

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland opens Northern Ireland Business and Innovation Showcase in London

Leading companies from across Northern Ireland are showcasing their products, services and expertise in London today (15 September) as part of a high-profile Northern Ireland Business and Innovation Showcase.

Organised with support from the Department for International Trade and Invest Northern Ireland (INI), the Showcase will create opportunities for Northern Ireland organisations to network with international companies, governments and investors to create business opportunities, boost exports and investment into Northern Ireland.

The event at the QEII, which is being opened by Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis, is a highlight of the Northern Ireland Office's Centenary programme to mark 100 years since the foundation of Northern Ireland.

It follows a Number 10 reception hosted by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson this morning (15 September) and a City of London Corporation reception at London's Guildhall to welcome Northern Ireland businesses to the capital last night.

In total, 28 Northern Irish organisations will be exhibiting in the business showcase exhibition, including Northern Ireland's two universities, Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University. The exhibitors represent a cross section of the key sectors within the Northern Irish economy, including financial services, fintech, health and life sciences, ICT, advanced manufacturing and cyber security.

Welcoming the event's opening, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"Today I will welcome businesses from across Northern Ireland to 10 Downing Street as they showcase their products and services to new markets, from the Tayto crisp to vital healthcare products helping doctors carry out lifesaving work.

"This year we are celebrating the huge contribution Northern Ireland has made to our country over the past 100 years and looking ahead to the enormous potential of its employers and innovators.

"The UK Government will continue to promote Northern Ireland interests to help boost investment and jobs as we build back better from the pandemic."

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

"I am delighted to welcome such a large number of Northern Ireland businesses from a variety of sectors to London to showcase their innovation, expertise and quality products.

"This Showcase is an ideal forum to show the positive contribution of Northern Ireland firms to the UK economy, and reinforces the UK Government's commitment to build back better by creating opportunities for businesses to flourish through trade.

"It is particularly fitting that this Showcase, hosted by the Northern Ireland Office, is happening in Northern Ireland's Centenary year, as it symbolises all that is positive about today's Northern Ireland and its ambitions for a bright and prosperous future."

First Minister of Northern Ireland Paul Givan said:

"Northern Ireland is a fantastic place to live, work and invest. I'm pleased to be here as First Minister to mark both Northern Ireland's 100-year history and its tremendous potential for the future.

"Today it is a place of innovation, looking forward with optimism to tomorrow's opportunities. The businesses and organisations present at this showcase are a representation of that vibrancy and creativity, and I applaud all those involved in this wonderful event.

"Across government, industry and a wide range of stakeholders, we are working collectively to enhance Northern Ireland's reputation on the global stage."

Northern Ireland Economy Minister Gordon Lyons said:

"Northern Ireland has a prestigious and storied history of innovation and global business success, and is now well established as a global leader in new and emerging fields like cyber security, fintech and advanced manufacturing.

"My Department's 10X Economic Vision charts the course for building on our successes to date and maximising our many strengths to make Northern Ireland one of the world's leading small economies.

"We will invest in our people, upskilling and reskilling for the jobs of the future, and focus our energies on investing where the positive impact will be greatest.

"This is an exciting time for Northern Ireland as we work together to create an even stronger economy for the benefit of everyone in society."

Chief Executive of Invest NI Kevin Holland said:

"The Northern Ireland Business and Innovation Showcase in London is a fantastic platform for our exhibiting businesses to promote their world-class

products, services, skills and innovation to potential new buyers and investors.

“We look forward to engaging with them and promoting Northern Ireland as a place for business growth and excellence.”

In addition to established firms, 12 startups and innovative companies will have the opportunity to highlight their services on an Innovation Platform, demonstrating that NI is leading the way with innovation and is a great place to invest, partner and do business.

Tourism NI will also host an area of the exhibition hall to showcase the very best of NI locations, hotels and tourist attractions.

As well as the exhibition and the innovation platform, the Showcase will feature keynote speakers, such as Northern Ireland’s Special envoy to the US Trevor Ringland, who will give a speech on Foreign Direct Investment. There will also be panel sessions on cyber security, innovation in Northern Ireland, creative industries, financial services, foreign direct investment and women in business in Northern Ireland.