

Press release: Department for International Trade: 2 years on

Two years ago the UK voted to leave the EU, triggering the formation of the Department for International Trade (DIT) to help businesses export, attract investment, negotiate market access and free trade deals, and champion global free trade.

In that time, the department has seen exports grow by an average of £7 billion per month for the last 23 months with DIT actively helping firms secure more than £70 billion worth of export wins. During that same period, DIT has overseen a boom in total trade which has grown 15.7% to a record-breaking £2,381.8 billion.

Jobs have been created across the country with DIT figures showing that 4,337 investment projects were recorded over the last 2 financial years, creating 151,194 new jobs and safeguarding 47,735. This amounts to nearly 1,500 new jobs per week.

Two years on and DIT is also nearing the completion of a capability building programme ahead of the UK's exit from the EU. In that time, the department has grown from some 2,500 people at inception to around 3,500 people now – more than 500 of whom work in DIT's specialist trade policy group.

More recently, there have been significant additions to the senior leadership team and changes to how DIT operates, with 9 new Her Majesty's Trade Commissioners to lead the trade and investment business across the world and new Directors-General for Exports and Investment with decades of experience at the world's biggest banks.

All this work will ensure that DIT is able deliver on the government's ambition to build a truly global Britain operating the UK's first independent trade policy in more than 40 years.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The UK has always been an outward-facing, trading nation and as we move towards our departure from the European Union, our priority is to establish the UK as a fully independent member of the international trading system and pursue trade agreements with new friends and old allies.

Since its creation 2 years ago, the Department for International Trade has formed strong global trading relationships, begun the process of establishing Britain's independent seat at the table, supported British businesses to export to new markets, and set out the strategic direction for exports and investment post-Brexit.

We have come a long way in a short space of time, and I look

forward to seeing this work reach fruition, as we exit the European Union.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP said:

As we celebrate our second anniversary, there are many great achievements which reflect the dedication and hard work of my international economic department. After 150 years, DIT has reconstituted a Board of Trade for the 21st century, we have developed export and investment strategies; and have begun legislating for our trading future by taking the [Trade Bill](#) through Parliament.

We have succeeded in ensuring continued record export performance which has seen the trade deficit narrow by £3.9 billion in the year to May 2018, and made sure the UK remains the number one destination for inward investment in Europe.

Permanent Secretary Antonia Romeo commented:

The department published its flagship piece of legislation, the Trade Bill, currently in Parliament, established a new approach to foreign direct investment and outward direct investment and we are shortly to publish our Export Strategy.

As we reach our second anniversary, I am proud of the significant progress the department has made.

Second Permanent Secretary and Chief Trade Negotiation Adviser, Crawford Falconer said:

This department has become the hometown stadium for a fantastic team of dedicated professionals, that have already built a formidable trade policy machine from the ground up. It's nothing less than a privilege to be adopted by it.

Earlier this year, DIT launched the International Trade Profession, a government profession designed to build trade expertise across the civil service, in the UK and overseas, maximising opportunities for the UK with an independent trade policy. I look forward to heading up this exciting new profession and helping to develop a new wave of trade talent.

[Since DIT started 2 years ago](#)

ENDS

- The Department for International Trade Annual Report and Accounts 2017 to 2018 can be found at: gov.uk
- Export and total trade figures measured over 23-month period between July 2016 to May 2018 and comparable to the prior 23 months to May 2016. Trade deficit figures measured over the latest available 12-month period between June 2017 and May 2018 and comparable to the prior 12 months to May 2017.
- Export wins figures consolidated over 2 year period, where there has been a change to methodology and validation. In 2016/17 there was no systematic validation in place, but in 2017/18 2 new processes were introduced to deliver a proportionate but robust validation approach.
- £70 million export win figure is measured from April 2016 to March 2018.

For further information

[News story: Better detection of psychosis: apply for funding](#)

The [Department of Health](#) in Northern Ireland has up to £200,000 to invest in projects that use information and communications technology to improve the detection of emerging psychosis in patients.

Develop prototypes and design clinical trials

Psychosis is a mental health problem that makes people perceive or interpret things differently to those around them. It can involve hallucinations or delusions.

Funding is under SBRI (the Small Business Research Initiative).

It is available for projects that develop prototypes and design clinical trials. Successful projects could compete for further funding to carry out clinical trials.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for submitting tenders is at 3pm on 9 August 2018
- any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea can apply
- we expect phase 1 contracts to be worth up to £66,000 and to last up to 6 months
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts

- applications must be made through [etendersNI](https://www.etendersNI.gov.uk/)
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[Press release: Astronaut Tim Peake launches competition to name ExoMars Rover](#)

Due to launch in August 2020 the UK-built rover is part of the European Space Agency's ExoMars mission which will look at how Mars has evolved and whether there may be conditions for life.

The ExoMars rover will be the first of its kind to travel across the Martian surface and drill down to determine if evidence of life is buried underground, protected from the destructive radiation that impinges the surface today. It will collect samples and analyse them with next-generation instruments, many designed by British engineers.

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

"Exploring the surface of another planet is what many scientists and researchers dream of and now a British-built rover will travel the surface of Mars to answer some fundamental questions, and the public can be part of this exciting new chapter by naming the rover. We want creative and bold entries – I'll start the ball rolling with Rover McRoverface!"

"The ExoMars mission showcases the very best of the UK's world-leading robotics expertise and this mission will inspire the next generation of engineers, scientists and space enthusiasts to be part of the journey as the UK continues to reach for the stars. We are truly entering the new Great British Space Age."

The competition was unveiled by British ESA astronaut Tim Peake at the Farnborough International Airshow today (Friday 20th July). Tim Peake said:

"Mars is a fascinating destination, a place where humans will one day work alongside robots to gather new knowledge and search for life in our Solar System."

"The ExoMars rover is a vital part of this journey of exploration and we're asking you to become part of this exciting mission and name the rover that will scout the Martian surface."

The UK is the second largest European contributor to the ExoMars mission, behind Italy, having invested €287 million in the mission and £14 million on the instruments.

Airbus Defence and Space is leading the build of the rover while the UCL

Mullard Space Science Laboratory is leading on a key instrument known as the PanCam, a high resolution 3D camera which will be used to look at the terrain and rocks to try to detect signs of life.

Leicester University and Teledyne e2v are involved in work on the Raman Spectrometer with STFC RAL Space processing the data it delivers. ExoMars will be the first mission to combine the capability to move across the surface and to study Mars at depth.

The rover, which is due to land on Mars in March 2021, uses solar panels to generate the required electrical power, and is designed to survive the cold Martian nights with the help of batteries and heater units.

Another part of the ExoMars mission, the Trace Gas Orbiter, is already at Mars, looking for atmospheric gases that may be linked to active geological or biological processes.

In 2014 more than 4,000 people responded to a call to name Tim Peake's 6-month mission to the International Space Station, with Principia being chosen as the winner. The name referred to Isaac Newton's world-changing three-part text on physics, Naturalis Principia Mathematica, describing the principal laws of motion and gravity.

The Holiday Makers is a summer-long campaign to get kids making, inventing and having fun in the Year of Engineering. The campaign is supported by organisations such across the country, including the UK Space Agency, and there are lots of ways for families to get involved over the summer holidays, from free activities that kids can do at home, to events across the country and weekly challenges from partners like the Science Museum.

Engineering makes a major contribution to our economy, from driving advances in healthcare and communication to supporting our growing space industry, but the sector faces a major skills gap and lack of diversity – there is annual shortage of 20,000 engineering graduates each year, only 12% of the engineering workforce is female, and less than 8% comes from a black, Asian or ethnic minority background.

As well as the honour of naming the rover the winner of the competition will receive a tour for four people of the Airbus facility in Stevenage where the Mars rover is being built.

[View the competition terms and conditions.](#)

[News story: Call for evidence launched](#)

[on qualification fee information](#)

Ofqual has today (20 July 2018) launched a [call for evidence](#) focused on the availability of information about qualification fees in the regulated market. This aligns with work being undertaken by our fellow regulators in Wales and Northern Ireland on making the qualifications market work more effectively. The call runs until 30 September 2018, and is looking for responses from across the education sector in England.

Dr. Michelle Meadows, Ofqual's Executive Director of Strategy, Risk and Research said:

We want to make sure that those who purchase qualifications, including schools and colleges, have access to information that will help them to make informed choices. We are also interested in hearing from those who develop qualifications about how they make fee information available and how they interact with purchasers.

We will use information that we receive through this call for evidence to look closely at the accessibility of fee information and determine whether there is any action we need to take to improve this.

[News story: Lord Duncan holds financial services roundtable](#)

UK Government Minister Lord Duncan has met leading figures in finance, investment and Fintech to discuss a range of issues affecting financial services companies and organisations in Scotland and the UK.

The meeting in Glasgow included representatives from the Bank of England, Scottish Financial Enterprise and the Financial Conduct Authority. They discussed the opportunities arising from the UK's departure from the European Union, the differences between the Scottish and UK economy, as well as the UK Government's support for the FinTech sector.

Lord Duncan said:

It's well known that Scotland's financial sector punches above its weight. We have internationally renowned firms, cutting edge technology and some of the brightest minds in the business. That's why it is so important that I hear directly from representatives from these businesses in order to hear directly what their concerns

are, and where they see areas of development as we leave the EU.

Fintech is an area that I'm keen to hear more about – and something that the UK Government is fully behind. Earlier this year the UK Government published the Fintech Sector Strategy, which outlined how the government would act to make the UK the best place to start and grow a Fintech business and looked at areas where we could help remove barriers to entry and growth faced by these firms.

I was pleased to welcome Stephen Ingledeu, the Chief Executive of FinTech Scotland which is an example of the benefits of collaboration between the government and the private sector. It's really important that the UK Government, Scottish Government and organisations such as those represented today work closely together for the benefit of the sector.

During a speech last month the Chancellor said that we are standing on the brink of a technological revolution – with leaps and bounds being made in AI, robotics, biotech, Fintech, and a whole lot more. We need to capitalise on this and be ambitious in our development – working with other leaders to share knowledge and expertise. We have Fintech Bridges with Singapore, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, and Australia, which builds on collaboration between us and those countries – enhancing bilateral trade and investment flow.

It is obvious that there is a bright future and a wealth of opportunities for these companies and the whole sector, and I look forward to discussing them in more detail.

Lord Duncan updated the group on the UK Government's Chequers position, and confirming that we are seeking a financial services regulatory and stability arrangement. This will provide stability for the EU-UK financial ecosystem, preserving mutually beneficial cross-border business models and economic integration.

The UK Government's negotiating position is critical to Scotland's future. That is why the course agreed at Chequers was one intended to enhance our prosperity and security outside the EU and build a country that works for everyone.