Sukkar](#), Attorney and Counselor at Law (734-623-1694)

Assistance with US Citizenship Process – 8.8 million immigrants are currently eligible for citizenship in the US. [New American Workforce](#) works with businesses to assist their eligible immigrant employees with the citizenship process. Statistics show a direct correlation between immigrant integration and happier, more effective workers – which directly impacts business profitability. New American Workforce is funded by national and local foundations to work with businesses to offer free citizenship services to their legal permanent resident employees (green card holders). They provide these employees with free informational assistance and legal assistance to become US citizens. For more information contact:

- [Dr. Rita Fields](#), SHRM-SCP, Detroit Coordinator (248-752-5442)

English Language Training for Non-native Speakers – Need to brush up on your English language skills? Residents in the Ann Arbor region speak many different languages and in our local public school system, over 64 languages are spoken by students. Because of this diversity of language, there are many opportunities for English as a second language (ESL) classes:

- [Ann Arbor Technical High School's ESL for Adults](#) (734-997-1250)
- [Washtenaw Community College ESL Certificate](#) (734-973-3300)
- [Jewish Family Services ESL Lessons](#) (734-769-0209)
- [Michigan Language Center ESL Program](#) (734-663-9415)
- [Language Link Classes](#) (734-945-1743)

Translation Services

Need marketing materials, contracts, business information or other resources translated? These organizations are here to help:

- [University Translators Services LLC](#) (734-665-7295) – Any language
- [Forefront International](#) (248-705-2605) – Over 50 languages
- [Babel Latina Inc Language Services](#) (805-453-6647) – Any language
- Comisal, LLC (734-971-0805) - Spanish
- [Lingua Science](#) (734-930-1553) – Japanese
- [Lingua Technics](#) (734-662-0434) - Spanish
- Olas Translations (734-213-5396) - Spanish
- Servicios Diversos, LLC (734-973-9824) – French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai
- [Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County](#) (734-769-0209) – Arabic, Armenian, Farsi, Hebrew, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian
- [Ole Servicios Latinoamericanos Translation](#) (734-528-1212) Arabic, French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, Turkish
- [Ema Stefanova](#) (734-665-7801) – Macedonian, Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian
- [Japan-America Management Ltd](#) (734-973-6101) – Technical translations in Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Russian,
- [Epic Translations](#) (734-786-8293) – Any language
- [University of Michigan Health Services](#) (734-936-7021) offers interpreters for patients and families of non-English speakers during their time with the health system

Phase Four: Business Services

Banking – A local, U.S.-based bank is an asset to your organization. Providing business checking accounts, credit cards, various types of loans, lines of credit, letters of credit, and more, these local banks have expertise in international banking:

- [Bank of Ann Arbor](#) (734-662-1600)
- [Chemical Bank](#) (734-887-3100)
- [Citizens Bank](#) (248-226-7785)
- [Comerica](#) (734-930-2457)
- [Fifth Third](#) (734-214-7929)
- [Huntington Bank](#) (734-302-1481)
- [Key Bank](#) (734-741-6582)
- [Lake Trust Credit Union](#) (517-267-7200)
- [Old National Bank](#) (734-887-2619)
- [PNC](#) (248-921-8587)
- [University of Michigan Credit Union](#) (734-662-8200)

Capital – As a result of the partnership between Ann Arbor Spark and the MEDC, you have the great ability to gain access to capital and funding. The MEDC offers a variety of resources for businesses to assist in attaining access to capital and seeking potential funders. Connecting with Ann Arbor SPARK can help identify and assess the feasibility, but the following online resources are useful:

- [MEDC Capital Locator Tool](#)
- [Ann Arbor Spark Funding for Entrepreneurs](#)

Intellectual Property and Patent Protection – Need help protecting your business products? The following local law firms specialize in intellectual property law:

- [Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP](#) (734-418-4200)
- [Bodman PLC](#) (734-761-3780)
- [Butzel Long](#) (734-995-3110)
- [Miller Canfield](#) (734-663-2445)
- [Brinks Gilson & Lione](#) (734-302-6000)
- [Pear Sperling Egan & Daniels P.C.](#) (734-665-4441)
- [Nacht & Roumel P.C.](#) (888-312-7173)

Real Estate – As you move from temporary office space toward a more permanent solution, these local real estate property experts will help you find the right space for your business:

- [Domino's Farms Corporation](#) (734-930-4425) – Office Park
- [First Martin Corporation](#) (734-994-5050) – Commercial Real Estate
- [McKinley](#) (734-769-8520) – Commercial Real Estate
- [Oxford Companies](#) (734-747-6000) – Commercial Real Estate

Supply Chain – Locating a facility in a new area frequently requires an updated supply chain that reflects an optimal mix for that area. Identifying, qualifying, selecting, and on-boarding the new suppliers is a significant challenge.

- [IndustryStar](#) (734 794-3072) - Supply Chain as a Service

Other – No matter your business needs, we can connect you to great local resources to get your company up and running:

- [Plante & Moran PLLC](#) (734-302-6913) - Accounting
- [Rudolph Libbe Group](#) (419-241-5000) - Construction
- [DTE Energy Foundation](#) (313-235-9271) – Charitable Grant Funding
- [ITC Michigan](#) (877-482-4829) - Energy
- [Michigan Office Interiors](#) (734-929-6352) – Office Furniture



International Successes in Ann Arbor

Below are the 74 foreign-owned firms currently located in the Ann Arbor region, representing 17 nations and employing more than 11,000 people.

Australia: Amcor Rigid Plastics

Austria: Anger Machining; AVL Powertrain

Belgium: Bosal NA

Canada: Martinrea International; Pollard Banknote Ltd

China: BWI Group; SF Motors; TUSstar

France: Cerenis Therapeutics; Condat Corporation; EXSTO; Faurecia; Key Plastics; Navya

Germany: Borries Marking Systems; Carcoustics; Chem-Trend; Eberspächer North America, Inc.; Essen Biosciences; ETAS Inc; Genomatix; GFG Instrumentation; IPG Automotive; Leibherr-Aerospace; Liebherr Gear Technology; Mercedes-Benz Emission Test Lab; Mueller-BBM; Nagel Precision; Phoenix Contact; Polytec; Prime Research; Schnorr Corporation; Siemens Medical Solutions; SIKO Products, Inc; Wacker Chemical; Wandres Micro-cleaning; Zoller

India: Mahindra GenZe

Italy: Control Gaging

Japan: A&D Technology; ACTech North America; AGC America; American Honda; American Soy Products Inc; Asahi Kasei Plastics NA; AW Technical Center; Dexter Fastener Technologies; FTTA Fowlerville Proving Grounds; Horiba Instruments Inc; IMRA America, Inc; Kyocera Unimerco Inc.; Mitsubishi Motors R&D; NSK Corporation, Bearing Division; Pro-Face America; Subaru Research and Development Inc; Terumo Cardiovascular Systems; Toyota Technical Center; UBE Machinery, Inc.

Korea: Hyundai America Technical Center

The Netherlands: Koppert Biologic Systems

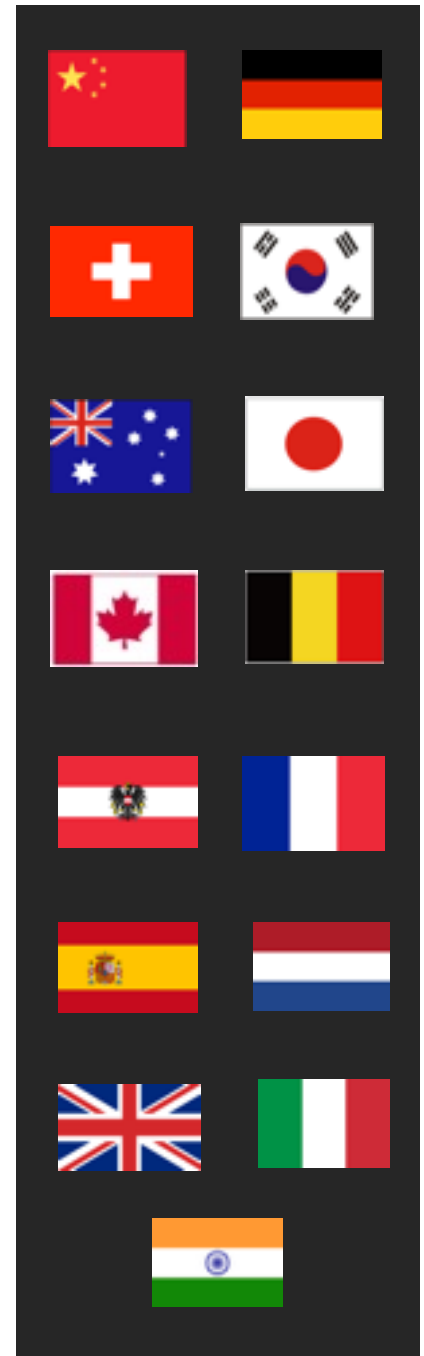
Spain: Aernnova; Grupo Antolin North America; NubePrint AA

Switzerland: Automotion, Inc; Eco Physics, Inc; Gudel Lineartec Inc; Klingelberg-Oerlikon Tec Center; Sonczboz

Taiwan: Wintek Electro-Optics Corporation

Thailand: Thai Summit Ogihara

United Kingdom: Cameron Balloons; Cinpres Gas Injection Inc; Secured by Design; Ultra Electronics USSI



Foreign Direct Investment Contacts

- **Wayne Brannon**, Principal at WDB Consulting LLC
- **Richard Corson**, Director at East Michigan U.S. Export Assistance Center
- **Michael Drake**, Director, Corporate Relations at University of Michigan
- **Tel Ganesan**, President & CEO at Kyyba Inc.
- **Joseph D. Gustavus**, Senior Principal at Miller Canfield
- **Soraya Kim, Esq.**, Chief Innovation Officer at American Center for Mobility
- **Peter Kozma**, Retired Executive at Liebherr
- **Bhushan Kulkarni**, President and CEO at GDI Infotech, Inc
- **Grace Lee**, Vice Chair/President at Asia Pacific American Chamber of Commerce
- **Dieter Lehnert**, Project Manager at German American Chamber of Commerce
- **Tom Nastas**, President and Founder at Innovative Ventures
- **Molly Swart**, Senior Trade Advisor at Automotive Business France North America
- **Rick Walawender**, Miller Canfield
- **Mark V. Heusel**, Member at Dickinson Wright



Ann Arbor SPARK can assist in growing your business in the United States by easing the challenges you may face when starting a new business in a foreign country. We are your connection to local resources — from helping fill available positions to making introductions to local banks, insurance firms, municipalities, and in other ways help your firm grow and thrive in the Ann Arbor area. We will be there with you every step of the way as you build your business in our region.

We can also connect you to local groups from around the world to help welcome you into the local community, point you in the right direction for real estate, education, and healthcare. We will help you make our home, your home. Start by checking out this step-by-step informational guide then contact Ann Arbor SPARK to discuss what specialized services you may need as you move into the U.S. and Michigan markets.

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