

File name: Welcome - Mel Chittock, Interim CEO, Invest NI and Karen Patterson, NI Showcase 2022 Host.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).

Mel Chittock: Good morning to those of you who are here in the room, and joining us virtually. Welcome to ICC Belfast. I am Mel Chittock, I am the Interim Chief Executive Officer of Invest Northern Ireland, and I have to say, after some two years, it's great to actually get back to meeting people face-to-face, holding events such as this, and moving forwards. That is what today is all about. As many economies begin to move from crisis to recovery, the global competition for investment, talent and trade will intensify. Throughout the pandemic, many of our businesses have shown remarkable resilience and adaptability. We've all seen that first-hand. This has not gone unnoticed by many of our existing investors, our potential investors, and our training partners. We believe that as restrictions continue to ease, and economies re-open, that there's a unique opportunity for Northern Ireland to grasp these opportunities, because we all know that a strong and vibrant economy leads to a wealthier, healthier society where everyone benefits. We all know that economic development is the foundation for a sustainable, regionally-balanced economy. It's an investment, not a cost, and something that, that I've spoken about passionately over the last number of weeks. It is our role, Invest NI's role to deliver that economic development, helping Northern Ireland to become more successful. That is important. Why? Because as Northern Ireland becomes more successful, it can generate higher-quality jobs, better healthcare, better education, better social inclusion, and ultimately, better outcomes for the whole of Northern Ireland. The reality is that Invest NI has been doing this for twenty years. The start of April will mark our twentieth birthday, and it has been quite a journey.

The reality is, we've moved from where we were in our first year, where we won ten new inward investment projects, which collectively promoted 815 jobs, and since then, we have won a further 300 first-time investment projects, bringing over 18,000 jobs. That represents over £1.1 billion of new salaries to spend in the local economy. We have also supported almost 110,000 further direct jobs created by companies already here, both locally and internationally-owned. Overall, the support which we've provided to grow our economy has led to a total investment of over £12.8 billion, no mean feat. Our impact has been both broad and deep. Over the years we've seen some sectors decline, to be replaced by new, emerging ones. So, before we get into the main part of the day, let's have a quick look at some of the things which set us, Northern Ireland, apart. Thank you.

Advert: Northern Ireland may be small, but our people have enormous energy and ambition. As a result, we've become leaders in sectors including advanced manufacturing and engineering, life and health sciences, and technology. Let's explore. Northern Ireland's education system is one of Europe's best, developing the skilled people who make our region world-renowned for engineering excellence. That's

why our innovations inspire the world. We are maritime innovators, creating zero-emission vessels. Our materials handling companies divert waste from landfill. We build hydrogen-powered buses, making the promise of carbon-free transport a reality. Northern Ireland has always been a launchpad for aviation innovation. Today, we create cutting-edge aircraft seats that allow passengers to fly in greater comfort. Northern Ireland is revolutionising life and health sciences, with inspiring advances in diagnostics, precision medicine, medical technology, and pharmaceuticals. Our seventeen research centres rank among the UK's top bioscience research institutions. We create revolutionary diagnostic machines that can do the work of multiple labs in a fraction of the time, and lead the way in clinical 3D printing and wearable technologies. We harness the power of data in revolutionary ways, transforming primary research into medicine faster and more safely than ever before. Our work on AI speeds new drug development, and creates intelligent tools for more efficient hospitals. Northern Ireland's tech breakthroughs build on a heritage of innovation. Our innovative start-ups and large, global firms continue to push boundaries, so it's no wonder that we're one of the world's top digital economies of the future.

Our cyber security expertise safeguards sensitive information for governments, financial institutions, law enforcement agencies, and armed forces worldwide. Northern Ireland's smart city tech uses AI and data analytics to improve public transport, health services, and energy grids. In addition, we are the home of a world leader in mass data storage solutions. We have developed software platforms that monitor farms from space, assess animal health, and optimise nutrition from farm to fork. Our future-ready education software empowers modern learners. These VR and educational gaming platforms introduce students to advanced concepts, while our stress control apps and smart learning support help them unlock their potential. We have built revolutionary player performance data tracking for elite sports, such as football, rugby, NFL, and hockey. We have devised AI-enabled sensor technology for cyclists, monitoring their environment up to 800 times per second, to make every journey safer. We're developing innovative tech so golfers can instantly access and book a tee time online. Our animators bring fantasy worlds to life, while our game developers let you step right into them. These tech advances are just the beginning. We are benefiting from £1.3 billion of investment that will help develop digital technology to ensure we remain at the cutting edge of global innovation. That's why the world recognises Northern Ireland as a tech leader. Northern Ireland has ambition to be among the world's best small advanced economies. Through our sectoral expertise, working in partnership with industry, academia and government, and by building on our tradition of innovation, we can realise this ambition for the benefit of our economy, and wider society.

Karen Patterson: Very impressive, I'm sure you'll all agree. Thank you, Mel and a very good morning to all of you. Lovely to see faces in a live environment again, it's been far, far, too long. So, let's crack on. You're very, very welcome to the Northern Ireland Showcase. I'm Karen Patterson, and I'll be taking you through the day where we have a range of speakers and panellists who are going to showcase home-grown business success stories, and also showcase what Northern Ireland offers for international investors. As Mel mentioned, economic development is an essential investment for a strong, regionally-balanced economy. It can deliver lasting, real and positive change to people's lives. To achieve that, the executive has set as one of its priorities, building a strong, competitive economy that helps Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, attract investment, and stimulate innovation and creativity and also, where people can achieve their ambitions and enjoy healthy, active lives. To translate that vision into

reality will require investment in economic development. As we saw in the short videos at the start, Northern Ireland has so much to offer, and much has already been delivered, but the economic landscape has changed. We need to respond accordingly. Just doing what we have always done will not deliver against our ambition. The Department for the Economy has published its 10X economic vision for a decade of innovation. This sets the new direction for travel.