Ministry of SMEs and Startups

Press Release
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MSS Selects 188 Consumer Products for Export Support

The Ministry of SMEs and Startups (MSS) launched its 2026 K-Export Strategic Products program on October 28 at Startup Venture Campus Seoul (SVC Seoul), near Hongdae in Mapo District.

Established in 2024, the program helps SMEs capitalize on growing international demand for Korean beauty, fashion, lifestyle and food products. MSS selects products with strong export potential and works with major retailers, including Olive Young, to help the companies behind them enter overseas markets.

Previous participants have recorded substantial export growth with support from the program.

- Life With Corporation (beauty): Selected in 2024, the company sells carbonated facial masks containing ingredients such as Indian holy basil. Support included influencer marketing through Olive Young, online and in-store promotions through Shinsegae Duty Free, and assistance with certification and intellectual property protection through the export voucher program. Its exports grew approximately 690%, from around USD 390,000 in 2023 to USD 3.11 million in 2025.
- Phoinix (fashion): Founded in 2003 by a designer from Seoul's Dongdaemun fashion district, the womenswear company joined the program in 2025. It participated in Musinsa Japan promotions and influencer marketing campaigns, as well as pop-up stores in Tokyo and Osaka through a separate MSS program that helps SMEs expand overseas alongside larger companies. Its exports increased approximately 900%, from USD 24,000 in 2024 to around USD 240,000 in 2025.

This year, 983 companies applied. Global retail experts and overseas consumers evaluated the products' quality and international market potential, ensuring that customer preferences informed the selection. The final list comprises 188 products: 70 in beauty, 38 in fashion, 40 in lifestyle and 40 in food.

The products will be on display at a pop-up store on the venue's ground floor through October 31. Visitors can browse and try them free of charge, giving participating companies an opportunity to introduce their products to both Korean consumers and international tourists visiting Hongdae.

Selected companies will receive tailored assistance from major Korean retailers with international operations. Olive Young will support beauty brands; Shinsegae Department Store, beauty and fashion brands; Musinsa, fashion brands; Gmarket, lifestyle brands; and Lotte Mart, food brands. Support will include help securing listings with overseas retailers, running online and in-store promotions, and working with local influencers.

Companies will also receive preferential consideration for government export support, including vouchers for export-related services, overseas certification assistance, and participation in international trade shows and business matchmaking events. They will have priority access to MSS-organized overseas events that promote Korean products alongside Korean culture.

The event also launched a network connecting current and previous participants. Members will exchange advice on entering overseas markets, share successful approaches and build business relationships.

“Korean SME exports continue to set new records, with consumer products, led by K-beauty, playing a central role,” said Park Yongsoon, Deputy Minister for SME Policy at MSS. “We want these products to become leading Korean brands internationally and help generate growth across the SME sector. We will continue listening to businesses and responding with policies that help them succeed.”

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