

## Appendix 2: Belfast City Council – International Relations: Delivery Plan 2025-2026

Trade and Investment					
Project/Initiative	Brief Overview	BCC Lead	Partners	Timeframe	Priority outputs and benefits
New York, New Belfast 2025	Annual event and supporting side programme focused on engaging with key east coast USA economic “champions” and pipeline FDI companies considering investing in Belfast and potential trade opportunities for local companies. Also opportunity to position Belfast’s latest Tourism messaging ( Fleadh 2026) and City Deal Assets for investment	EU and International Relations Team	Event organisers Invest NI US office and Belfast Chamber	June 2025	Investment leads for City assets and trade leads for Belfast businesses  Support Invest NI for investment and trade pipeline  Promotion of major events
Homecoming 2025	Business conference promoting Belfast to diaspora communities for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism including business tourism</li> <li>- FDI including Housing, City Deal Assets</li> <li>- Partnership</li> <li>- Major events including Fleadh 2026</li> </ul>	EU and International Relations Team	Event organisers	October 2025	Priority leads and follow up for City assets- City Deal, housing led regen, Support for decisions made on FDI pipeline / trade opportunities Promotion of major events /opportunities like Fleadh, Belfast Stories
US Sister City collaboration engagement	Action planning to consider next steps following successful Nashville visit (Feb 2025) and potential re-engagement with Boston, using same successful “ Team Belfast” model used for Nashville	EU and International Relations Team supported by Economic	ICB; universities; Catalyst; individual businesses	Date tbc	Partnerships and access to finance for Belfast businesses, Innovation Centres

	mission. Boston focus will also be Life and Health Sciences inc access to innovation partnerships and VC s l	Development team		Q4	and City Deal assets, with focus on L&HS Promotion of Belfast as a study and tourism destination
Belfast City and Region Place Partnership	Joint public and private sector-led initiative focused on place positioning to attract investment and deliver on inclusive growth. Critical events include MIPIM (France, March each year) and UK ReiiF (Leeds, May each year). Other special/one-off events may also be involved, in line with opportunities. The Partnership also produces resources such as a website and investment prospectus	City Regeneration and Development team	Other BRCD councils, Belfast Harbour, Universities, Invest NI, developers, construction companies, legal and financial services	Annual programme of work	Leads generated in support of investment attracted and developments supported
Develop and maintain updated Belfast's city proposition messaging	New and updated collateral to validate and demonstrate Belfast's economic ambitions	Business Research and Development supported by Corporate Communications City Regeneration City Innovation Office ICB Economic Development EUIRU	Invest NI and active stakeholders working internationally	End Q2 2025 and ongoing	Ensuring that consistent and updated city messaging products ( including economic, place making, innovation, net zero, tourism , culture etc ) that are shared and used by all city stakeholders
EU Trade and Investment	Develop updated approach to EU engagement with City and Regional	EUIRU City Innovation Office	Invest NI and TEO	Q3 2025	Agreed approach to enhanced EU engagement

	Partners, building on work of Universities, Innovation and Smart teams	ICB Economic Development			
Inward Delegations: Facilitate requests for presentations on Belfast's proposition.	Facilitating bespoke inward visits, showcasing opportunities and delivering presentations to visiting delegations to outline opportunities for investment, trade collaboration & showcase best practice	EUIRU with input from Thematic Experts in BCC	Broad range of city stakeholders; Thematic & industry specialists	Ongoing	Follow up engagement leading to more specific plans for investment /trade or collaboration
Support implementation of city educational institutions' international activity	Support development of global education partnerships, research exchange , study mobility programmes and funding opportunities through Horizon and other EU funds	EUIRU, City Innovation, ICB	QUB UU BMET Stranmillis St Mary's British Council	Ongoing	BCC contributing to attracting more international students, research and EU funding partnerships, which contribute to sector and city economic & cultural impact
<b>Innovation and Knowledge Exchange</b>					
Belfast Innovation value proposition	Developing a shared investable value proposition for the Belfast innovation ecosystem – including the City Deal funded investments.	City Innovation Office	Innovation City Belfast partners Plus most of the city's other innovation partners including INI and DfE	Working towards an agreed proposition by autumn 2025 – with testing likely at Smart Cities World Congress in November 2025	New product in suite aligned with new and updated overall economic proposition
Bloomberg Philanthropies 2025 Mayors Challenge	A two phase, 12-month programme with 50 other cities aimed at delivering urban innovation solutions	City Innovation Office	Innovation City Belfast and challenge partners	First international workshop	Collaborative proposals for solving

				planned for late Spring 2025	urban innovation challenges
Sejong Memorandum of Understanding	City-city cooperation on innovation and technology Includes a potential visit by Sejong Mayor in Q3	City Innovation Office	ICB	Ongoing	Support for partner workstreams
Smart City World Congress (Barcelona)	Promotion of city messaging, focusing on opportunities for partnership, investment, research and trade in relation to digital innovation There will be a particular focus on identifying Horizon Europe opportunities with other cities.	Innovation City Belfast	ICB Partners	Q3 –	Leads in relation to partnerships, investment, research & funding opportunities
Upsurge Initiative	EU Funded climate demonstrator project linking Belfast to Maribor, Budapest, Breda, Katowice	Climate Team	BCC CNS Queens University Friends of Botanic Gardens Friends of the Field EU Partners	Ongoing	Demonstrate alternative nature based solutions (NBS). Inform and evidence the viability of nature based solutions and building within communities for sustainable food production.
<b>Tourism development and city positioning</b>					
Supporting strategic tourism stakeholders in attracting and promoting major	Collaborating with Visit Belfast, Tourism Ireland and Tourism NI to drive sectoral growth and positioning Belfast as a host city for major events and international exhibitions – such as Fleadh Cheoil	Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts	Visit Belfast Tourism Ireland Tourism NI NITA ICC	Ongoing	Number of strategic opportunities in which opportunity integrated aligned to tourism growth

tourism and cultural events					Media coverage / promotion Belfast as host destination
Friendship Four – Men and Women’s Tournaments	US College Ice Hockey Tournaments linked to Boston Sister City; associated STEM Festival and promotion of city via US TV airtime	EUIRU	Odyssey Trust  NI Connections DfC Tourism NI	Q3	Economic impact on city – bed nights, Arena venue, US and global press coverage value, socially and also impact on schools and community groups making US ice hockey links for future cooperation
Your Roots Are Showing	Folk music conference and trade fair which attracts over 100 artists. Potential to be held in Belfast Jan 2026.	Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts	City’s cultural venues – part of music trail	Q4	Economic impact on city – including bed nights, conference venue, socially Plus enhanced global reputation of Belfast as a business tourism destination within this sector
Celebrate Chinese New Year	Participation in city partner events to mark New Lunar year	EUIRU	China stakeholders – CWA, Chinese Chamber, Chinese Consulate, Confucius	Q4	Enhances civic relations with Chinese players locally and internationally at govt, business and community level

**In addition to above workstreams, BCC participate in a number of strategic thematic networks as outlined below aligned to framework**

Council for Global City CIOs	Information and opportunity exchange between innovation cities across the world.	City Innovation Office
European & UK Learning Cities Networks	Engage in each Network to exchange best practice and develop initiatives to support community learning	City & Organisational Strategy
UNESCO City of Music	Active participation in UNESCO cultural networks with reciprocal benefits between the cities including but not limited to partnerships with UCoM cities Kansas City (US) Hannover (Germany) Daegu (South Korea), Conde (Brazil), Ghent (Belgium) and Bologna (Italy). Includes BCC representation on UNESCO Music subnetwork meetings.	Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts