

Northern Ireland Built for Business

Northern
Ireland





You're about to **find out why** Northern Ireland is better for business.

As you explore this document, you'll discover a thriving region bustling with energy and filled with potential for your business. So, whether you're looking for a new place to locate, or somewhere to source world-class products, Northern Ireland offers you unique advantages.

So, let's explore Northern Ireland...

A few key facts

- » We're perfectly positioned between mainland Europe and the USA, giving you **easy access to key markets** across GB, Europe and the USA.
- » We're the only part of the UK that shares a **land border with the EU** (Ireland).
- » There are 1.9 million of us, and **50% are under 40 years old.**
- » Our capital is **Belfast and Derry-Londonderry** is the second largest city.
- » We offer unique free movement of manufactured goods from Northern Ireland to **GB and all 27 EU countries.**



Belfast Harbour

“Northern Ireland has a rich legacy of manufacturing excellence and entrepreneurial spirit, and it is this, combined with a skilled workforce, culture of innovation, strong local supply chain, and strategic access to global markets that makes it a compelling opportunity for forward-thinking investors.”

Kieran Hegarty,
President, Terex
(Dungannon and
Derry-Londonderry)



Belfast



You can reach us via **three airports** which offer regular direct flights across the UK and Europe.



There are also **four seaports - Belfast, Foyle, Larne, Warrenpoint** - along our famous coastline.



And by road or rail, it's under **two hours** to Belfast from Dublin, the capital of Ireland.

Northern Ireland's District Council Areas



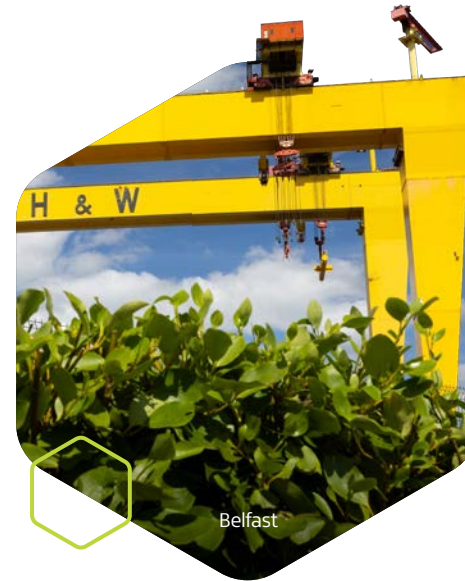
A magnet for international businesses

Over 1,500 international companies have already set up in Northern Ireland.

That includes A&O Shearman, Allstate, Baker McKenzie, Citi, Collins Aerospace, Microsoft, Rakuten, Seagate, Terex and many more. And when you see the advantages we offer, you'll know why they chose us.

"Belfast is at the very heart of our global network of activities, and we are very proud of what we have achieved here. We truly believe the secret sauce is the combination of forward-thinking government policy, a strong education system and a determined and resilient population."

David Livingstone,
Managing Director,
Citi Group (Belfast)



Northern Ireland gives international businesses:

- Unique seamless tariff-free and customs-free access to GB and EU markets.
- A skilled, well-educated and motivated workforce backed by a commitment to improving work-relevant skills.
- Competitive operating costs.
- An excellent telecoms infrastructure.
- A supportive R&D environment – driving innovation through collaboration across government, academia and the private sector.
- A government dedicated to supporting businesses to adopt productivity-boosting technology such as AI and robotics.
- A commitment to reach Net Zero by 2050 and helping companies cut energy needs and maximise Green Economy opportunities.

"Our presence in Northern Ireland means we will now be ideally situated between two key markets across Ireland and the UK, allowing us to serve even more customers as we continue to expand our footprint globally.

The presence of a highly skilled workforce and the strong tech and business environment in Northern Ireland made it a very easy decision to invest in the region. Northern Ireland is a very attractive location for inward investment, start-ups, spin-outs and scale-ups, and Ergo are thrilled to be contributing to this thriving tech and business environment."

Paul McCann,
CEO,
Ergo (Belfast)



A number-one-ranked region for FDI Strategy

(FDI Intelligence's Mid-sized European Regions of the Future 2024)

A trusted **global trading partner**

Over 100 countries trust Northern Ireland to deliver world-class products and services. Our strong track record and reputation comes from our companies' ability to develop longstanding and trusted partnerships with global customers.

Our expertise in areas such as Fintech, Cyber security, Aerospace, Materials handling, Cleantech, Medtech and Construction is internationally recognised. Northern Ireland companies are deeply embedded in the supply chains of numerous high-profile global enterprises. As trusted partners, our companies are relied upon to deliver quality on time, every time.

Our companies deliver innovative technology and product solutions to clients across the world, including:

- High speed data analytics for smart cities, elite sports and industry 4.0.
- AI powered regulatory technology for compliance in banking and financial services.
- Cyber security to reduce digital risks to corporations and governments.

- Earth observation and satellite applications to monitor and predict Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and Seaweed production.
- Medical devices to meet the future of healthcare and cutting-edge antibody, cell therapy and drug development for cancer and other conditions.
- Decarbonisation of heat through heat pumps, solar and battery storage solutions.
- On and offshore wind supply chain, from pre-assembly to repurposing wind turbine blades.
- Bulk materials handling equipment that can operate in the harshest environments, in temperatures ranging from -40 to 50°C.
- Construction services for the five storey mega-basement project in Claridge's Hotel, featured in the BBC programme 'The Mayfair Hotel Megabuild'.



>> We know what buyers want and we can deliver:



Technical specification



Pricing



Design



Added value



Quality



Customer service

...and much more.

Just a few of our local companies making their mark on the world stage...

Almac – a world leader in a range of expert services across the drug development lifecycle.

KX – specialists in high-volume, high-speed, data-intensive analytics used by NASA, F1 and Wall Street.

STATSports – trusted by elite sports teams worldwide including Premier League and UEFA Champions League soccer clubs, NBA, NFL and MLS.

Denroy – all fairings on the Airbus A320 are manufactured by Denroy, in the same facility which has produced over 100 million of the world famous Denman brushes.

The Deluxe Group – builds story-led interiors and guest experiences across themed entertainment, hospitality, luxury residential and cruise line sectors around the world. This has included work for Disney and Motiongate.

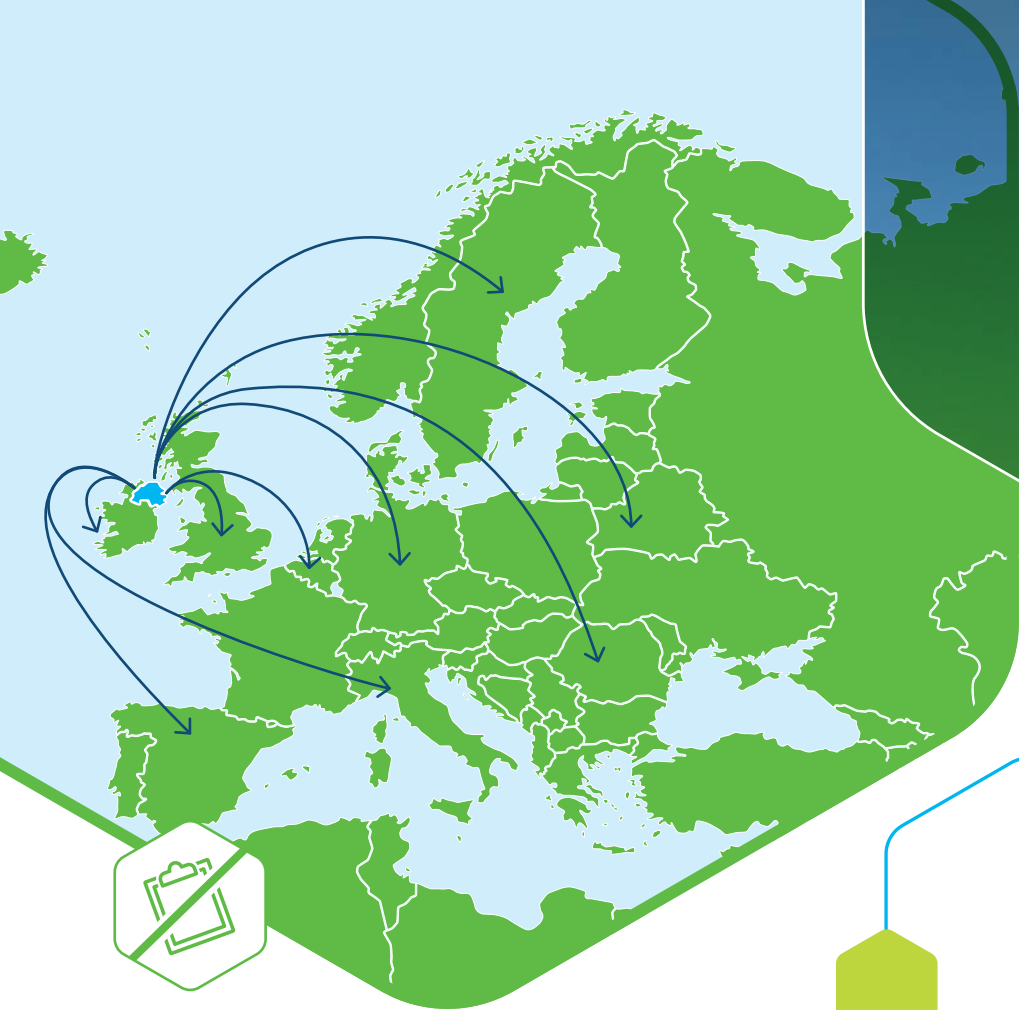
Foods Connected – develops software solutions that support McDonald's global supply chain to deliver its product specification and facility auditing solutions.

Lagan Energy Engineering – develops carbon-friendly solutions in hydrogen, on and offshore wind, battery storage and decarbonisation of ports. Contracted by Energia to commission an electrolyser, creating the first wind farm in the UK and Ireland to produce green hydrogen.

Plaswire – works with global players in key sectors such as Aerospace (Airbus) and Wind (Iberdrola) to create commercial solutions for waste products.

Bushmills – the world's oldest licensed distillery, producing whiskey for over 400 years. Today it is among the top three most popular Irish whiskeys, selling over 13 million bottles each year globally.





Seamless tariff-free and customs-free

GB and EU market access

If you locate your business here, it means you can ship seamlessly to GB and EU markets – without tariffs, customs documentation or declarations.

Or if you source goods from Northern Ireland, our unique market access and regulatory alignment with the EU make the buying process easy.

Locate here:

- Sell to both GB and all 27 EU countries without tariffs, customs forms, declarations, rules of origin issues or non-tariff barriers.
- Manufacture using EU inputs which move seamlessly into Northern Ireland.
- Benefit from UK free trade agreements.
- Improve efficiency by having both your manufacturing and distribution operations in Northern Ireland.

Source products from here:

- No checks or processes.
- No customs or tariffs.
- No need to register as an importer.
- Order just like you did before the UK's exit from the EU.



Northern Ireland is the only place in the world with seamless tariff-free and customs-free market access to both GB and the EU.



Warrenpoint Harbour

A bit about Invest Northern Ireland

As the region's economic development agency, Invest NI's job is to help your business make the most of all the opportunities Northern Ireland offers.

» Invest NI has teams located all over the world



Helping you expand into Northern Ireland

- We work closely with you to make it easy to establish and expand your operations here.
- We can help with initial fact-finding missions and discovery visits to help you find the ideal property, talent and much more.
- We also offer financial assistance packages tailored specifically for your business.
- We even make networking easy, by setting up introductions across different businesses and sectors and local suppliers.



Helping you connect with Northern Ireland suppliers

- We help you source world-leading products and services by connecting you to Northern Ireland companies.
- You can meet our team and companies at sector exhibitions, trade shows and Meet the Supplier events around the world, giving you the perfect opportunity to network and find out more.

"We have multiple R&D locations throughout the globe and have chosen to expand within Northern Ireland due to its strong talent pool, associated links to local universities and successful placement and graduate schemes.

Our decision to expand in Derry is a testament to the wealth of talent available in the North West and the support, advice and guidance we've received from Invest NI."

Caoimhe Keogan,
Chief People Officer,
AVEVA



Northern Ireland's education system is **number one** for primary maths in Europe, and **sixth best** in the world.



We attract around **69,000** higher education students from **almost 100** different countries to our higher education institutions.



Our students consistently outperform other UK regions at GCSE and A-Level (high school leaving).



82% of our undergraduates earn a first-class or upper second-class degree.



72% of our school leavers go on to further and higher education.

A snapshot of our people and education

Our universities and further education colleges

Northern Ireland's universities and colleges work closely with businesses and government on a skills pipeline.

Queen's University Belfast

- A member of the prestigious Russell Group of 24 leading UK research-intensive universities.
- In the top 200 universities in the world for impact and sustainability.
- 4th in the world for international outlook.
- 13th in the UK for research intensity.

Ulster University

- In the top 30 UK universities in the Guardian University Guide.
- 87% of research is world-leading or internationally excellent.
- The newest Belfast campus is one of the largest higher education capital builds in Europe.
- 19 active spin-out companies with a collective turnover of over £50 million and 700 staff.



Queen's University Belfast, Computer Science Building

Further education colleges

- Home to six further education colleges with around 29 campuses spread across Northern Ireland.
- These colleges develop a comprehensive portfolio of academic and vocational courses that include A-Levels, foundation degrees, apprenticeships and higher level apprenticeships.

Assured Skills Academies

This is a joint initiative between Northern Ireland's Department for the Economy (DfE) and Invest NI. It's a unique, fully-funded pre-employment training programme and it guarantees that incoming companies can find the right talent with the right skill-sets. That means newly arrived operations can hit the ground running.

The model helps companies recruit new staff in areas including Software development, Data analytics, Cyber security and Financial management.

"EY is delighted to launch our fourth Assured Skills Academy. The programme has already supported the creation of a number of permanent new roles within EY NI and plays a vital role in enabling us to meet client demand across our wide range of services and offerings. The latest Academy, focused on Digital Engineering, is a particularly exciting programme and will equip participants with skills across a broad range of areas including Application Development, Systems Integration and Digital Sustainability."

Rob Heron,
Northern Ireland Managing Partner,
EY (Belfast & Derry-Londonderry)



Ulster University Magee Campus

Competitive costs



Research & Development:
The Patent Box means your business could pay a **lower rate** of corporation tax (10%) on profits from patented inventions.



Operating costs:
on average, costs are around **40-55% lower** here than other parts of Western Europe.



R&D expenditure credit (RDEC) lets businesses claim **20% tax relief.**



No tariff or customs costs to move goods to **GB and the EU.**



For every **£1** spent on R&D, the real cost to a company can be as little as **41p.**



Fiscal environment:
our corporation tax rate is **25%** – the lowest in the G7.



Low carbon and green tech

Northern Ireland is using its expertise in Engineering, Technology and Construction to deliver into the low carbon and net zero sector. Our renowned innovative spirit and underpinning government policies enables Northern Ireland to position itself as partner of choice in net zero technologies for trade and green investment.

Our green economy assets



A modern gas network connected to **Ireland and Great Britain.**



Access to **four million mega-litres** of rechargeable water per year from underground aquifers.



The **only dedicated purpose-built facility** for offshore renewables on the island of Ireland and in the Irish Sea.



A world-leading renewable grid system with a further **£2bn** planned infrastructure spend.



The only large-scale, salt cavern storage facility for natural gas on the island of Ireland. It's capable of providing **25%** of the UK's capacity.



90 anaerobic digesters across the region.

Hydrogen and alternative fuels

Northern Ireland has a unique advantage because it has the assets and resources for alternative fuels and hydrogen deployment.



Substantial renewable capacity to produce hydrogen at scale.



A Hydrogen Training Academy.

Decarbonisation

Northern Ireland is becoming a key player in global net zero ambitions.

- Offshore wind and maritime cluster supporting global projects.
- Applying industry 4.0 and the Internet of Things to drive energy efficiency and productivity.
- Commercial circular economy solutions beyond basic recycling.
- Centre of excellence for manufacturing heat pumps.

Sustainable water management

Northern Ireland has enhanced water quality and resource management through advanced water treatment technologies like UV disinfection and wastewater treatment.

A pioneering project by Northern Ireland Water employs electrolysis to treat wastewater by capturing and injecting oxygen into the process, instead of releasing it. This method generates substantial hydrogen as a by-product, which aids in decarbonising transport and supports the hydrogen economy.

Green transport

Northern Ireland is decarbonising transport on:

Land: Northern Ireland company Wrightbus introduced the world's first hydrogen-powered double deck bus.

Sea: Belfast-based Artemis Technologies recently launched the world's first commercially viable zero-emission 100% electric workboat foiling vessel, 'Pioneer of Belfast'.

Air: Light weighting for aircraft to reduce fuel usage on flight paths.



Long Mountain Windfarm, Dunloy

Technology

All across Northern Ireland, exciting start-ups are working side-by-side with big-name international companies.



No.1 region for US cyber security firm investment



Over 100 companies in Northern Ireland work in the AI and Machine Learning sector. Meanwhile, we've got major clusters of excellence developing in Cyber security, Hardware, IoT, Medicine, Robotics, Multimedia, Analytics and Economics.

“Northern Ireland's best-in-class educational system, paired with hard-working curious people creates the perfect environment for software development and cyber security. Aflac has found the region to be a top talent hub, supporting our global business.”

Keith Farley,
Senior Vice President,
Aflac (Belfast)

Major firms like BT, Telefonica Tech, IBM, Microsoft, Nvidia, Rapid7, Proofpoint and Synopsys are here already and are tapping into local knowledge, talent, expertise, support, the tech ecosystem and our strong sense of entrepreneurship.

Meanwhile, our homegrown firms such as Kainos, EOS IT, STATSports, Data Intellect, MetaCompliance, Anaeko, Instil, KX and Analytics Engines are making waves around the world. These local companies are revolutionising sectors such as Cyber security, AI, Fintech, Smart city technologies and more.



No. 1 location for new software development projects in Europe

Creative technologies

Northern Ireland's digital creativity sector fuses exceptional talent with state-of-the-art technology.

It's a dynamic industry, where companies collaborate with global clients and international partners. They're delivering innovative solutions in gaming, animation, media production, post-production and interactive content.



Northern Ireland company
Sixteen South
has won over
50 international awards
including
two EMMY® nominations



» Northern Ireland is also gaining worldwide recognition as a thriving hub for film and television production. Iconic projects like the HBO epic Game of Thrones showcased Northern Ireland's capabilities to the world. And that's not a one-off – Netflix, Sony, Universal Pictures, BBC and Disney have also chosen Northern Ireland for recent productions.

Financial services

Northern Ireland is a key location for international financial services. We've got expertise in fund administration, investment operations, regulatory compliance and risk management, capital markets, asset management and banking.



Belfast is the world's top city for Fintech inward investment projects.

We have exceptional credentials in Fintech, including the highest concentration of Fintech employment in the UK.

Those are just some of the reasons so many global financial services institutions have already set up operations of scale here. The list includes Allstate, Citi, CME Group, DailyPay, The Insurance Office of America and TP ICAP. That's before mentioning a dynamic cluster of home-grown companies such as Data Intellect, Dactacts, Fern Software, FinTrU, Options, Pytilla and Regtick.



"The Financial services sector and particularly the Fintech sector in Belfast have grown massively over the past 10-15 years. There's a great talent pool and a world-class education system, and if you take these factors combined, then it really makes it attractive for any global financial services company to have a presence in Northern Ireland."

Tina Hasenpusch,
Global Head of Clearing House Operations,
Banking & Collateral Management,
CME Group (Belfast)



Professional and legal services

The professional services cluster in Northern Ireland includes the “Big 4” accountancy houses, which have all located their UK delivery centres in Belfast. Deloitte’s and PwC’s Belfast centres are their largest in the UK outside London. BDO, Grant Thornton and PA Consulting are also active right here on our doorstep.



Northern Ireland’s legal sector is vibrant, dynamic and internationally focused. In the last decade, globally recognised law firms including A&O Shearman, Baker McKenzie, Herbert Smith Freehills and Factor have all opened centres here.



We also share a regulatory framework and company law regime with England and Wales, which is yet another reason Northern Ireland’s a proven location of choice for international legal services.



“Our Global Solutions Centre in Belfast has exceeded our targets, with nearly 100 dedicated employees now part of our team - a testament to the talent in the vibrant region.”

Liz Washko,
Managing Shareholder,
Ogletree Deakins (Belfast)



Newry

Life and health sciences

We're thriving in Life and health sciences. We've got deep expertise in Precision Medicine, Diagnostics, MedTech, Pharma and Biotech, not to mention a highly skilled workforce of nearly 20,000 people.

With over 250 innovative businesses, including Randox, Almac, Diaceutics PLC, CV6, Neurovalens, Axial 3D and Sonrai Analytics, the local sector is bolstered by world-class research and close collaboration between industry, academia and clinicians.



We also have a strong university spin-out culture, with Queen's University **ranked 2nd** in the UK for entrepreneurial impact.



We're home to **18** world-leading centres of excellence with more than 1,000 researchers.



With a population of nearly two million and our uniquely integrated health and social care system, Northern Ireland is the ideal test bed for population-size clinical trials.

Agri-food and Agri-tech

Northern Ireland is famous for food and drink. The sector is filled with producers who are passionately dedicated to traceability and quality.



Our Agri-tech sector helps global food producers meet rapidly-changing consumer demands and helps increase profits, manage land, improve sustainability, boost yields and protect food quality.



Over 100 years ago, Northern Ireland introduced whiskey to the world. Now our distillers and craft brewers are leading a vibrant renaissance, with over 20 distilleries and breweries.



We are incredibly proud of our global reputation for food safety. Pioneering research is underway at Queen's University Belfast's Institute for Global Food Security – a specialist centre that advises the UK and other governments on food safety.

Advanced manufacturing and engineering

You may already know of our strong engineering heritage. Our companies are globally renowned for delivering products and services for the Advanced manufacturing, Aerospace, Defence and space, Construction, Materials handling, Energy, Renewables and Electronics sectors.

Funding from the Belfast Region City Deal is helping to create a new £98m Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC), which will create a 'Factory of the Future', and give companies access to the very latest technology, specialist equipment and expertise.

This consolidates and enhances our world-leading research hubs – the Northern Ireland Advanced Composites & Engineering Centre (NIACE), the Polymers Processing Research Centre (PPRC) and the Northern Ireland Technology Centre (NITC).

Northern Ireland has strengths in photonics technologies applications for data centre technology, cancer detection, pharmaceutical sensing, and optical communications, with a particular focus on integrated photonics manufacturing and design.





Over 40% of the world's tracked mobile crushing and screening equipment is made in Northern Ireland.



Northern Ireland has around 50% of the global 1st and business class seating market share.

“As a renowned leader in the design and manufacture of interior aircraft solutions, Collins Aerospace is continually seeking to elevate levels of comfort for airline customers.

This latest R&D investment aims to create the most efficient production system for a new, innovative and highly complex aircraft seat that is far superior to anything else currently on the market. Our team in Kilkeel has a strong reputation for R&D and innovation excellence and we're well positioned to undertake this challenging project.”

Alan Henning,
Managing Director of Operations,
Collins Aerospace Kilkeel

A new state-of-the-art Centre for Industrial Digitisation, Robotics & Automation (CIDRA) is being created with funding from Derry and Strabane's City Deal. It's going to be a dedicated demonstration space for robotics, automation and AI. This 'ideas factory' for R&D in new businesses will be a cutting-edge support facility for local and international industry.



Northern Ireland is home to a wide range of homegrown and international businesses including Artemis, Ryobi, Seagate, Terex and Wrightbus.

Innovation

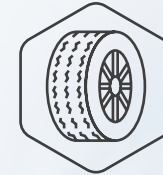
Northern Ireland has a proud reputation for innovation



Andor Technology designed and developed cameras that discovered two new Jupiter-sized planets.



Titanic, the largest and most luxurious passenger ship of its time, was designed, built and launched in Belfast.



John Boyd Dunlop invented the pneumatic tyre in Belfast in 1888.



The portable defibrillator was designed in Northern Ireland in the 1960s by Professor Frank Pantridge.



In 1917, Harry Ferguson patented the technology that led to the modern tractor.



Northern Ireland firm Neurovalens developed Modius SLIM, a groundbreaking wearable technology that can modify metabolism rates, appetite and fat storage.



Newry-based STATSports is a world leader in sports performance monitoring technology, with elite teams worldwide using its 'Apex Pro' system.



Lord Kelvin, the father of modern science, was born in Belfast in 1824.



4 CITY & GROWTH DEALS



£1.3bn investment

Northern Ireland is benefitting from four city and growth deals that will deliver sustained and inclusive economic growth across the region.

The UK Government and the Northern Ireland Executive has agreed a funding package of £1.3 billion for the deals.

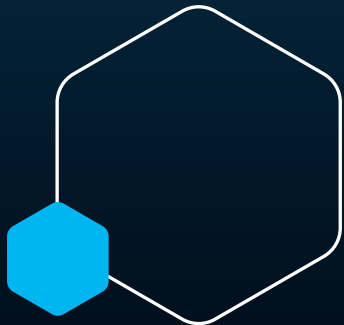
Each deal has a series of capital projects that collectively aim to drive sustained and inclusive economic growth, helping to drive competitiveness, boost productivity and the creation of good jobs.

These transformational investments will:

- Help create global centres of excellence in key growth sectors.
- Provide opportunities for businesses to create breakthrough technologies, products and services.
- Further strengthen our leading-edge business and research base.
- Support new competencies and capabilities.
- Develop the infrastructure for the next generations of products and services.

International businesses and research institutions can also benefit from collaboration opportunities.

They will also support next generation digital capabilities and enable regeneration, underpinned by infrastructure developments and investment in skills. This will connect people to jobs and services that will allow products and services to be tested, trialled and de-risked.



Exciting investments are on the way...



Advanced manufacturing & engineering and digital twinning:

a factory-of-the-future innovation centre, along with the development of research capabilities in robotics and automation. A UK national digital twinning facility will also be established.



Artificial intelligence:

two leading-edge research facilities with complementary skills development programmes.



Challenge funds:

a series of funds to address key regional, societal and productivity challenges.



Agri-tech:

Agri-tech R&D and trialling facilities and food incubation.



Innovation hubs:

a number of integrated innovation hubs to support entrepreneurship.



Life & health sciences:

advanced clinical trial, drug discovery and Medtech facilities.



Virtual production:

integrating virtual production with traditional film, animation, games and the broadcast industry, alongside leading-edge R&D capability.



Green economy:

a range of industrial decarbonisation investments, including a research and application centre to support the adoption of hydrogen technologies.



Quality of **life**

Northern Ireland is
a fantastic place to live.

In fact, research shows people here are the happiest in the UK. Here are just a few of the reasons why:

- Excellent schools
- Affordable housing
- Friendly people
- Top tourist attractions
- Vibrant hospitality sector
- Rich arts and culture
- Stunning scenery
- Historical landmarks
- Fabulous beaches

Gortin Glen Forest Park, Omagh



Armagh Apple Orchard



Mourne Mountains, Newcastle




Bushmills Inn



Marble Arch Caves, Fermanagh



Belfast



To find out more, please visit
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