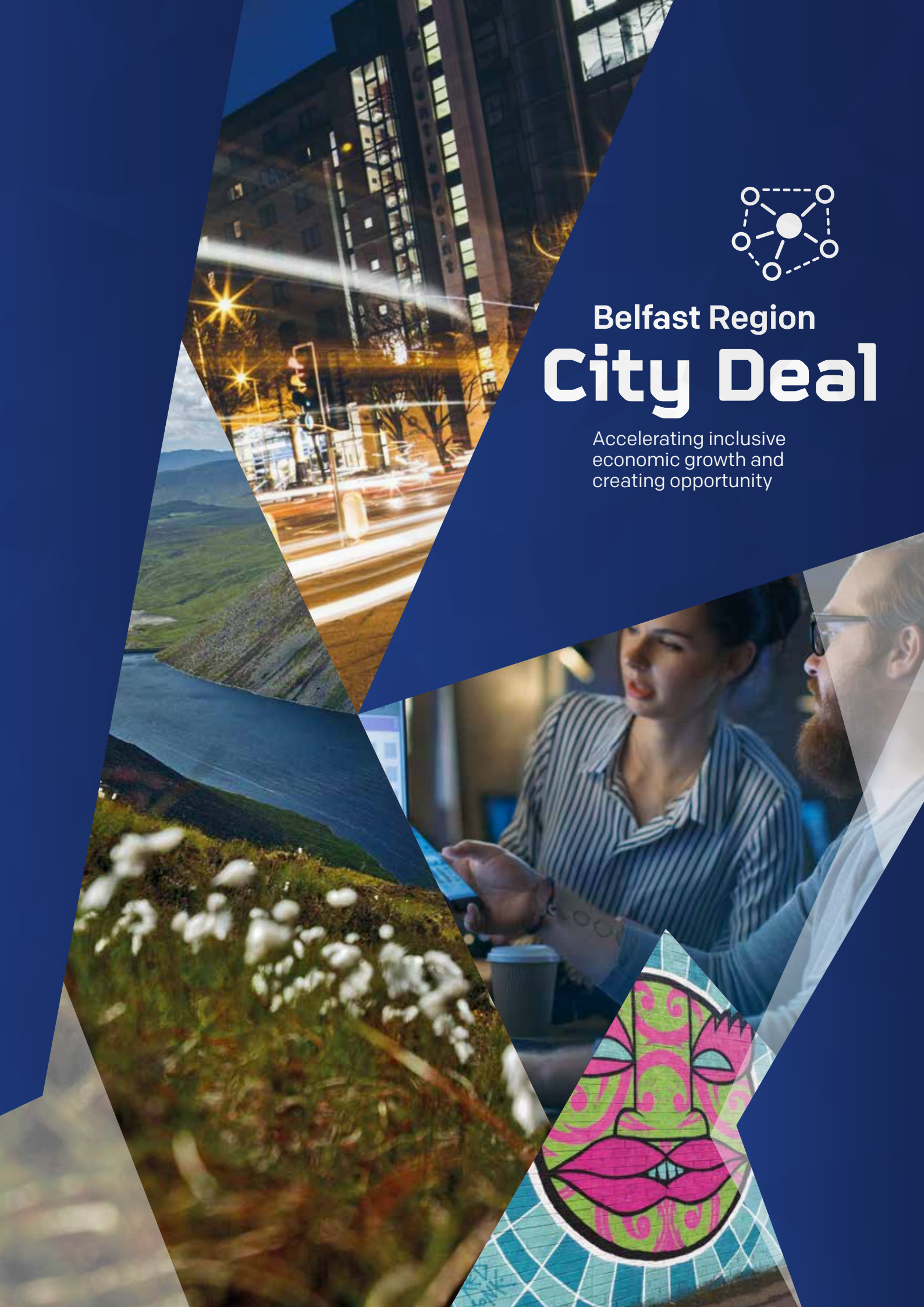




Belfast Region City Deal

Accelerating inclusive
economic growth and
creating opportunity





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economic growth and
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Innovation and digital

Investing in digital
and innovation to
drive productivity

Boosting tourism and regenerating our region

Creating internationally
visible visitor products
and regenerating our
towns and cities

Infrastructure

Connecting people to
opportunity and services
through enhanced
infrastructure

Employability and skills

Underpinning inclusive
economic growth
with a comprehensive
employability and skills
programme

22 integrated projects underpinned by investment in
employability and skills

Delivering up to 20,000 new and better jobs

Transforming our innovation and digital
capabilities

Boosting tourism and regenerating our region

Connecting people to opportunity
and services

Increasing GVA by £470 million
per annum



Background

A City Deal is a bespoke package of funding and decision making powers agreed between central government and local regions; aimed at helping to harness additional investment, create new jobs and accelerate inclusive economic growth.

A number of regions across the UK have benefited from City Deals, and in November 2017, the Chancellor announced that negotiations on the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) would commence.

Our goal is to use this opportunity to secure £1 billion of co-investment from a range of sources. This will allow us to accelerate inclusive economic growth for the whole region and deliver up to 20,000 new and better jobs, accessible to people from all communities.

The City Deal signals a new opportunity for collaborative working. The BRCD is comprised of the six councils of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, working in partnership with Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University, the Further Education colleges across the Belfast Region and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The development of the programme is overseen by a Programme Board made up of Chief Executives of the six partner councils, senior officials from the Northern Ireland Civil Service, and the Vice Chancellors of Queen's University and Ulster University.

In order to maximise the opportunities from the City Deal, we want to work in genuine partnership and collaborate with residents, businesses and other interested parties in innovation, digital, tourism, infrastructure, and skills development throughout the process.

We have received support from all of the local political parties and from key businesses across a range of sectors for the BRCD proposals. To make a success of the Deal, it's important that we work collaboratively and bring everyone with us.

The BRCD has been developed by all six partner councils. Each organisation brought forward its own proposals and the final list of agreed projects was submitted to the NI Secretary of State, Karen Bradley, and to the Northern Ireland Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in September 2018.

What is the timescale?

Work on the next stage is now progressing following the Autumn Budget Statement on 29 October 2018 when Chancellor Philip Hammond announced £350 million investment from Treasury over the next 15 years. As part of the Deal the NI Executive is expected to add a further £350 million and councils and university partners will contribute £150 million.

On 26 March 2019, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, alongside the Belfast Region City Deal partners and the Northern Ireland Civil Service, signed the Heads of Terms for the Deal which outline the joint commitment of all the partners to full implementation of the BRCD. This allows the BRCD to move to the next phase, which will take 12- 18 months, and will involve developing business cases for each of the City Deal projects.

What will it look like?

The Belfast Region City Deal councils have agreed an integrated set of projects to transform the region's economy. The agreed programme will seek to address a number of key barriers to growth by taking measures to improve productivity, invest in innovation, tackle economic inactivity and deprivation, address skills gaps and inequalities, invest in additional world-class visitor experiences and develop the physical and digital infrastructure.

At the heart of our City Deal vision is a drive to deliver inclusive growth and to focus efforts on areas in which we can become genuinely world-class; namely digital / ICT, life and health sciences, creative industries, advanced manufacturing and tourism.

Investment in Innovation and Digital Capabilities



The Belfast Region requires a catalyst that will drive forward investment in research and development and help embed a culture of innovation to act as a driver for increased productivity.

Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University have collaborated extensively to develop proposals for global centres of innovation excellence in key growth sectors in which world-leading expertise in our universities can be leveraged by businesses to create breakthrough technologies, products and services.

This will be enabled through a digital partnership, technology testbeds, digital infrastructure and an innovators' network, that will connect and enable the centres of excellence and reach out across the region to build the capacity in indigenous businesses to fully engage in the Knowledge Economy.

The Regional Innovators Network

This will comprise a network of state of the art innovation spaces and facilities which will provide problem-solving environments that foster creativity across the region, empowering businesses and communities with critical opportunities for innovating, creating and skill building. A central network will co-ordinate and support individual spaces across the region; serving as an organiser of collaborative bids, a contact point for out- of-region expertise, and a hub of experience ensuring that as spaces are developed they put into practice lessons learned across the network.

The network will incorporate high quality, digitally advanced co-making spaces in each council area to provide a platform for education and skills training, particularly for new economy skills and digitally enabled design. It will offer technologists, local businesses and local communities the space and equipment to pursue innovation projects at small and medium scale roll out in conjunction with the testbeds programme. The Regional Innovators Network will provide a front door for local businesses to access the investments in innovation, digital capability and skills that will be delivered through the BRCD.



The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC)

This will operate at the interface between academia and industry; accelerating new technology developments through the innovation phase and ensuring that real industrial challenges based on market need are solved through collaboration with the best university research.

Queen's University Belfast, with Ulster University and its BRCD partners, have developed an ambitious Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) concept, that will become the springboard for manufacturing innovation within the region. Through the integration with, and expansion of, the existing facilities it will establish a strong and coherent offering within the region's innovation ecosystem. It will build on 50 years of sustained innovation and support to industry via exceptional industrial outreach centres such as the Northern Ireland Technology Centre (NITC) and the more recent university-industry partnership, NIACE. It will provide a coherent, linked suite of facilities for the manufacturing sector, uniquely bringing together advanced manufacturing techniques with Industry 4.0 disruptive technologies.

Alongside upgraded facilities placed within an academic setting (NITC) and an industry environment (NIACE) a new Factory of the Future facility is planned as the flagship for this BRCD project. The facility will be unique and provide access to the very latest manufacturing technologies, supported by experienced professional engineers with design and simulation capability. This facility will enable companies to experiment with new process flows and materials before implementing in their own factory and will be a location where a new start up can prototype ideas before committing to the installation of expensive high-end equipment themselves. The AMIC proposal is closely interwoven with other BRCD projects, drawing on customised digital and data capabilities from the proposed Global Innovation Institute, as well as providing a natural region-wide link between the Factory of the Future and the Regional Innovators' Network, which aim to provide introductory manufacturing capability through access to facilities aligned to local business needs. We will ensure that our City Deal plans complement those of Derry City and Strabane District Council and any other areas that come forward and deliver on regional framework priorities.



The Centre for Digital HealthCare Technology (CDHT)

This will be a high visibility, high quality centre for digital technology and associated living labs in the areas of cardiology, diabetes, respiratory and stroke. The proposed project will see the development of an integrated three-way co-creation platform (private sector, university and hospital health professionals) for the health and life sciences sector that will provide the basis for partnership working to jointly identify accelerated productivity opportunities for improved healthcare pathways (or market opportunities) and to support the realisation of commercial market solutions at a faster rate than is currently achieved. This will be underpinned by engineering, computing, molecular science and artificial intelligence capability. A key aspect of the proposed cluster is the partnership working of CDHT scientists and companies with the existing pilot clinical Living Lab at the Royal Victoria Hospital. In the longer term, the expectation is that the scope of the Living Lab will be expanded into new areas including the treatment of respiratory conditions, stroke and diabetes. The CDHT will also be a focal point for a digital healthcare technology cluster called the Digital Healthcare Technology City District which will comprise relevant companies, academic centres and public / private healthcare organisations.

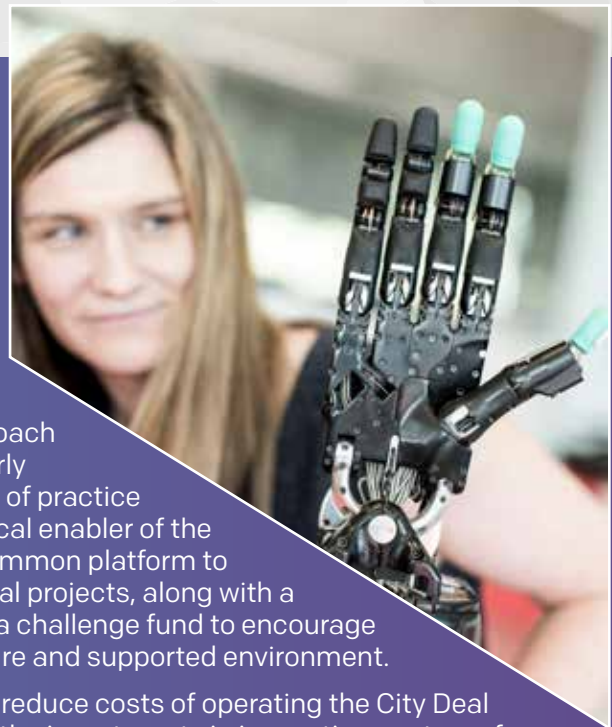
The Centre will create a branded cluster of medical device and technology companies that through a supportive and collaborative eco system of co-location and working will build the size and value of the sector through increased levels of commercially successful innovation that leads to tangible benefits of increased sales by cluster companies, a health technology related accelerator programme, increased skill set and enhanced opportunities for graduates in the region. The close partnership between healthcare professionals, researchers and industry professionals will result in more digital healthcare technology products being launched in Northern Ireland which will have better product market fit, scale globally faster and have a lower failure rate than the status quo. The co-ordinated cluster approach will further enhance the Belfast region's reputation as a world class centre for digital healthcare technology, making it the location of choice for increased levels of R&D and global FDI. The centre will allow for a soft landing for FDI companies offering top class facilities, access to expertise, equipment and combined with market validation, allowing them to scale and grow rapidly. The concept has received support from world leading companies such as Dell, Microsoft and BT who are keen to invest in the centre to boost productivity.



The Digital and Innovation Platform and Partnership (DIPP)

This is a shared physical and digital environment where the academic research community, tech entrepreneurs and industrial partners will come together to address key challenges in business and society through the application of the IoT and data science. The DIPP will support a common approach to big data sourcing and management, including early adoption of prevailing industry standards and codes of practice for secure and ethical use of data. The DIPP is a critical enabler of the Innovation and Digital ecosystem. It consists of a common platform to share expertise and data capabilities across City Deal projects, along with a regional partnership to facilitate collaborations and a challenge fund to encourage businesses to test products in a cost-effective, secure and supported environment.

Ultimately the DIPP is an enabling project which will reduce costs of operating the City Deal projects and ensure that the impact and benefits of the investments in innovation centres of excellence, data capabilities and testbeds are extended out beyond the core partners to businesses across the Region. Enabling affordable access to expert capabilities in areas such as data analytics and cybersecurity and the opportunity to utilise controlled test-environments has the potential to have a transformative impact on the ability of businesses in the Belfast Region to invest in innovation.



The Global Innovation Institute (GII)

This is a Queen's University led cross-disciplinary digital innovation hub that builds on the momentum of the world-class ECIT (Institute of Electronics, Communications & Information Technology) facility that has already succeeded in putting Belfast on the map in terms of digital innovation.

It will draw together the leading-edge skill-sets of three of Queen's University's internationally recognised Global Research Institutes: The Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT), The Institute of Health Sciences (IHS) and The Institute for Global Food Security (IGFS), to anchor and support the creation of a Global Innovation Quarter in Belfast, comprising a community of businesses linked by a common digital innovation thread. A new peta-scale AI supercomputer housed in the Institute and implementing a best-in class real-time 'AI Cloud' will catalyse and accelerate an innovation agenda based on research strengths in priority growth sectors for the region: Health and Life Sciences and Agri-food.

The project will be distinguished by its focus on providing customised, domain-specific solutions to innovation barriers in the selected sectors, co-designed with business. It will benefit from the unique combination of expertise contributed by ECIT, which enables a holistic approach to digital innovation, encompassing hardware, software, networks, data processing and AI services. The Global Innovation Institute will enable co-location of research expertise within an established innovation community at Catalyst Inc with high potential for growth.

The capabilities delivered by the GII underpin and enable other BRCD innovation projects including The Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (i-REACH), The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) and The Screen and Media Innovation Lab.



The Infrastructure Enabling Fund (IEF)

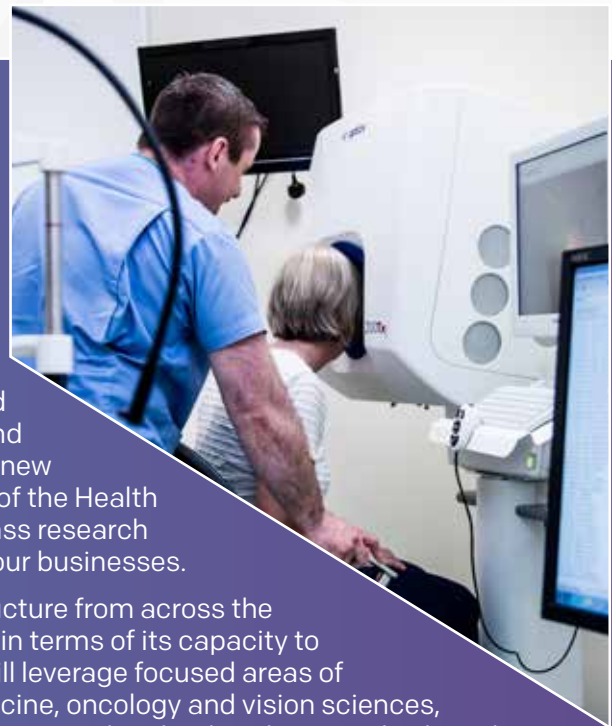
This will deliver the next generation of digital connectivity required within and between the Belfast Region City Deal projects. It will catalyse strategic business activities and ensure inclusive growth by delivering state-of-the-art connectivity to the Belfast Region. It will also make provision for connectivity needs in Belfast Region rural locations identified as testbeds for smart agriculture and tourism. The IEF will supplement ongoing government connectivity efforts and ensure key businesses and City Deal projects obtain timely connectivity to enable successful delivery of all innovative services.



The Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (i-REACH)

This is a transformative project led by Queen's University, Ulster University and partners from the life and health sciences sector. The project sits within the umbrella of an emerging Health Innovation NI concept, which seeks to bring a unified 'front door' for external investment into the health and life sciences sector. i-REACH is a central element of new clinical infrastructure that will underpin the delivery of the Health Innovation NI proposition and builds on the world class research carried out by NI's universities and the strengths of our businesses.

i-REACH will bring together existing clinical infrastructure from across the region that is disparately located and overstretched in terms of its capacity to deliver cutting edge clinical trials. The investment will leverage focused areas of research quality and scale, such as respiratory medicine, oncology and vision sciences, and seek to attract further investment into the region to conduct leading, large scale clinical trials. As medical research is being transformed by the arrival of Big Data, AI and machine learning technologies, the i-REACH facility will dovetail closely with the BRCD investment in a Global Innovation Institute, to deliver clinical trials that are supported by real-world, real-time data.



The Screen and Media Innovation Lab

This is a collaboration between Ulster University and Queen's University which seeks to build on the incredible success story that the creative industries have created for NI, already contributing £1billion GVA to the NI economy and employing around 26,000 people. It will provide the Belfast region with a world-leading research and innovation centre to accelerate the growth of the sector and drive the convergence of creativity, content development, technology and digital delivery. Building on both institutions' shared track record of innovation in research and teaching, this flagship centre will cement a closer engagement between the region's two universities and the creative industry sector by providing a special, dedicated space where academics, researchers and the creative sectors will collaborate and innovate.

It will provide:

- cutting-edge incubation facilities
- transformative production, studio and R&D facilities
- access to a range of programmes to upskill the creative economy workforce
- a cultural hub to drive networking and general engagement with the sector



Smart District and Testbeds Programme

As well as being an area for dynamic industry and specific technology testing, the Smart District will act as the flagship for the Regional Testbed Network, including connectivity infrastructure, such as 5G networking, at a large enough scale for multiple large-scale use cases across different sectors. Technology-ready testbeds will be created to develop and attract investment in technologies related to key sectors, such as health, tourism, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.



Boosting tourism and regenerating our region

The Programme of Investment



Given the unique history, natural environment and cultural heritage of the Region, there is a real opportunity for a further step change in the tourism offering, building upon the significant success already achieved in terms of tourism growth and in external validation (for example, the Belfast and the Causeway Coastal Route was named the Lonely Planet's number one destination in 2018). We want visitors to stay longer and spend more regenerating our towns and cities. We plan to do this by creating internationally visible tourism products that will extend the tourist route from Belfast through Carrickfergus, towards the breathtaking Causeway Coast and Glens along North Down and into the majestic Mourne Mountains. In addition, if the Belfast Region is to achieve its potential, it is also vital that investment is directed towards towns which have suffered from industrial decline and economic restructuring, so that they have the opportunity to play a full part in the Region's growth. Supporting major regeneration projects will help to transform the economic potential of key towns across the region.

Belfast Story Destination Hub

Located in Belfast City Centre, this unique international attraction will invite you to explore the many stories of the city and its people through an immersive, multi-gallery experience. The galleries will draw on the full range of interpretive techniques, using a combination of multi-media technologies and selected objects to reveal histories, personal secrets and fascinating facts about Belfast.

This attraction will be the centrepiece in a major, multi-venue cultural destination where locals meet and Belfast connects with its international visitors. As well as the Belfast Story, the experience will include a large scale exhibition space and cafés, restaurants and retail outlets appropriate to the nature and content of the attraction. It will be of landmark architectural quality, with attractive covered outdoor areas.



Gateway to the Mournes

An initiative aimed at redefining the visitor destination experience associated with the Mourne Mountains and the coastline, enhancing access to Newcastle town, the Mourne Mountains, foothills and forests.

The project will develop the tourism infrastructure at a number of sites to provide a unique and unforgettable experience inspired by the Mourne Mountains, including a new signature visitor experience at Thomas Quarry and a gondola ride.

This exciting project will draw on the natural and built heritage of the area to attract a greater number of local, domestic and out of state visitors.



Hillsborough Castle and Heritage Village

The proposed investment aims to unlock and further enhance the significant tourism potential of this landmark asset. The project will create a world-class heritage attraction, encouraging greater movement and connectivity between attractions by developing Hillsborough Forest, restoring and developing Hillsborough Courthouse and Fort, developing a new magic garden in Hillsborough Castle and investing in public realms.

It is anticipated that this exciting project will not only enhance the tourism offering and increase the number of visitors, but also increase spend in the local economy and create new jobs in the area.



Gobbins Phase II

The extension of the Gobbins' Cliff and Coastal Path to Heddles Port, doubling the length to 1.5 miles. It will also deliver a new adventure experience, similar to models in Cheddar Gorge and the Lake District.

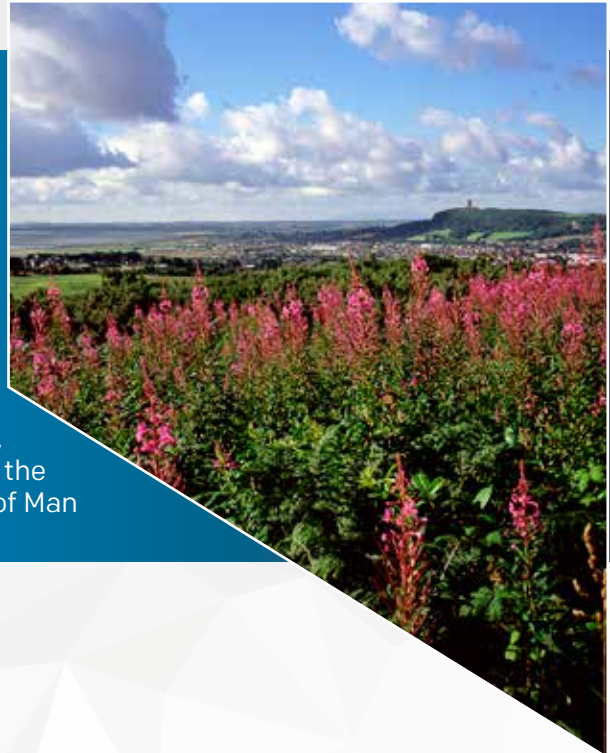
This project is aimed at re-establishing the Gobbins' coastal walkway using the existing path on the rock ledges with new light 'roped bridge' and other high adventure type structures to cross gullies and crevices, to secure the site as a sustainable and viable attraction, increase overnight stays and out of state visitors and leverage additional investment into the overall visitor experience.



Whitespots

The start of a phased approach to the wider development and creation of a multi-use recreational and international visitor destination, including an interactive outdoor activity zone, a unique Mining Heritage attraction and a thought provoking experience outlining Ireland's role in the World War.

Located in a spectacular country park linked by a series of greenways to Belfast and the wider region, the park has panoramic views of Strangford Lough, the Ards Peninsula and across the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man and Scotland.



Game of Thrones Legacy attraction Moneyglass

Building on the success of past Game of Thrones live branded experiences, including the Touring Exhibition and Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience, HBO will open up the production archives and share them with the series' loyal fans.

The Game of Thrones Legacy attraction will offer the first opportunity for the public to set foot inside some of the most iconic locations from the series - including the Winterfell Castle in Moneyglass - and behind the camera lens to see how the world's biggest TV show was made.

The site will feature the breathtaking sets and exhibit costumes, props, weapons, models, and other production materials. The visitor experience will be enhanced by state-of-the-art digital content and interactive materials, showcasing some of the digital wizardry for which the series is renowned worldwide.



Carrickfergus Castle, Walls and Public Realm

A programme of investment to regenerate, reposition and rebrand the town of Carrickfergus, placing it firmly on the map as an authentic heritage-led tourism hub, part of the wider Belfast Story and the 'must visit' starting point to the internationally recognised Causeway Coastal Route.

This will include the development of the Castle, Walls and surrounding environment as a world class heritage site and visitor attraction, high quality public realm works enhancing the Castle setting, facilitating access to the town centre and creating a venue for residents and visitors.

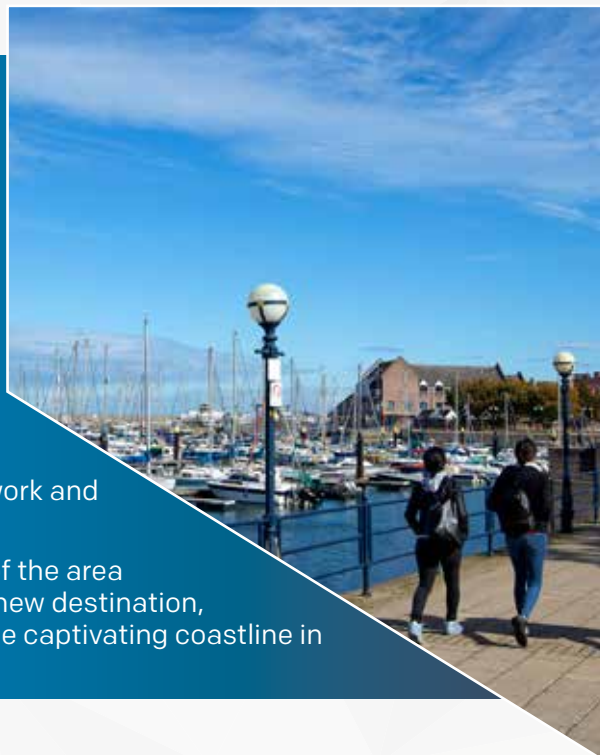


Bangor Waterfront Regeneration

A scheme which will regenerate a three mile stretch of coast from Ballyholme Beach to Bangor Town Centre, Marina and Waterfront, creating a seaside destination of choice.

Key elements of the scheme include the redevelopment of Bangor Marina, development of a "Bangor by the Sea" attraction, new greenways and coastal paths linking people, place and sea, reimagining Ballyholme beach and creating new artwork and public realm.

Not only will this work enhance the attractiveness of the area and support wider regeneration, but it will create a new destination, encouraging more visitors and residents to enjoy the captivating coastline in new and different ways.



St Patrick's Barracks Regeneration

The first phase of this innovation led regeneration scheme will enable the development of a next generation science park on a key site in the borough. The proposed Integrated Industrial Inspiration and Innovation Campus, i4C, will be developed on a former military site adjoining a number of areas of deprivation in Ballymena.



Newry Regeneration

Investment in city centre regeneration, including a new theatre and conference facility, Grade A office development and public realm .

This project aims to stimulate private sector investment to create a thriving city centre, secure new jobs across a range of sectors, encourage greater numbers of visitors to Newry and revitalise the night time economy.



Infrastructure

The Programme of Investment

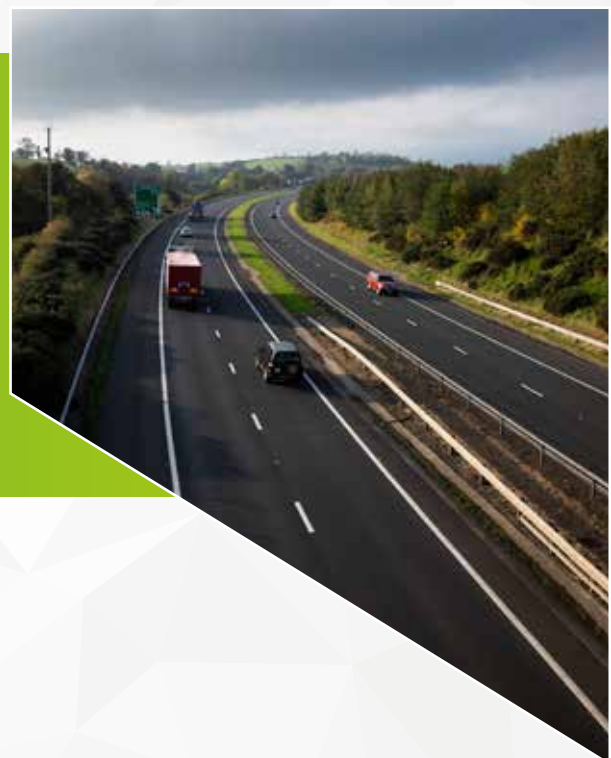


The Belfast Region continues to wrestle with the consequences of underinvestment in transport infrastructure, particularly public transport, and the resulting high levels of car use, pollution and congestion. For any region to be successful, modern and world class infrastructure needs to be in place. It enables economic growth, builds the connections to markets and opportunities and is a key consideration for inward investors. Investing in infrastructure is also important in delivering balanced economic growth and ensuring that job opportunities that we are creating can be accessed by all communities.

The Programme of Investment includes two key transport projects of strategic importance to the economies of the Belfast Region. They deliver direct economic benefits for the region and have also been assessed as making an important contribution to the inclusive growth ambitions of the BRCD partners.

Newry Southern Relief Road

This proposal is to take forward a new strategic road, linking the A1 bypass of Newry City with the A2 Warrenpoint dual-carriageway. This will provide an alternative strategic route for traffic that avoids Newry city centre. The scheme would link to the Eastern Seaboard Key Transport Corridor, which includes road and rail links between Larne and the border at Newry, facilitating onward travel to Dublin and improving access to other regional gateways.



Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) Phase II

The extension of this strategically important public transport network will include dedicated bus lanes, new halts and upgraded road infrastructure to improve the connection to and with the wider Glider service.

Phase II of the BRT will extend to neighbouring council areas of Antrim and Newtownabbey, as well as Lisburn and Castlereagh, providing cross council improvements on the transport network. It will enhance connections to health, education, leisure and job facilities and improve economic return in Belfast city centre and across the region.



Lagan Bridge - Gasworks to Ormeau Embankment

This project aims to address the geographic barrier to growth by constructing a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the River Lagan, linking the Gasworks Development with Ormeau Park, providing access to jobs and opportunity and improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities by encouraging more active lifestyles.



Employability and Skills

The Programme of Investment



A strong, complementary employability and skills package is required to ensure that the right skills are available within the Region to support the economic growth created by the capital programme set out across the Investment Pillars of the Deal. The Belfast Region partners have therefore completed a regional skills barometer and developed a Belfast Region Employability and Skills Proposition to integrate the efforts of partners to provide a transformative employability and skills programme for the Region that delivers Skills for Growth and Skills for Inclusion.

The key to the success of the employability and skills approach for the Belfast Region will be the development of a more integrated approach to prioritising and planning interventions across the region. The approach will need to take account of the nature and responsibilities of central and local government and statutory bodies in Northern Ireland.

The establishment of an Employability and Skills Partnership for the Belfast Region, led by the local Councils and including representation from government, business, colleges and social partners is considered to be crucial to the success of the Belfast Region City Deal in terms of the implementation of agreed programmes and projects.

The BRCD partners propose to invest £30 million in a series of employability and skills projects under three main themes:

Education

Skills

Employability



Education

On the one hand our education system can produce some of the most highly qualified young people, while on the other hand many school leavers leave with low or no qualifications. The Belfast Region is proposing a sustainable approach to the development of core functional (essential) skills in literacy, numeracy and digital which in turn could provide better options and pathways for our young people. It is also necessary to enhance pathways to job opportunities in growth sectors such as Digital and Creative, Tourism and Hospitality, Advanced Manufacturing, Life and Health Sciences and Professional and Business Services.

Measures proposed under the Education theme include:

Career Enhancement Programme

The BRCD project for the Careers Enhancement Programme will be focused on delivering better informed choices for young people through the education system, with greater involvement from local and national employers.

STEM++

In order to meet the ambitions of the BRCD, there is a need to revisit and redouble our efforts to develop more innovative approaches to nurture the STEM agenda. A more integrated approach will be developed across the various stakeholders involved in promoting STEM careers to develop action plans and school engagement strategies that are based on directly involving employers in offering animation and engagement opportunities to create individual role models and case studies across the broad STEM agenda.

Hospitality Works

There are immediate job opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sector in Northern Ireland and the BRCD investments will undoubtedly increase demands for more skilled staff. Finding appropriately skilled people in the labour market will be a major challenge. The BRCD project will involve reshaping the image and understanding of the career opportunities in this sector, working closely with employment service and job centres to connect with interested jobseekers. It will also link strongly with the investments in employability for all, activating people who are currently outside the labour market.



Skills

The development and delivery of up to date traineeships, internships, apprenticeships and higher level apprenticeships are critical to improving opportunities for lower skilled workers to upskill for labour market entry and to seek higher level outcomes. Support is also required for employees already in the workforce to upskill or reskill and this requires encouragement and incentives for employers to buy into this type of investment.

Programmes proposed under the Skills theme include:

City Deal Apprenticeship Programme

Innovative City Deal pilots would be developed in areas which already apply in other parts of the UK such as Public Sector Apprenticeships, Shared SME Apprenticeships and Adult Apprenticeships. This City Deal Apprenticeship Programme would provide a framework to pilot new approaches in priority areas, giving the opportunity to unlock the potential to deliver a high-level skills provision maximising the advantage of delivery in conjunction with workplace activities. There will be a particular focus on employer-defined skills in the Digital, Manufacturing, Health, Construction and Tourism sectors.

Business Productivity Programme

Working in collaboration with Invest NI and other stakeholders supporting business development, innovation and process improvement, to develop a suite of solutions which can support improvements in productivity.

Digital Skills Programme

Working in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Digital ICT working group and Department for the Economy to create a pipeline of talent to address the shortage of digital skills. It will fund a comprehensive Digital Skills Programme which will offer entry and upskilling opportunities to learners and employees across the Belfast Region. The programme will be designed to offer different levels of access to digital skills: Digital Engage: for entry level access to improve societal understanding and engagement with digital technology, Digital Boost: to support those already in work to upgrade or enhance their digital skills and Digital Advance: for higher level graduates to ensure they have the digital skills to respond to innovation across the services and manufacturing sectors.



Employability

There are a wide-range of employability challenges in the Belfast Region. There are challenges related to young people entering the world of work, long-term economically inactive groups seeking to reconnect with employability opportunities and those impacted by redundancy programmes. The aim of the BRCD partners is to develop an approach which is both comprehensive and yet flexible enough to be tailored to the needs of different groups. The key priority for the Belfast Region programme is on getting people into employment and then keeping them in employment.

Measures proposed under the Employability theme include:

Graduate Development Programme

This programme will be focused on recent graduates and post-graduates in NI and will seek to extend the Assured Skills Academy Programme and to further enhance the approach by developing a 24 week Graduate Management Development Programme across the region. This would offer opportunities for specialist management roles in the priority growth sectors.

Employment for All

Building on the Bridge to Employment Academies, the BRCD proposition is for a more focused and joined up approach to collating information on employer demands and working to co-design training solutions, with access to appropriate equipment and facilities to deliver immediate returns in terms of job outcomes. One of the keys to success in the Employability for All Programme will be to shape interventions for the range of economically inactive groups, such as women returners, parents with caring responsibilities, individuals with sickness, disability and mental health Issues, and young people not in education, employment or training. The project will seek to offer innovative and flexible interventions geared towards addressing the barriers of specific client groups and areas of need.



How much investment will the Belfast Region City Deal bring?

We believe that we can secure £1 billion of investment for the Belfast Region through funding from the UK government, the Northern Ireland Executive, local councils, universities and the private sector. Based on other City Deals, there is the potential to leverage up to £4 billion of private sector investment over the next 10-15 years.

What will the investment from the UK Government be used for?

The £350 million investment for the BRCD is essential if we are to boost productivity and create a dynamic and sustainable local economy. This investment will be used for non-devolved areas such as innovation and digital, focusing investment in research and development and digital infrastructure in key sectors.

Who will benefit?

Everyone. We are committed to ensuring that the Belfast Region City Deal brings inclusive growth to every part of the community. Creating in the range of 20,000 new jobs, up-skilling the workforce, bringing investment in local infrastructure and developing local tourism will mean that we spread the benefits of the BRCD to as many people as possible.

It's important that we bring local communities with us, and that's why when the timing is right, we will be holding a number of community events to share our exciting plans with you and to hear from you on how we can bring economic prosperity to the region.

What is 'inclusive growth'?

Inclusive growth is a term that refers to economic growth that is designed to bring prosperity to the maximum number of people and to the widest possible geographical area. Unfortunately, despite significant progress in recent years, many communities feel that they have been left behind and have not seen the positive impact from greater levels of foreign direct investment in the Belfast Region that others have experienced.

City Deals are bespoke packages and thus allow for projects to be designed specifically for areas of deprivation or in need of investment. The BRCD has adopted a community up model whereby local councils have brought forward their own priorities as determined by local communities and their elected representatives.



What can you do to help us?

We need your help to deliver the type of City Deal that can transform the local economy and deliver new and better jobs.

We are asking you to use your influence to:

1. Raise awareness of our efforts and show your support on social media using #BRcitydeal
2. Use every opportunity to share and amplify the Belfast Region City Deal narrative
3. Help shape the projects to drive inclusive growth



Belfast
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Belfast Region City Deal is a big deal.

Can we count on your support
to help make it happen?

 #BRcitydeal

 www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastregioncitydeal



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**Antrim and
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Castlereagh**
City Council



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council



**Ards and
North Down**
Borough Council



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council



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