

# [Press release: Liam Fox launches new export champion community](#)

Companies of all sizes from across the UK will benefit from first-hand advice as the Export Champion Community will today (Thursday 28th February) be launched by International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP.

Almost 1,000 businesses that have successfully entered overseas markets will encourage their fellow firms to start exporting, offering practical advice.

Over 730 new Export Advocates have agreed to join businesses that are already working with the Department for International Trade (DIT) to help promote the government's message to their industry audience and get businesses thinking globally.

Together these businesses form the new Export Champion Community – a nationwide network of UK companies acting as ambassadors for exporting, sharing success stories, offering practical advice and leading by example.

**Launching the Export Champion Community in Durham, International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade Dr Liam Fox MP said:**

The Export Champion Community is an important initiative and its members will play a vital role in creating the culture of exporting that my international economic department is building in Britain.

By raising the profile of exporters in this way, we will help to normalise exporting across the country, expanding horizons, removing barriers to market access and facilitating expansion here in the UK.

Supported by a community of the UK's leading exporters, I am confident that our businesses will continue to grow their exports in the months and years ahead.

**Minister for Trade and Export Promotion Baroness Fairhead added:**

A key part of DIT's role is to help UK businesses to export. That is why our Export Strategy is unapologetically business-led.

So today, I am delighted to help launch this Export Champions programme which was created in response to business demands for a peer-to-peer means of finding information, advice and inspiration. It will allow companies to seek support from 'those who look like them'.

I'd encourage any business looking to export for the first time, or

seeking to expand its exports, to get in touch with DIT to find out more about this programme or any of the other of the services we offer. We are here to help.

As the Board of Trade meets later at Durham University, Dr Fox will present companies from across the Northern Powerhouse with Board of Trade Awards (BOFTAs) for their exceptional performance in international trade.

A hallmark of British quality, these awards have become a globally-recognised certificate of excellence, shown on product labels of successful businesses from every corner of the UK.

Six companies will be presented with BOFTAs later today:

- Powdered baby milk producer Kendal Nutricare
- Middlesbrough based Wilton Engineering
- Leeds medical lighting company Brandon Medical
- Huddersfield firm Paxman Coolers, which provides scalp cooling for chemotherapy patients
- Ulverston's Playdale Playgrounds
- Gateshead based components manufacturer Gate 7

Dr Fox will also visit students at Durham University who have been tasked with designing their own British heritage fashion brand and export strategy, as part of the National Trade Academy Programme.

**Professor Stuart Corbridge, Vice-Chancellor at Durham University, said:**

We are delighted that the Department for International Trade has recognised the impact of our research and collaboration locally, nationally and internationally.

It is great to see Durham University spin-out, Kromek, become an export champion. The company is an excellent example of how academic research can be commercialised, leading to global export success and job creation.

As a University we are rooted in the North East of England, but our global connections and partnerships are important to us and mean that our research has the ability to tackle challenges in many corners of the world.

Last August, DIT launched the government's ambitious new Export Strategy, seeking to move exports as a percentage of GDP from 30% to 35%.

The strategy sets out a range of support which will help companies make the most of global business opportunities.

Businesses that wish to apply to become part of the Export Champion Community, or those seeking further information, should visit [great.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/great-gov-uk).

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## **Notes to editors**

The Department for International Trade (DIT) helps businesses export, drives inward and outward investment, negotiates market access and trade deals, and champions free trade.

We are an international economic department, responsible for:

- supporting and encouraging UK businesses to drive sustainable international growth
- ensuring the UK remains a leading destination for international investment and maintains its number one position for international investment stock in Europe
- opening markets, building a trade framework with new and existing partners which is free and fair
- using trade and investment to underpin the government's agenda for a Global Britain and its ambitions for prosperity, stability and security worldwide.