

Growing export opportunities for UK businesses in the Caribbean

The Department for International Trade (DIT) recently hosted an event in Bristol in partnership with the Caribbean Development Bank and the Caribbean Council, showcasing the growing number of opportunities for UK companies in Caribbean markets.

A new analysis of HMRC data by DIT shows that the UK exported £1.2 billion to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2019 – an increase of 76.1% from the four quarters to the end of Q1 2018, with the export of services alone (£1 billion) accounting for 83.6% of this total.

Swindon-based company David Jarvis Associates was present at the Bristol event and is already tapping into demand for British goods and services in CARICOM, having recently secured an opportunity to support the production of the National Spatial Plan for the Jamaican Government.

The company's team of consultants, which consists of chartered town planners, urban designers and landscape architects, will produce technical reports after extensive assessment of the island. The reports will guide the Jamaican Government on where to locate housing, industry, infrastructure and tourism in a climate resilient and sustainable way.

David Jarvis Associates Chairman, David Jarvis DipLA PPLI said:

Attending DIT events is invaluable as you get to meet in-country representatives from a selection of countries. In addition, at the Bristol event there were two speakers from the Caribbean Development Bank, and they mentioned some projects that their board had only approved in the few days prior, so we got to hear about the opportunity first.

Doing business in the Caribbean and places like the Middle East is made much easier because the contract language is English – it is much simpler for me to talk to ministers and permanent secretaries about our services without worrying about a language barrier.

Securing this opportunity with the Jamaican Government has been really rewarding and I would encourage other businesses to consider exporting because if we can find international success, so can you.

Since being founded in 1982, David Jarvis Associates has worked extensively with governments, public authorities and the private sector all over the

world on contracts involving post-mineral extraction, strategic environmental impact assessments and design projects.

With an annual turnover of £2 million and a host of multi-national clients who work across over 70 countries, the company works anywhere in the world where there is a demand for its services. In addition to its recent contract with the Jamaican government, David Jarvis Associates is also working on a project in the United Arab Emirates, with a Trinidad brief also in the pipeline.

HMTC for Latin America and the Caribbean Joanna Crellin said:

The Caribbean is an excellent entry point for SME exporters, offering opportunities covering a wide range of sectors from food and drink, healthcare, to security and defence.

There are significant opportunities in infrastructure and energy as the Caribbean region is rapidly emerging as an offshore oil and gas hub with countries like Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica presenting a myriad of possibilities for UK energy suppliers.

And even on islands that are less focussed on oil and gas, there are opportunities for UK businesses to engage on renewable projects in solar, wind and geothermal.

Earlier this year DIT signed the CARIFORUM-UK Economic Partnership Agreement to ensure that companies can continue trading with the Caribbean on the same terms as they do today after Britain leaves the EU.