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## Press Release



# Network connects UK and Ireland businesses to Europe

**A joint UK-Ireland initiative is helping businesses in the UK & Ireland exploit growth opportunities in Europe.**

***Enterprise Europe Network UK and Ireland ([www.enterprise-europe.net](http://www.enterprise-europe.net)), part of parent organisation Enterprise Europe Network, was set up to strengthen the links between the 12 network regions within the UK and Ireland.***

The network, comprising 12 regional and 31 business development partners, means the UK and Ireland are working together in what is effectively a 'super region' within Europe.

"We provide support and advice to help companies grow their business into Europe," says Lorna McLean, at Enterprise Europe Network UK and Ireland. "Within the UK and Ireland, we work with a wide consortium of development organisations, including UKTI, Business Link, Enterprise Ireland and Invest NI, all dedicated to supporting and promoting commercial opportunities and partnerships across Europe."

"We can also call on colleagues in Enterprise Network Europe so we really are able to act at a local, national and European level."

"The real strength of this UK-Ireland initiative is the impressively wide collaborative platform it creates for local and national organizations to deliver a really seamless service to help companies, in particular SMEs, do business in Europe. It's all about taking a joined-up approach. We couldn't do what we do quite as effectively without the support of all our partners."

Through the website [www.enterprise-europe.net](http://www.enterprise-europe.net), Enterprise Europe Network UK and Ireland focuses on key services needed by businesses which are either breaking into or are already established and expanding in Europe.

Whether companies are looking for alliances, new products or technologies, the network can help them explore a wide range of partnering and licensing opportunities. And, although not a funding source, we can provide SMEs and organisations with information and support on how to apply for EU grants such as FP7, tender for public sector contracts and navigate their way through what can be complex EU business and legislative processes. We also actively match UK and Irish companies with partners across the EU through the wider Enterprise Europe Network.

“A major part of our work is around funding,” adds Lorna MacLean, “but we can support businesses in many ways, from helping them write business plans, to setting up meetings at major industry events.”

“Some 98% of European businesses are small and medium-sized enterprises,” adds Lorna MacLean, “and that’s why the EU Commission’s focus is firmly on ‘putting small businesses first’. At Enterprise Europe Network UK and Ireland we fully support that.”

#### NOTES:

Enterprise Europe Network UK and Ireland comprises 12 UK and Ireland Enterprise Europe Network regional partners: East England, Ireland, London, Midlands, North East England, North West England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, South East England, South West England, Wales, Yorkshire. [www.enterprise-europe.net](http://www.enterprise-europe.net)

The regional partners also operate as individual network partners within parent organisation Enterprise Europe Network.

Enterprise Europe Network is the consortium of 600 partner organisations in more than 40 countries, promoting competitiveness and innovation at local level in Europe and beyond. [www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu](http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu)

#### OUR STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS:

UK Trade and Industry, Department for Business Innovation & Skills, Invest NI, Enterprise Ireland, Technology Strategy Board, Knowledge Transfer Networks.

We also work directly with a variety of regional Chambers of Commerce and other organisations including: Skills South-East, the Manufacturing Advisory Service, Asian Business Development Network, Federation of Small Businesses, The Institute of Civil Engineering.

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