

# UK companies partner with Thailand MDES to unlock Smart City opportunities

Monday, 10 May 2021 – The UK's Minister for Exports, Graham Stuart MP co-launched the "UK-Thailand Tech Export Academy", a virtual trade mission, alongside Thailand's Minister of Digital Economy and Society (MDES), H.E. Mr Chaiwut Thanakamanusorn, that has led to over 200 business matching sessions between British and Thai businesses.

The programme was facilitated by industry leaders including Deloitte, EY and KPMG, who provided advice and guidance to firms about doing business in the APAC region.

The Tech Academy was launched last year by Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade, The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, as part of a plan to support UK companies post Covid-19. From a strong field of 108 companies who applied, only 30 were carefully selected to join the nine-month programme in preparation for the final trade mission to Thailand.

The mission was amongst many other collaborative efforts in smart cities between the UK and Thailand, spear-headed by the initial launch of the UK-Thailand Smart City Handbook, in partnership with Thailand's Digital Economy and Promotion Agency (DEPA). The UK's partnership with DEPA continued with a series of Smart City Workshops, where the British Embassy Bangkok met with local authorities in Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen and Chonburi to explore potential areas for smart city collaborations.

The UK and Thailand is also working to deepen and strengthen its trading relationship across all sectors following the completion of a Joint Trade Review. In March 2021, the UK and Thailand signed an MoU which commits us to further strengthening trade and investment ties through a new joint trade dialogue. The Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) offers a significant new opportunity for the UK and Thailand to work together to improve bilateral trade, including by addressing market access barriers affecting businesses. The first meeting of the new UK Thailand JETCO will take place later this year.

Minister for Exports at the UK Department for International Trade, Graham Stuart MP, said,

Our first JETCO with Thailand is testament to our desire to increase trade with friends like Thailand. We will build business-to-business connections between our two countries, as the whole business world recovers together from the effects of the pandemic.

Smart city technology has the potential to revolutionise the way we design urban environments, and how we live within them, the better to suit modern society. The businesses chosen for the Tech Export Academy are changing the world of tomorrow – from commuting to work, to powering public facilities.

Minister for Digital Economy and Society, H.E. Mr Chaiwut Thanakamanusorn said,

The Ministry has been proactive in shaping smart city development in Thailand through robust means, measures and mechanisms. One of which is building synergy and long-term relations with trusted international partners...our Ministry and the UK partners have indeed accomplished quite a few meaningful collaborations, such as the bilingual Thailand Smart City Handbook and stakeholder mapping workshops in three different regions, namely in the northern region (in Chiang Mai), the north-eastern region (in Khon Kaen) and the eastern region (in Chonburi).

British Commercial Counsellor to Thailand, Mr Richard Porter, said,

This initiative represents the deepening trade links that the UK is forming with Thailand. Our £184bn Tech Sector – the largest in Europe – sees fantastic opportunities for partnership with Thai companies and organisations. In the past year alone, total trade between the UK and Thailand exceeded £5bn. The overwhelming reception of the UK-Thailand Tech Export Academy's trade mission reflects strong buy-ins from both UK and Thai businesses to forge partnerships in driving cities of the future.

About the Department for International Trade (DIT): The UK's Department for International Trade (DIT) has overall responsibility for promoting UK trade across the world and attracting foreign investment to our economy. We are a specialised government body with responsibility for negotiating international trade policy, supporting business, as well as delivering an outward-looking trade diplomacy strategy.

Our services we offer:

- Bespoke Information on key commercial considerations including company registration, financing, labour and skills, research and development, real estate, transport, utilities and regulatory issues.
- Comprehensive regional and local location analysis to help overseas companies choose the right place to set up. • introductions to sector networks including industry leaders, chambers of commerce, service providers, universities and centres of R&D excellence.
- Assistance to develop innovative UK business opportunities through our Global Entrepreneur Programme (GEP).

- Continued support through our investor Development network, which offers assistance to companies once they are established in the UK.

Learn more about the Tech Export Academy [here](#)