

**File name:** queen's\_awards\_chapter\_3 (720p).mp4

**Moderator questions in Bold**, Respondents in Regular text.

**KEY: Unable to decipher** = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

M: It gives me great pleasure to be here today at this event to promote the Queen's Award for Enterprise. I represent Northern Ireland on the Lord Lieutenant's National Regional Committee to promote the award, and in association with the department in London, we are trying to raise the profile of the Award. It's regarded as the most prestigious award for UK businesses. The Queen's Award for Enterprise recognises rewarding outstanding achievements in fields of innovation, international trade, sustainable development and promoting opportunity through social mobility. Global recognition, increased turnover, growth in international trade and boosted staff morale are just some of the benefits companies have cited on winning a Queen's Award for Enterprise. In 2022, as the ministers already said, there were four winners in Northern Ireland. In 2021 there were five winners, but the talent and skills and successes of local companies would suggest that that tally should be much higher. From the 2021 winners, some facts. 92% of the UK winners in 2021 were SMEs and of that, 44 of the 205 winners have less than ten employees. Should be encouragement to companies in Northern Ireland who might think that these awards are only for very large businesses. If your company can apply, please do so and see the benefits that you will accrue over the years for your business. Please also spread the word about the Award because it is-, a lot of people don't know about it and probably think, 'It's not for me,' so encourage companies who would qualify to make an application.

Finally, I'd like to thank the Minister for taking time out of his busy schedule to come and help us. I know he's very keen to promote these awards and I encourage his department to get involved with promotion. Thank you to Invest NI for organising today and special thanks to Nicky Bruno and her colleagues from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy for coming over to present to you and hopefully answer any questions you may have. Thank you.