

Northern
Ireland

Fast track

Investment Handbook

[InvestNI.com](https://www.investni.com)





Choose Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is a highly cost competitive place to do business. We have a world class digital infrastructure, a consistent pipeline of talented business-ready graduates, a committed workforce with a strong work ethic and first class, dedicated support for new investors.

Invest Northern Ireland (NI) is your trusted business partner throughout and beyond your investment project, on hand to give you the best business solutions. Our focus is on building relationships, developing strategies and providing world class support in an ever changing global business environment. We strive to help you deliver against your objectives, with engagement and partnership at the forefront of our investment process.

Cost competitive salaries coupled with a highly skilled and innovative workforce are at your disposal. We have a young population with 53% under 40 years of age. They are results driven and dedicated to their task.

Northern Ireland has an advanced, high spec communications infrastructure and transport networks linking you with Europe and the rest of the world. We also have affordable property and a very competitive corporation tax rate.

“It’s all about the people. The people we have attracted and retained here in Belfast just have this great attitude, very high skills, and work together as a single team in a very effective way with a forward looking pragmatic approach.”

James Bardrick, Chief Country Officer UK, Citi

Our Investors Tell Their Story

(click to view)



Reasons
to invest in
Northern
Ireland

Northern
Ireland offers
altogether
more for
business

To see our range of assistance, visit our website at [InvestNI.com](https://www.investni.com)

The investment journey

Invest NI's support for our investors is second to none and we will be with you through every stage of your investment journey. We can offer financial assistance for employment, capital, training and R&D. We can also educate you on the local market, introduce you to key contacts and influencers within your sector and the wider business network. A dedicated Invest NI advisor will guide you step by step through our approval process.

Both part of our approval process and key to your business' development, your business plan will be a clear definition of the investment project, how it fits with your long term objectives and the key milestones against which you can measure your progress.

The approval process will commence with the submission of your full business plan for the NI operation. Your dedicated Invest NI advisor will provide guidance on the completion of the business plan and subsequent timeframes throughout the process, an approximate guide would be:

Within 5 working days:

We will review your business plan to ensure it contains all the required information for the appraisal process to begin.

Within 20 working days:

A process of due diligence will be carried out on your business plan by our appraisal team and you will be notified as to whether we can go ahead.

Business case submission:

At this stage we will discuss with you any issues arising from the due diligence process and agree both the level and structure of the proposed assistance and any conditions attached to these. Once agreed, your Invest NI advisor will prepare a summary of the casework and submit to the approvals committee within 15 working days.

Approval:

Your Invest NI advisor will answer any questions the approvals committee may have regarding your case. Generally this takes 11 working days but larger projects will require a higher level of approval and therefore may take longer.

Agreement:

When the approvals committee is content a Letter of Offer will be issued. This is a legally binding document between you and Invest NI and you should receive this within eight working days of final approval.



The best people: Educated, skilled, talented and business-ready

Within Northern Ireland's governmental structure, the [Department for the Economy](#) is responsible for funding both Invest Northern Ireland, and the further and higher education sector in the region.

This allows us to [build effective, strong partnerships with further education colleges and universities](#), giving business access to emerging talent and building [future-focused](#) and relevant [academic research partnerships](#). These strong partnerships between industry and government drive [skills development in the region](#).



Companies, universities and government agencies and departments, work together to create a business environment that reflects the needs of the business community in Northern Ireland. This has also led to a particularly [responsive and business oriented education system](#), particularly at [college and university level](#).

In recent years Invest NI has found that skills quality and availability is the single biggest issue for businesses, when considering an investment location.



Read: Assured Skills: delivering skilled employees through bespoke training programmes

It is this close partnership between business, government and academia that has enabled Northern Ireland to respond to the skills challenge and to be in a position to provide an assurance to businesses that the appropriate high quality skills will be available when they locate in Northern Ireland.

Invest NI works very closely with a network of reputable and trusted recruitment agencies who can deliver the right candidates for your business needs.

Every stage of the process is managed by the agencies including advertising, sourcing, screening CVs, shortlisting and interviewing, and notification and negotiation of offers.



A Guide on EU Employment Law is available on our NIBusinessInfo website

Well connected

The UK's vast support infrastructure ensures excellent service support to business. A resilient, digital network provides high-speed voice and data connections throughout the world. Northern Ireland was the first region in Europe to have 100% access to broadband. Hibernia Networks' transatlantic cable, provides the lowest latency connections available between major commercial and financial centers in North America, Europe and beyond.

We have a high capacity, low-latency transatlantic cable system, providing direct connectivity between Northern Ireland and North America, as well as onward connectivity to Europe and beyond. It offers:

- Services up to 100G per wavelength
- Protected services offering 99.999% availability
- Interconnection with eight points of presence across Northern Ireland
- Onward connectivity to Great Britain and Europe
- High connectivity at very competitive cost

- Fully digital, fully fiber optic communications network
- Prospering telecoms sector
- Deregulated and highly cost competitive

Use our cutting edge communications infrastructure to do business with your customer base around the world.

1st



First region in
Europe with
100% broadband
coverage

Transport Infrastructure

Transport Links

Due to its compact nature and size, all locations in Northern Ireland can be accessed within approximately **90 minutes of Belfast**.

A well-developed bus and rail network already operates and further significant developments are taking place.

Northern Ireland has three airports, Belfast International, George Best Belfast City, and City of Derry.

The region has four ports – Belfast Harbour, Foyle Port, Warrenpoint Harbour and Larne Harbour.

Dublin airport is 90 minute drive from Belfast and provides direct access to over 180 destinations in 40 countries.

[Read about the Belfast Transport Hub.](#)



Hosted Visits

Visiting us

For many companies, this is your first experience of Northern Ireland. We recognise that first impressions count.

We will host you and deliver an insightful, informative and enjoyable visit programme, connecting you to the right people and giving you the perfect opportunity to see why Northern Ireland is right for your business.

The most important aspect of the hosted site visit is learning from the experiences of people just like you, who have already made the investment decision and successfully set up operations in Northern Ireland.

However, your time here will not be all work and no play. You will get a chance to experience our culture and our passion. To see the stunning architecture of Titanic Belfast, feel the vibrant atmosphere of the Cathedral Quarter and taste some of the best locally produced food and drink you are likely to find anywhere.

Belfast has been acknowledged as one of the best small European cities for 'business friendliness' by fDi Magazine (*part of the Financial Times group - fDI's European Cities and Regions for the Future 2018/19*). And, along with the Causeway Coast, Belfast was **Lonely Planet's number one region to visit in 2018**.

During the hosted site visit, we will support you by:

- **Linking you with existing investors.** Meet them, hear their story and learn from their experience.
- **Showing you our talented pool** of potential candidates. Hear about university internships and our unique Assured Skills training programmes.
- **Showing you property solutions.** View permanent and serviced office accommodation.
- **Providing you with market analysis.** We can supply you with market information, benchmarks and cost information.

No two visits are the same as they are tailored to the needs of your company and investment project. They can range from short one-day 'scouting' visits, to the more detailed, visiting multiple locations and running over two or three days.



Research and development is a corporation tax relief that could reduce your business tax bill. Read about R&D Tax Credits

Legal IP and tax

Legal Entities: There are two choices for registering your business in the UK including Northern Ireland:

A Subsidiary is wholly owned by, but a separate legal entity from the parent company. Liable for corporation tax on your profits.

A Branch is the same entity as the parent. Profits and losses are incorporated with the overseas parent. Debts and liabilities are the responsibility of overseas parent.

Intellectual Property: Protecting your intellectual property. There are charges applicable for carrying out checks on existing patents and for the registration and renewal of patents, trademarks and design rights.

Specialist advisors in Invest NI can assist you with the IP protection process. You can also visit the [Intellectual Property Office website](#) for more information.

Patent Box is a scheme that allows companies to apply a 10% rate of corporation tax to all profits attributable to qualifying patent.

Read more about Patent Box (Gov.UK)

Tax in the UK:

The current UK rate of [corporation tax](#) is 19%, the joint lowest in the G20.

The UK has double taxation agreements through treaties with other countries.

More about the UK's tax treaties with countries (Gov.UK)

Value Added Tax (VAT) is payable on most goods and services supplied in the UK. The current VAT rate is 20%.

Learn about the UK's VAT system

Citizens of any countries in the European Economic Area and Switzerland can work freely in the UK.

Bringing key overseas employees to work in the UK is for your UK entity requires a sponsor licence from the UK immigration authorities.

Once the licence is in place, non-EEA employees can come to work for your UK entity under a Tier 2 Intra-Company Transfer (ICT) or Tier 2 General work visa.

More information on process and criteria for the Tier 2 Visa is available here.

Put your business in a good place

We are committed to finding you the right space for your business set up. We offer independent advice and a full range of solutions:

- Landing or incubator space
- Hi spec manufacturing facilities
- Building fit out and technical advice
- Office rental
- Invest NI managed sites
- Financial assistance may be available through a Property Assistance Grant



Search for available commercial property in Northern Ireland

Commercial Property Search

Belfast



Business networks

Invest NI works with local councils, government departments, economic development organizations, further and higher education, sector specific representatives and business development organisations in order to provide the highest level of expert business support services to our clients.

Northern Ireland has a well-developed business network offering everything from best practice advice, networking events, opportunities to develop business partnerships and expert advice on a range of business services.

Meet ups



DevOps meet ups

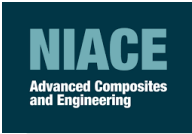
Belfast has a vibrant tech meet up scene. Informal meet ups for people interested in DevOps (culture, automation, metrics, sharing) happen regularly.



The Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) is a worldwide organization focused on improving the security of software. The Belfast Chapter is very popular with inward investors and indigenous software companies.



Collaborative networks



NIACE brings together engineering companies and knowledge providers to work on projects developing technical expertise and helping support innovation and product development across multiple sectors including aerospace, automotive, construction, marine, renewables and space.



The Connected Health Innovation Centre (CHIC) is focused on business-led research in the area of connected health. It seeks to lead transformational research which aligns care needs with technology providers, researchers and clinical experience. Areas of focus include: sensors and diagnostics; smart living; analytics, and internet of things.



The Health Innovation Research Alliance Northern Ireland (HIRANI) is an alliance of universities, health organisations and other industry bodies. Acting as a voice for the life and health sciences sector it drives collaboration and connectivity across business, academia and health organisations and collectively promotes and strategically positions it nationally and internationally.

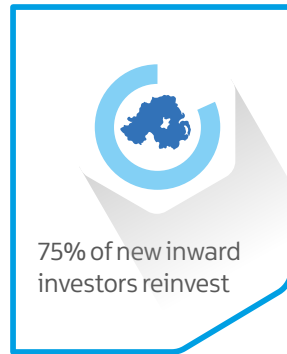
Breaking news

To announce your operation in Northern Ireland, we can connect you to local media to maximize your brand exposure and give you the opportunity to engage with stakeholders, customers and potential employees. We can also promote your announcement across our social media networks worldwide.

We can fully support you in the announcement process co-ordinating local media attendance and helping to ensure your message is heard.

And the support continues...

Following your successful launch in Northern Ireland we will be your **trusted business partner**. You will have a dedicated advisor and have access to our comprehensive suite of assistance including financial and non-financial support.



Peace Bridge, Derry~Londonderry

