

**For Growth.
For Innovation.
Leading.
Delivering.**



**The Voice
of Enterprise**

Annual Review | 2013

**For Growth. For Innovation.
Leading. Delivering.**

Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) was set up in 2000 to represent the 32 Local Enterprise Agencies. ENI operates at three levels:

Supporting

ENI represents the interests of local enterprise agencies and lobbies on behalf of small businesses

Networking

ENI provides a range of services for members, including, continual professional development, networking events, joint purchasing, business development, policy papers, research and quality assurance.

Delivering

ENI holds national contracts with various public sector organizations. The contracts are delivered primarily by the member agencies. Programmes include:

- Regional Start (Go For It);
- Social Entrepreneurship;
- Exploring Enterprise;
- Tradelinks programme;
- Business Boot Camp;

All of these programmes are supported by access to finance through the ENI Loan Fund and the Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund.

**The voice of
enterprise for
those supporting
and developing
small business in
Northern Ireland.**



The 2012-13 financial year has been a very busy and varied year for ENI. This Annual Review has been compiled to give you an overview of our activities and achievements.



Launching...
The Case for
Enterprise,
Belfast City Hall.

Contents

In the Chair	4	Supporting for Growth	16
Chief Executive Summary	5	Delivering for Enterprise	17
ENI Board Members	6	Delivering for Exporters	18
ENI Roundup	7	Delivering for You	19
Business Support Programmes	9	Networking for Start Ups	20
Regional Start Up Initiative	10	Networking for Young People	21
Business Boot Camp	11	Networking for Business Support	22
Exploring Enterprise Programme	12	Networking for Ideas	23
Social Entrepreneurship	14	Looking Forward	24
Supporting for Entrepreneurs	15	Start Up Loans	25

In the Chair.

When I joined the Board of Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) four years ago, I did so with an insight into the work of ENI and of many of the Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs) through my previous involvement with The International Fund for Ireland (IFI). In that capacity I worked with many of the LEAs in developing the workspace element of the businesses in Northern Ireland and with the County Enterprise Boards in the border counties of the Republic of Ireland. They are still producing a significant dividend for the investment. Many of the LEAs and Enterprise Boards, with the support of the funders, were able to expand their enterprises successfully to second, third and fourth phases.

The past year has been positive and productive. The award of the Tradelinks 2 Continuance programme means that the continuum of support that LEAs provide has been secured. LEAs are the only enterprise support network providing a continuum of support from capacity building (Exploring Enterprise), through to business start up (RSI), a bespoke social economy offering (SEP3) and a cross border business growth programme. All supported by access to finance through the ENI Loan Fund and the Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund.

The future holds many challenges for ENI and its network. These include current economic conditions, tightening budgets and local government reform. Some also arise from the natural change and development to which maturing organisations aspire.

ENI has already set itself an agenda for change. It is clear to the Board (and indeed the majority of members) that the ENI structure although successful to date, must change if ENI is to remain fit for purpose.

There are for example, new contracts to implement that will require adjustments to current procedures. We will also want to direct our energies to improving the quality of our delivery in all aspects of our business activity. Our potential to impact on those who are suffering the demoralising effects of economic inactivity or who feel disenfranchised from economic progress, is a motivation to continue to build on the past and to repay the trust of those who made available the finance that has provided the infrastructure we currently



enjoy. The strong order book and stability of the corporate governance arrangements make this an opportune moment to review ENI.

As my tenure as Chairman draws to an end I look with pride on ENI and its members and what we have achieved. We have a clear strategic direction, a renewed board with ideas to implement and an executive team who are more than capable of driving us forward. I would like to record my sincere thanks to everyone involved with ENI. To LEA directors and staff, the ENI board of directors and staff team led very effectively by the Chief Executive Gordon Gough and to our clients and stakeholders.

Good luck to everyone for the future and remember...luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

Sandy Smith
Chairman

Chief Executive Summary.

Most economic commentators in the past twelve months are in agreement that we need to grow the private sector in Northern Ireland and move away from an over-reliance on public sector job creation. In other words, we need to be more enterprising and entrepreneurial. Easier said than done, some would say.

Against this backdrop Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) is responding to the needs of the small business community. Since our launch in 2000 as the umbrella organisation representing Northern Ireland's 32 local enterprise agencies (LEAs) we have played a significant role in stimulating economic growth and private sector job creation.

In every local council area in Northern Ireland, there is an LEA delivering a range of services and providing a continuum of support to help people set up and grow their businesses.

Over the past twelve months we have dealt with thousands of enquiries from people looking to set up in business. Some people say there has never been a better time to start a business. Recent research from Enterprise Nation UK shows that during 2012 the highest number of people in over a decade started their own business. Why? Because it is now perfectly possible to start and grow a business (even in your spare time and from home) on a small budget. And if you are looking for business premises then look no further than your LEA - across Northern Ireland they provide workspace for over three thousand small businesses.

Social economy businesses are big business in Northern Ireland. The LEA network over the past

year helped to set up forty six new social enterprises with a combined projected turnover of over £3m, creating over one hundred new jobs.

With the current dearth of start-up capital the ENI small business loan fund has never been more appealing to small business owners. During 2012 we loaned almost £750,000 to local businesses. Since the fund was established in 2002 we have provided over 1200 loans totalling £7.5m.

This year also marked the launch of the Invest NI Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund which ENI delivers in collaboration with Ulster Community Investment Trust. The spirit of enterprise is holding up well in Northern Ireland judging by the number of business start-up enquiries. People in their thousands are spotting gaps in the market or turning their hobbies into a way of making a living.

So, back to my opening comments. Is growing the private sector in Northern Ireland easier said than done? Certainly organisations like the LEAs are well positioned to assist the Northern Ireland Executive to meet its social and economic goals. If the sector is given the financial investment it needs to continue to deliver the range of services that I have detailed, then its contribution to the economy and local communities will be immense.



In conclusion, I would like to thank our stakeholders, in particular, Invest NI, DEL, SEUPB, the COMET region councils and the 1000's of small businesses who have used our services over the past year. I would also like to thank the Chairman, Sandy Smith and the Board of ENI for their commitment, support and strategic leadership. Finally, I would like to welcome Mr John D'Arcy as the new Chair of Enterprise Northern Ireland.

Gordon Gough
CEO

...Judging by the number of business start-up enquiries... People in their thousands are spotting gaps in the market

**For Business. For Support.
Networking. Delivering.**



ENI Board Members 2012/2013:

Name	Representatives	Organisation
Sandy Smith	Chairman	Danske Bank
Angela McGowan	Vice-Chair	Enterprise Equity
Aidan Langan	Independent	Ballymena Business Centre
Melanie Christie-Boyle	North East	Acorn The Business Centre
Francis Ashe	North East	Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd
John Treacy	Western	Cookstown Enterprise Centre
Ciaran Higgins	Western	Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency
Conor Patterson	Southern	Banbridge District Enterprises
Ciaran Cunningham	Southern	Lisburn Enterprise Organisation
Aisling Owens	Eastern (O)	Castlereagh Enterprises
Jack McComiskey	Eastern (O)	Ortus - West Belfast Enterprise Board
Seamus O'Prey	Eastern (I)	North City Business Centre
Alice Quinn	Eastern (I)	Roe Valley Enterprises
Martin Devlin	North West	Workspace Ltd
Brian Murray	North West	

**For Business. For LEAs.
Supporting. Delivering.**



LEAs operate from 40 locations across Northern Ireland. ENI Members provide over 2 million sq ft of workspace to almost 3000 small businesses.

Supporting...
Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster MLA, visits tenants at Argyle Business Centre.



Training...
ENI Vice-Chair Angela McGowan with Gordon Gough and CMI Ireland Business Manager, Stanley Wallace, with the CMI Outstanding Training Provider award, presented to ENI at the National Awards ceremony in London.

The challenge: to integrate the work of the NI Executive, reformed local government and the Third Sector in an agreed economic vision.



**For Business. For LEAs.
Supporting. Delivering.**

In every local council area there is an LEA delivering a range of services and providing a continuum of support.



Opening...
First Minister Peter Robinson MLA at the official opening of phase 2 at Argyle Business Centre.



Enterprising...
Chairman and Chief Executive with MLAs at the launch of the Enterprise Forum at Stormont

Growing...
Employment and Learning Minister, Stephen Farry MLA at the Exploring Enterprise Programme launch.



The Voice of Enterprise

In 2011 Argyle Business Centre became the latest organisation to join ENI.

**For Business. For Funding.
Helping. Lending.**

Business Support Programmes

The Enterprise Northern Ireland Loan fund and NI Small Business Loan Fund. The Enterprise Northern Ireland Loan Fund provides loans to individuals starting a business.

The Loan Fund was established in 2002, and since then has provided over 1,200 loans totalling in excess of £7.5m to help businesses across the whole of Northern Ireland.

A decade later, the ENI Loan Fund is receiving more enquiries about its products than ever before. The Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund (www.nisblf.com) is part of Invest NI's Access to Finance Strategy. The fund provides unsecured loans

to social enterprises and SMEs in the micro enterprise sector in the start up and growth phases. The fund helps to bridge gaps where other funding options have been exhausted.

Loans to recipients are in the £1k - £50k range. ENI works alongside Ulster Community Investment Trust (UCIT) as fund managers. Already in the first half of 2013 we are on schedule to lend over £0.5m to 21 businesses.

Access to finance remains challenging for small business. The ENI Loan Fund and Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund continue to provide an important financial lifeline for small business.

Enterprise Minister, Arlene Foster MLA launches the new Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund with ENI Board Member Seamus O'Prey and William McCulla, Invest NI.



**For Start Ups. For Ideas.
Encouraging. Growing.**

Regional Start Up Initiative.

The Invest NI Regional Start programme is the national business start up initiative for Northern Ireland. Regional Start provides a range of guidance, support, training and business clinics and also ongoing support to help develop and grow businesses.

In the past year the LEA network has dealt with over 7000 enquiries and assisted almost 3000 start up business plans via Regional Start. In addition more than 400 business plans have been produced in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas securing grants of over £400,000. In the same period more than 200 business plans have been produced from young people not in employment, education or training (NEETS) enabling over £300,000 of start up grants to be drawn down from Invest NI.

The Go for It Programme is provided by Invest Northern Ireland and is part financed by the European Regional Development Fund. For details, log on to www.goforitni.com.

LEAs have supported almost 3000 people into self employment in the past 12 months.

Exclusive Ladies Brands

Boudoir Boutique

After working for others in the retail sector for years, Fiona Murphy decided she too wanted to be her own boss. By combining her passion for fashion and her deep love of shopping she's recently snipped the ribbon on her very own retail enterprise - 'Boudoir Boutique' - in downtown Derry/Londonderry.

"I had thought and talked about doing it for long enough - I knew the time was now," said Fiona.

For someone who started out in the midst of recession, Fiona has adapted well to the challenges facing the retail industry.

"I made sure I would get my price point and stock levels correct, right from the start and I do

make sure I introduce new stock regularly. That's definitely helped me because people keep coming back to see what's new. I'm now looking at employing staff to help me out in busier periods."

With her keen head for business, Fiona signed herself up for the Go for It programme to make sure she had all the tools she needed to help make her venture a success.

"The expert advice and support I received definitely helped me to move things forward. From the start, I was assigned a personal adviser who helped me to work out what aspects of business I needed to learn most.

Fiona is looking forward to growing her business in the years ahead.



To access the Go For It Regional Start initiative call 0800 027 0639

**For Entrepreneurs. For Learning.
Mentoring. Targeting.**

Business Boot Camp

The Business Boot Camp Programme is an innovative programme actively targeting young entrepreneurs and business owners aged 16 to 35 years old to start and grow their businesses. It is funded by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Structural Funds Programme.

COMET (Councils of the Metropolitan Area) a partnership of six local authorities located within the Greater Belfast metropolitan area (Belfast, Lisburn, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey, North Down and Carrickfergus) partnered with Donegal County Council to deliver this programme.

Business Boot Camp is unique on the Island of Ireland as it is the only programme of its type that supports young entrepreneurs through a combination of resources including group workshops, one-to-one mentoring, enterprise shadowing and an on-line platform and much more. Both 'START' and 'GROW' elements to the programme were specifically

designed to meet the needs of young entrepreneurs. The cross border nature of this programme enables participants from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to work together to build a more sustainable economy.

In the past twelve months more than 60 young people have applied for the Bootcamp programme with more than 40 going on to start a business.

In the same period almost 40 young people participated in the growth element of the programme and set about developing business expansion plans for their businesses.

Business Boot Camp is helping to address youth employment.

More than 40 young people have set up their own Business this year.

The Business Boot Camp Programme is funded under the European Regional Development Fund through the European INTERREG IVA Structural Funds Programme.

Finding herself redundant and with two young children, things looked bleak for Lisa McBriar until she came across the Business Boot Camp Programme. Lisa found that her silver lining was in creating her own Business.

"I had started looking into my business idea and then, through Castlereagh Enterprises, got my place on Business Boot Camp".

Lisa decided to go for it, after all she had nothing to lose. Being a legal secretary for over 11 years previous gave her a good organisational and professional background and she has drawn on these skills in her business.

Lisa's business, Mamasmarket, is an indoor marketplace for people to buy and sell high quality new and pre-loved maternity, baby and children's goods whilst enjoying a fun day out with all the family.



For Unemployed. For Disadvantaged. Training. Benefiting.

Exploring Enterprise² Programme

Exploring Enterprise² develops employment opportunities for the long term unemployed. The focus is on helping people from disadvantaged backgrounds. One to one advice and training is available leading to an award in Understanding Business Enterprise.

2011 to March 2013, LEAs have delivered 117 accredited training courses throughout Northern Ireland. 1073 participants have completed the programme of which over 900 achieved the award in Understanding Business Enterprise.

We are also delighted to have various local councils involved as strategic partners including, Larne Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Moyle, Ballymoney, Roe Valley, Fermanagh and Dungannon.

Exploring Enterprise² Programme is part funded by the European Social Fund, the Department for Employment and Learning, Enterprise NI and the Local Enterprise Agencies under the NI ESF Programme 2007-2013.

Getting people back into work is a key objective of the NI Executive. Exploring Enterprise² has helped over 1000 people to do this over the past 2 years.

Ann Louise Bresnahan and Sean Gallagher are among the first candidates from the Omagh area who are reaping the benefits of the programme.

Ann Louise, a graduate with a high street retail background has just launched an online vintage clothing store from her home. Sean has launched an event photography business after being out of full-time work and unsure of his future direction.

Realising that he wanted to run his own business, but without any firm business idea, Sean was directed to Omagh Enterprise Agency and he joined the Exploring Enterprise² Programme.

After some local and online research, Sean was able to use his new-found business knowledge to see that an

event photography business idea could be a viable business.

Ann Louise always had a passion for fashion and design. She initially secured work in textile and graphic design but when she moved back home to be closer to family in Omagh, she worked in retail management for a number of major high street retailers including Next and Argos.

Ann Louise discussed several business ideas before starting the Exploring Enterprise² Programme.

She settled on the concept of a vintage clothing business, her passion since she was in her teens. She developed a business plan, selling to friends and family from her bedroom, which quickly took off and has generated huge local interest.



The Voice of Enterprise

For North. For South. Linking. Trading.

Tradelinks

Tradelinks is our cross border business development programme designed to assist and grow the micro enterprise sector across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal.

Tradelinks assists micro businesses on both sides of the border to identify and address barriers to cross border trade and development. Using a portfolio of business improvement techniques.

Tradelinks helps small businesses to become more sustainable and competitive

and generate greater added value. Particular emphasis is in developing cross border trade opportunities and linkages.

In the second phase of Tradelinks, the programme supported 580 businesses in creating 250+ new jobs and increasing sales by £15m.

Tradelinks is a partnership initiative between Enterprise NI, the network of local Enterprise Agencies, and the Border County Enterprise Boards and is funded by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme.

Tradelinks enhances all island trade. Participating businesses increased sales by £15m and there are more than 600 North/South business to business linkages.

Cookstown Enterprise Centre Chairman, Trevor Wilson with Business Advisor Dana McKeown and Tradelinks participants.



Tradelinks Programme Manager, Kieran Mathers with representatives of Invest NI and Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency



Annual Review | 2013

The Tradelinks Programme supported the Fermanagh based client Shauna Gallagher. Shauna founded Nature's Inspiration at the age of 19. They specialise in creating natural and ethical skincare products in County Fermanagh. The company offers a wide range of products which include cleanser, toner, floral waters, facial clay, moisturisers, lip balm, body scrubs and recently introduced three products in their natural baby care range.

Shauna also sells online via her website and she attends events throughout Ireland to market her products.

Shauna commented: "The Tradelinks Programme has

been an asset to the growth of my business over the past year.

"After identifying the areas in my business which I needed help with, I was assigned mentors for finance, marketing, IT and development. Each individual mentor was enthusiastic about their work and it was great to have the advice and experience of these experts!"

Joanne Leary of Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd stated: "We are delighted to be working with Nature's Inspiration in the development of their business both North and South of the border.

For Society. For Everyone. Enterprising. Belonging.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurs bring innovative business solutions to some of the most pressing issues affecting society. Our Social Entrepreneurship Programme, delivered on behalf of Invest NI, provides business support and mentoring to social economy business start-ups.

Provided by Invest Northern Ireland, funded by the European Union through its Peace and Reconciliation Programme.

A key challenge is a joint economic vision for Northern Ireland.

The programme promotes sustainable models of finance as well as providing ongoing training to help sustain these businesses. The outputs over the past few years have been very encouraging:

- 175 new social enterprises set up, 450 jobs created
- Combined projected turnover of £9,5 million
- Export sales of around £1 million 68% of social enterprises being set up in the top 300 SOA of disadvantage in Northern Ireland
- 23 social enterprises have become Invest NI mainstream clients.

Clanrye Retail Social Enterprise is an innovative enterprise developed by Clanrye Group with support from Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency. Clanrye Retail Social Enterprise provides employment focused training, accredited qualifications and work experience for individuals with a physical disability or health condition focused on the retail / customer service sector.

Training is carried out using a social enterprise model that incorporates a gift shop; 'Heart & Home', and a telesales / ecommerce site.

Billed as the gift shop with a 'heart', Heart and Home is a retail social enterprise that allows trainees to train in a commercial retail environment. It is unique in that it offers 'the local cottage industry' shelf space with well-chosen social enterprise and fair trade products. In addition it is setting out to manufacture high quality bespoke craft items for sale at local, regional and national level.

At Clanrye Retail Social Enterprise the focus is on ensuring that each participant is given the opportunity to train while fostering a sense of belonging and social inclusion.



The Voice of Enterprise

Supporting. For Entrepreneurs.

Cookstown Enterprise Centre launched Exploring Enterprise during the year. The programme was launched by Cookstown's own star of the Apprentice Jim Eastwood. The Exploring Enterprise initiative helps those who are unemployed or economically inactive to develop skills to enhance their individual chances of securing employment or entering self-employment.

Speaking about the programme Jim Eastwood said: 'This is a very exciting initiative for the people of Cookstown and will allow the entrepreneurial spirit of local people to flourish while giving them the qualifications required to become more attractive to employer's at a time when competition for jobs is extremely high.'



Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster visited Causeway Enterprise Agency in Ballycastle to celebrate the amalgamation of the N. Antrim Business Agency with the Causeway Enterprise Agency. From left: Cara McShane Chair of Moyle District Council, Robert McLroy Vice Chair at Moyle District Council, Gordon Gough Chief Executive of ENI, Dr Mark McKinney Chair of the Causeway Enterprise Agency and Jayne Taggart Chief Executive of the Causeway Enterprise Agency.

Employment and Learning Minister, Dr Stephen Farry, visited Exploring Enterprise participants in East Belfast Enterprise Park.

The Minister said: "The Exploring Enterprise Programme provides unemployed and economically inactive people who are interested in self-employment with a great opportunity to gain an insight into the world of the entrepreneur. The skills gained by participants will not only help them into sustainable self-employment, but play a key part in Northern Ireland's economic well-being."



Supporting. For Growth.

Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster and Omagh Enterprise Company CEO Dr. Nick O'Sheil and Chairman Fabian Monds at the official opening of the new £2.3 million Innovation Growth Centre.

The new Innovation Growth Centre forms an integral part of the Irish Central Border Areas Network's (ICBAN) Innovation Enterprise Programme (IEP). It also, provides a technology focused business environment to support growth companies and allow progression from the Technology Incubation and Resource Centre which was opened in 2005. The IEP which began in September 2010, has been supported with nearly £2.3million of financial assistance from European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Arlene Foster said:

"I am especially pleased that we have been able to provide



just over £2million towards the project through the INTERREG Programme. This new centre will provide the region with high quality, technology focused workspace which will complement the existing provision here at Omagh Enterprise Company.

"Job creation and the stimulation of private enterprise are crucial in driving forward our economic recovery in Northern Ireland. Projects like this, which create jobs, grow businesses and capitalise on our existing skills and infrastructure

base in Northern Ireland, are particularly welcome."

Expressing her support for initiatives that seek to enhance the economic infrastructure of Northern Ireland and create jobs, the Minister added: "It is envisaged that the new centre will support the creation of at least 200 new jobs in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In addition, the IEP project has been developed to help tenant companies increase their turnover during the three year life of the project."

Carrickfergus Enterprise has secured a contract to deliver a three-year business programme on behalf of Carrickfergus Borough Council. In the currently highly competitive consultancy market, Carrickfergus Enterprise beat off stiff competition from other large consultancy and training organisations to ensure the local delivery of the programme.

The Business Improvement Programme provides local Carrickfergus Businesses with a range of business and ICT mentoring as well as a range of seminars in topical business issues.

Kelli Bagchus says: "I am delighted that we secured this programme of support for our local businesses. We researched our clients and they wanted local delivery by an organisation who had local knowledge and a vested interest in the Carrickfergus Borough. Past participants of the programme have highlighted that such assistance was vital to their continued success and survival. We look forward to continuing to provide such critical support in today's difficult trading environment."



The Voice of Enterprise

Delivering. For Enterprise.

Claire Ferris, CEO from Work West Enterprise Agency was the first woman from Northern Ireland to be given the Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion.

Claire received the award at a ceremony in London followed by a reception in Buckingham Palace.

Work West operates in an area of high socio-economic deprivation with little foreign inward investment. "We hope that will change in the coming years; West Belfast is a great place to do business and the message is getting out there," said Claire.

In recent years Work West has developed as a one of the market leaders in the field of social enterprise support and one of the high points of her career was the opening of the Social Economy Village in 2009.

"I've seen the difference that social enterprise can make to a community and it's something that everyone in Northern Ireland needs to sit up and take notice of," she said.

"The creation of meaningful employment is also heavily reliant on our ability to grow our private sector. Interventions such as the Strategy in Business Programme which Work West has recently delivered on behalf of Belfast City Council will greatly assist in achieving this goal."

The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion recognises individuals who make outstanding contributions to

enterprise culture in the UK. The Awards are the UK's highest accolade for business success and are awarded to only 10 people per year.

They are made each year by The Queen, on the advice of the Prime Minister, who is assisted by an Advisory Committee that includes representatives of Government, industry and commerce, and the trade unions.



The Workspace Group, has acquired Manchester-based energy saving technology specialists Therm Tech Limited, bolstering its UK-wide reach and its ability to win even more business in the growing energy-saving sector.

Based in Ashton-under-Lyne, Greater Manchester, Therm Tech manufactures state-of-the-art energy saving solutions for a range of commercial and industrial uses. These include the provision of heat recovery and recycling systems through to industrial super-sized heaters and activated carbon technology.

A provider of enterprise units, business support programmes, recruitment services and employability initiatives, Workspace already owns Northern Ireland's largest home insulation provider Homeseal and energy efficient lighting firm Environment 2000.



Annual Review | 2013

17

Delivering. For Exporters.

Ortus announced the acquisition of University of Ulster spin out company, Flex Language Services.

This is the first acquisition of a University spin out company by one of Northern Ireland's leading social enterprises.



Flex Language Services was formed over 20 years ago as the University of Ulster's 'Foreign Languages for Export Service', playing a prominent role in helping local industry, commerce, public bodies and individuals to meet the demands of an ever expanding multi-lingual market.

The company caters for up to sixty languages and has 250 interpreters on its books. Key clients include the Department of Education, Ministry of Justice, Health and Social Care Procurement Department, Industrial Tribunals Court, private sector industries and individuals.

Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster said: "Ortus is an ambitious and forward thinking organisation and this acquisition is a positive example of their commitment to developing local enterprises."

Two local companies, the Kevin Watson Group and T McLaughlin and Sons have recently been successful in gaining accreditation for implementing quality systems with the help of Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd through the Tradelinks Programme.

Frank Quinn, Tradelinks Mentor, stated that both companies recognize the guidance and support provided by the Tradelinks Programme as businesses are finding it increasingly necessary to provide evidence of Third Party Certification of their Quality, Environmental and Health and Safety Management Systems to even enable them to reach the Tender Stage when seeking both private and public sector contracts.



The Voice of Enterprise

Delivering. For You.

The Newry and Mourne Co-operative and Enterprise Agency secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching out: Empowering Young People programme, to deliver the Work4UPlus programme, in partnership with Barnardo's, the Southern Education and Library Board and REACT. WorkForUPlus aims to improve the lives and job opportunities of - at risk young people.

The Work4uplus programme offers a training and support service for vulnerable and isolated young people aged 14-20 in disadvantaged areas of Newry and Mourne, Banbridge and Armagh who are at risk of becoming disengaged from education or training.

Chief Executive Dr Conor Patterson summarised the rationale for the programme as follows: "Statistics show a great need for this type of support, a high number of 16 to 19-year-olds in the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Area

have no qualifications and their future prospects are going to be affected by that."

Programme manager Pauline Coghlan added: "The programme is designed to help the young person improve their confidence,

develop a range of life and basic skills, perspectives and experiences that will help them understand they have the potential to go out there, return to education or find a job and change their lives."



Causeway Enterprise Agency, winners of the Involvement in the Community Award at the Coleraine Borough Chamber of Commerce Business Awards.



A group of Mid Ulster business people and politicians packed out the conference room of the Dungannon Enterprise Centre to hear first hand the pros and cons of the re-balancing of the Northern Ireland economy.

In a Question Time style conference, hosted by Brian MacAuley CEO of the Dungannon Enterprise Centre, a panel included Owen Paterson Secretary of State, Des Kelly, Partner at Cavanagh Kelly Accountants; John O'Neill, Director of Venturei Network and Martin O'Hanlon, Partner at PWC were grilled on what the lowering of corporation tax would do for the Mid Ulster Economy.

The conference was part of the Enterprise Centre's 20th anniversary.

Networking. For Start-Ups.

North City Business Centre teamed up with the Belfast Business Centre to host a series of free drop-in advice sessions in the City Centre for anyone who is thinking of starting up or growing a business.

A team of industry experts were on hand to offer information in a series of sessions entitled 'New Year New Start' and 'Hit the Ground Running'. The programmes were specially developed to facilitate those who are working or shopping in the city centre and want to hear more about starting or growing a business.

Chief Executive of North City Business Centre Alice Quinn said: "Our experience in this field has led us to believe that there are many people out there who are interested in starting a business or growing an existing business but don't wish to make a formal

appointment to learn more about these topics.

"By offering a 'walk in' option, we hoped to encourage uptake from people who were in the City Centre and could spare some time to pop in and find out what they need to know from our experienced team of experts.

"Starting or growing a business is something that requires expert guidance and we appreciate that not everyone can afford to take the time to make appointments. By delivering this in a less formal

manner we hope to reach many more people who have a great business idea, but have yet to take the necessary steps to make it a reality."

Topics on offer for new start ups included tips on how to be your own boss, turning your hobby into a business, selling online and online marketing.

Existing businesses could learn about growth through topics such as sourcing finance, working tax credit, tax and accounts, marketing and PR and getting more from exporting.



Networking. For Young People.

The Mayor of Craigavon commended the pupils from St Michaels Grammar School on their creativity and innovation in the recent CIDO Schools Enterprise Competition, sponsored by the Ulster Bank.

To coincide with Global Enterprise Week the competition aimed to inform students of the Enterprise culture and career possibilities it offers entrepreneurs and to encourage entrepreneurial activity in the Craigavon area.

Students were asked to develop a business idea which was an original or a spin off from an existing product and CIDO were overwhelmed by the standard of responses to the competition.

Brian Hunter, Chief Executive of CIDO commented "We were delighted by the response to this competition. It was very difficult to choose a winner as all the ideas were so innovative and creative".

Mayor of Craigavon, Carla Lockhart also commended the pupils for their participation and enthusiastic approach to the competition and encouraged entrepreneurship in the Craigavon Borough as she opened the awards ceremony. Guest speaker Nick Hutchinson from BNL productions then gave a creative account of his entrepreneurial experience and encouraged those interested in starting their own business to 'Go For It'.

The competition aimed to inform students of the Enterprise culture and career possibilities it offers.

Students were asked to develop a business idea which was an original or a spin off from an existing product.



Networking. For Business Support.

First Minister Peter Robinson officially launched a new rural conference venue in the Willowbank Business Park, Larne.

Willowbank Rural Conference Centre, located on the outskirts of the town, has been developed and is managed by LEDCOM.

Occupying a scenic rural site, the new centre is integrated with LEDCOM's Willowbank Business Park complex and offers a business conference venue, meeting and training rooms, interview rooms and a location for business networking, exhibitions and fairs.

Support facilities include on-site technical advice, event management, complimentary parking and easy access. The project was assisted with funding from the EU Rural Development Programme North East Region.

The First Minister said: "In these financially difficult times it is

very gratifying to see such a fine conference facility emerge alongside Willowbank Business Park, which is helping a number of exciting knowledge-based and export-oriented companies to start and grow.

"Diversifying the Larne economy through encouraging small business start-up and rural enterprise has never been more important in light of the recent FG Wilson/Caterpillar jobs cuts announcements.

"The Northern Ireland Executive is fully committed to supporting economic development in Larne, and not least in rural enterprise, business development, diversification and rural tourism where there are opportunities for encouraging more tourism-focused and knowledge-based companies.

"I am confident that this conference facility will help LEDCOM to continue the excellent work it has been engaged in for 35 years in these and other areas, helping build a better economy and a better future for Larne."



The Northern Ireland Executive is fully committed to supporting economic development.

Peter Robinson, First Minister

Networking. For Ideas.

Shred-It sponsored an action-packed day in Townsend Enterprise Park with Keynote Speaker Alastair Hamilton, CEO of Invest NI and other leading consulting companies and financial institutions providing addresses on current business activity and support.



Over 60 businesses from various business sectors attended the enterprise event, listening to additional presentations from Gerry Falona, first class motivational and networking guru and serial entrepreneur, Colly Graham, CEO of Graham Associates and Salesxcellence, Jim Young, Area Manager for Ulster Bank Ltd, Business Banking NI, Peter Morton, Morton Consultancy and also Michael Haigney, Composermail. All left feeling refreshed, inspired and ready to work on the development of their businesses in this current climate.

As one speaker commented, "What stuck me about the day was how well attended the Event was, this in itself is an indicator of the high value that local business people place upon the Townsend team."

Cookstown Enterprise Centre launched an exciting Business Development Programme designed to support businesses throughout the Cookstown District Council area. The Cookstown Business Elevate Programme supports local businesses in accelerating their growth and development and the Programme will assist a minimum of 84 local micro/SMEs, each of which will receive a detailed Business Audit; and one-to-one business Consultancy support by way of either up to 5 days or 8-days consultancy tailored to meet the needs of each participating business. The one-to-one consultancy support will focus on:

- Developing Business Plans
- Implementing Quality standards
- Sales and marketing
- Effective pricing
- ICT
- New or modified product/process/service introduction or development
- Human Resource Management
- Financial management

Funded by Cookstown District Council and Invest NI, this project is part financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland.

Ciaran Higgins, Manager of Cookstown Enterprise Centre, said: "The Business Elevate Programme is about putting knowledge and resources within the grasp of small businesses to guide them in their future development, to access support and to become more sustainable. The Micro/Small Business Sector is vital to the Cookstown District and it is imperative that even the smallest businesses have the opportunity to access professional business support and capitalise on business development opportunities to enhance their future competitiveness."



For Start Ups. For Ideas. Encouraging. Growing.

Looking Forward

The All Party Group (APG) on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) hosted its first event in Stormont Castle during the year.

ENI continues to respond to the needs of small businesses in Northern Ireland and to members feedback.

The Chair of the APG on SMEs, Judith Cochrane MLA, invited a wide-cross section of the business community in Northern Ireland, along with fellow MLAs, to ensure that current issues facing SMEs here are being firmly placed in the political frame.

Enterprise Northern Ireland acts as secretariat to the All Party Group and Gordon Gough

opened the event by outlining the significance of SMEs to the Northern Ireland Economy.

Internationally renowned business coach and public speaker Mr Brad Sugars, ActionCOACH business coaching, then facilitated a constructive discussion session where attendees highlighted key issues, and suggested fresh

ideas for moving forward. Mr Sugars closed the event by delivering a motivational talk designed to inspire confidence in the business owners in attendance.

Putting SMEs Firmly in the Frame.



For Start Ups. For Finance. Aspiring. Achieving.

Start Up Loans.

ENI has been selected to be the initial partner for the Start-Up Loans programme to Northern Ireland and is in discussions on how this will be delivered alongside existing Enterprise Loan programmes.

The Start-Up Loans programme aims to provide at least 250 loans in the next twelve months.

Launched by Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, ENI will be working directly with the Start-Up Loans Company which aims to provide support for budding young entrepreneurs aged 18-30.

The Start-Up Loans programme aims to provide at least 250 loans in the next twelve months with the Enterprise Northern Ireland and Prince's Trust networks leading the way.

The programme which is currently in operation in England has already committed more than 5,000 loans to entrepreneurs in the 18-30 year old bracket.

Following the success of the pilot in England, expansion to the rest of the UK is underway, with Northern Ireland first in line.

ENI has been selected to be the initial partner for the Start-Up Loans programme to Northern Ireland.





SEUPB Chief Executive, Pat Colgan, with the Tradelinks Joint Management Committee Chairs, Gordon Gough and Michael Tunney (Donegal County Enterprise Board).

In every local council area in Northern Ireland, there is an LEA delivering a range of services and providing a continuum of support to help people set up and grow their businesses.

Over the past twelve months we have dealt with thousands of enquiries from people looking to set up in business. Some people say there has never been a better time to start a business.

Social economy businesses are big business in Northern Ireland. The LEA network over the past year helped to set up forty six new social enterprises with a combined projected turnover of over £3m, creating over one hundred new jobs.

During 2012 we loaned almost £750,000 to local businesses. Since the fund was established in 2002 we have provided over 1200 loans totalling £7.5m.

For Growth. For Innovation. Leading. Delivering.

Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI)
representing the 32 Local Enterprise Agencies.

Acorn The Business Centre
Ballymoney
T 028 2766 6133

Antrim Enterprise Agency
Antrim
T 028 9446 7774

Ards Business Centre Ltd
Newtownards
T 028 9181 9787

Argyle Business Centre
Belfast
T 028 9023 3777

Armagh Business Centre Ltd
Armagh
T 028 3752 5050

Ballymena Business Centre Ltd
Ballymena
T 028 2565 8616

Banbridge District
Enterprises Ltd
Banbridge
T 028 4066 2260

Carrickfergus Enterprise
Agency Ltd
Carrickfergus
T 028 9336 9528

Castlereagh Enterprises Ltd
Dundonald
T 028 9055 7557

Causeway Enterprise Agency
Coleraine
T 028 7035 6318

Causeway Enterprise
Agency - Moyle
Ballycastle
T 028 2076 3737

Cookstown Enterprise
Centre Ltd
Cookstown
T 028 8676 3660

Craigavon Industrial
Development
Organisation Ltd (CIDO)
Craigavon
T 028 3839 6520

Down Business Centre Ltd
Downpatrick
T 028 4461 6416

Dungannon Enterprise Centre
Dungannon
T 028 8772 3489

East Belfast Enterprise
Belfast
T 028 9094 2010

Enterprise North West
Londonderry
T 028 7135 2693

Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd
Enniskillen
T 028 6632 7348

Larne Enterprise
Development Co. Ltd (LEDCOM)
Larne
T 028 2827 0742

Lisburn Enterprise
Organisation Ltd
Lisburn
T 028 9266 1160

Newry & Mourne
Enterprise Agency
Newry
T 028 3026 7011

North City Business Centre Ltd
Belfast
T 028 9074 7470

North Down Development
Org. Ltd
Bangor
T 028 9127 1525

Omagh Enterprise Company Ltd
Omagh
T 028 8224 9494

Ormeau Business Park
Belfast
T 028 9033 9906

Ortus - The Business
Development
Agency
Belfast
T 028 9031 1002

Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd
Limavady
T 028 7776 2323

Strabane Enterprise Agency
Strabane
T 028 7138 2518

Townsend Enterprise Park Ltd
Belfast
T 028 9043 5778

Work West Enterprise Agency
Belfast
T 028 9061 0826

Workspace -
The Enterprise Agency
Draperstown
T 028 7962 8113

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