**Tender: Supply of marketing strategy for the Belfast Digital Innovation Partnership**

1. **Introduction**

The newly established Belfast Digital Innovation Partnership (BDIP) is a coalition of Belfast’s anchor institutions: Belfast City Council, Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University, Belfast Harbour, Catalyst and Invest NI.

The senior leadership group includes the Chief Executives of Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Catalyst and Invest NI, and the Vice-Chancellors of Queen’s University and Ulster University.

The partnership is supported by Belfast’s recently appointed Digital Innovation Commissioner who is working with industry and key stakeholders to grow Belfast’s strengths and global reputation as a place to invest in digital innovation.

The BDIP partners share a vision for inclusive and sustainable economic development for our city and region, underpinned by digital innovation. The partnership provides strategic direction and encourages sectoral collaboration to harness knowledge, skills, assets and investment so that we can develop the city’s global offering for new digital innovation focused growth markets – and massively increase our productivity.

The partnership aims to:

* position Belfast and the region as a location of choice for innovation-led global investments (and notably in the context of Brexit, our unique geographic advantage in terms of access to UK, ROI, the rest of Europe and the US);
* enhance current levels of investment, business start-up rates and job creation;
* weave digital innovation into all aspects of our economy, our infrastructure and urban services; and
* encourage a new generation of students and employees to pursue careers in digital innovation and to develop a skills pipeline capable of servicing our digital innovation ambitions.

Please see attached publication ‘Belfast: Investing in Urban Innovation’ for more information on the BDIP’s digital innovation ambition.

**2. Background**

**2.1 Current position**

Belfast’s knowledge economy sector is the engine of the BDIP’s digital innovation ambition. Our FinTech, cybersecurity, software and IT sectors are amongst the fastest growing in the UK.

Across the region over 40,000 people are employed in the knowledge economy sector, with 7,000 employed in research and development. By 2030, Belfast’s knowledge economy sector has the potential to deliver an additional £3 billion of GVA and generate 80,000 new jobs.

Data science is an important subsector, with companies building strengths in AI and Machine Learningtechnologies. Between them, our two universities are home to six major clusters of AI research excellence including hardware, core data science, medicine and robotics.

Our region’s life and health sciences sector generates more than £800 million in sales each year. Our universities are among the UK’s top ten locations for bioscience research.

We are currently:

* number one international investment location for USA cybersecurity development projects
* number one global destination for financial technology investment
* number one European city for new medical software development
* One of the fastest growing creative clusters in the UK
* 2nd fastest growing knowledge economy in the UK.

**2.2 Key investments**

**Belfast Region City Deal**

The Belfast Region City Deal is seeking to invest up to £350 million in digital innovation projects over the next 10 years.

This includes five new centres of research excellence, led by Queen’s University and Ulster University, which will focus on key sectors including digital healthcare, advanced manufacturing, creative industries and AI.

Belfast City Council, and other local government partners, will deliver four digital projects. This includes the development of the Belfast Smart District and regional testbeds, Digital Innovation Platform and Partnership, Infrastructure Enabling Fund and Regional Innovators Network.

The Smart District will include a £65 million challenge fund to support innovators in the development and trialling of new products and services to tackle key urban challenges in areas such as energy, sustainability, mobility and health.

The £35 million Infrastructure Enabling Fund will support the rollout of advanced digital connectivity infrastructure that will underpin many of the digital innovation projects in the Smart District.

Find out more about the Belfast Region City Deal at [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastregioncitydeal](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastregioncitydeal)

**Belfast Smart District**

We have strategically selected three initial locations in Belfast that offer particularly rich environments for our innovation community to collaborate on research; for businesses to form and scale; for investments to flourish; and for next generation urban services to emerge. Collectively, these locations represent a global showcase of our wider city ambition.

* **Innovation District**  
  A world-class mixed use urban environment for research, innovation and entrepreneurialism covering 400 acres in the city.
* **Smart Core**  
  A unique opportunity for companies to design and deliver innovative urban services in a supportive real-world environment.
* **Smart Port**  
  With substantial investments in infrastructure and digital technologies, Belfast Harbour aims to become a Smart Port and Green Port, as well as the world’s best regional port.

Please see attached publication ‘Belfast: Investing in Urban Innovation’ for more information on the Smart District.

**2.3 Target audiences**

Our target audiences are:

* **NI and UK government** – policy makers, government leaders and politicians
* **Industry** – industry leaders, industry bodies, entrepreneurs, innovators and SMEs
* **Investors** – property investors and key sectors including Life and Health Sciences, FinTech, Cybersecurity, Bioscience and Artificial Intelligence
* **Academia** – researchers and education sector (primary through to third level)
* **Specialist business and tech media**
* **Specialist support organisations**

Although citizens are not in our initial list of target audiences, they will become a key audience as the Smart District develops, with the design and trialling of new innovative urban services in key areas such as mobility, health, energy and tourism. Over time, skills and workforce development are also expected to be important elements of BDIP’s programme and as such may include direct engagement with citizens and local communities.

**2.3 Examples of digital innovation developments in other cities**

**Smart Docklands – Dublin** [www.smartdocklands.ie](http://www.smartdocklands.ie)   
The Smart Docklands District, with its density of new builds, global tech companies and range of connectivity options, aims to provide a unique platform for innovators and entrepreneurs to develop new and innovative solutions that will transform cities.

**Knowledge Quarter – Liverpool** [www.kqliverpool.co.uk](http://www.kqliverpool.co.uk)KQ Liverpool brings together the city’s key partners to collaborate in a creative environment. It aims to be at the forefront of global innovation, ultimately growing the economy and creating new employment.

**ID Manchester and Oxford Road Corridor – Manchester**Manchester has set out its bold ambition to be the innovation capital of Europe. This includes the development of the £1.5 billion ID Manchester, a world-class innovation district on the site of the University of Manchester’s North Campus.[www.id-manchester.com](http://www.id-manchester.com)

The city has already developed the Oxford Road Corridor innovation district which is home to a unique concentration of knowledge, business and cultural assets. [www.oxfordroadcorridor.com](http://www.oxfordroadcorridor.com)

**Brainport – Eindhoven –** [www.brainporteindhoven.com](http://www.brainporteindhoven.com)   
Brainport is a technology region in the Netherlands where companies, government and educational institutions work together to generate new ideas and create innovative products.

**3. Requirements**

We have commissioned the creation of a dynamic, unique and strong **brand**, compelling **narrative** and a **range of marketing collateral** to position **Belfast as an emerging world leader in digital innovation** and we are now seeking a suitably qualified and experienced brand and marketing agency or consortium to develop a marketing strategy

**3.1 Marketing strategy**

The appointed contractor will be required to develop a **clear, detailed and costed marketing strategy** to achieve the BDIP’s key objectives, outlining optimum channels and activity that will reach and engage our target audiences – along with clear rationale.

The marketing strategy must:

* Raise awareness of and achieve standout for Belfast’s global strengths and achievements in digital innovation in a crowded marketplace.
* Position Belfast as an attractive investment location for innovation-led developments.
* Engage, motivate and inspire relevant stakeholders.
* Encourage partner and influencer endorsement and amplification of key messages through their own communications platforms.
* Encourage further government investment to ‘level up’ with other areas of the UK.
* Promote the key investments and digital innovation opportunities.

This strategy must provide a compelling value proposition to our audiences that engages them and drives them to a specified action (e.g. investment, relocation, participation in a skills development programme, response to a challenge fund), moving our audiences along the journey from awareness to acquisition to advocacy.

**4. Budget**

The maximum budget available for this initial piece of work is £3,000-£5000.

**5. Selection criteria**

We will evaluate submissions under the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | | **Weighting** |
| Quality | * Innovation and approach outlined in submission (60%) * Team’s relevant experience (10%) * Service quality (10%) | 80% |
| Cost |  | 20% |
| Total |  | 100% |

**Criterion 1: Innovation and approach outlined in submission**

To test both the innovation and approach recommended, agencies or consortia are asked to submit:

1. Summary of marketing strategy recommended – **maximum of two sides of an A4 page**.

**Criterion 2: Team’s relevant experience**

Please provide details of three projects undertaken by your company over the last five years that demonstrate how your team will be able to deliver this contract successfully.

Details should include the client’s name, project description, contract period and dates, value, contact name and telephone number and permission that the BDIP can contact for a reference.

Please also include the names and detailed profiles of team members who will be working on this contract.

**Criterion 3: Service quality**

Please outline your methodology for service delivery and contract management. Companies must indicate how they will ensure quality standards are met in the management of this project.

**Criterion 4: Cost**

Please provide a detailed breakdown of costs highlighting hourly and day rates of team members who will be working on this project.

**6. Timescale**

**4pm, Monday 15 February 2021**: Deadline for submissions.

**Wednesday 17 February 2021:** Successful contractor notified.

**19 March 2021**:  Successful contractor to deliver marketing strategy and key recommendations.