



**Increase  
your sales  
across the  
island**



# Increase your sales across the island

We can help your business to access and develop new markets and grow your sales across the island. Depending on your business needs we can offer you:

	<b>Page</b>
• Financial support through our sales and marketing programme, Acumen	<b>3</b>
• Trade Accelerator Voucher support to help you get expert cross-border business advice	<b>8</b>
• Advice and mentoring to help you access the all-island public procurement market with our Go2Tender programme	<b>11</b>
• Cross-border advice and support through our First Stop Shop information service	<b>14</b>
• Help with exporting North or South for the first time	<b>15</b>

---



## Financial support: Sales and marketing

### Acumen Programme

#### Employ a full-time salesperson

Funding of up to £15,000 (or euro equivalent) is available for you to employ a salesperson that is based in your target market and responsible for increasing sales in that region – North or South. Typically they will be an experienced salesperson, knowledgeable in your industry but you are free to recruit the best person for the job and we will fund up to 50% of their salary costs in the first year.

#### Hire a part-time salesperson

If you want to explore the sales potential in your export market, a part-time sales agent may be the best solution for your business – allowing you to scope the market opportunity, start small and limit your risk. We can offer you financial support of up to £8,000 (or euro equivalent) to hire a prospector who can represent your company in your target market for 12 months.

The InterTradelreland Acumen programme is funded by:



And supported by:



#### Market research support

We can provide your company with consultancy support of up to £4,000 (or euro equivalent) to help you:

- Plan and implement a cross-border market entry strategy
- Review your sales plan to grow your existing cross-border sales
- Develop a cross-border joint venture or strategic alliance

#### Employ a high-calibre sales & marketing graduate

Our graduate option can help your business to increase its awareness, understanding and capability to trade on a cross-border basis by assessing the market potential and developing a strategic marketing/sales approach. We will fund up to 50% of the cost of employing a graduate to undertake a 12 month project.

## Benefits

Through our Acumen programme, we have provided assistance to more than 300 companies across the island helping them to generate over €58m / £50m worth of sales.

Typical benefits as a result of the programme include:

- Access to new markets and increased sales
- Better knowledge of the cross-border market
- New business opportunities identified
- Improvements to your sales and marketing strategy
- Increased business contacts and prospects across the island

## Am I eligible?

To qualify for financial support through our Acumen programme ideally your business should be:

- A manufacturing or a tradable service company with an annual turnover below £40 million (or euro equivalent)
- A company that employs less than 250 people
- An indigenous company (not multinational or foreign owned)
- A company with an established relationship with a mainstream development agency (Invest Northern Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta, City or County Enterprise Board, a Local Enterprise Agency)

In addition, you should also have:

- A satisfactory track record in your home market
- Less than 30% of total business in the target cross-border market already
- A sufficiently unique product that does not displace existing products in the marketplace
- A project that can demonstrate that it may not happen without support

## Contact Us

InterTradeIreland Acumen Team  
Tel: 01 883 9223 or 028 8225 0404  
Email: [info@acumenprogramme.com](mailto:info@acumenprogramme.com)  
Web: [intertradeireland.com/acumen](http://intertradeireland.com/acumen)

## How it works

It is very straight forward to apply for Acumen funding - all we need you to do is to answer some simple questions and provide some basic information about your company.

### Step 1:

#### Contact us

Contact one of our Acumen Team. They will ask you some questions about your business and discuss the potential support options that may be right for your business.

### Step 2:

#### Complete a short business proposal form

Once you have spoken to our advisors, they will ask you to complete a short two-page application form and return it.

### Step 3:

#### Approval & assessment

Your proposal will be reviewed at a monthly Acumen meeting and if your application is approved you will be notified immediately.

### Step 4:

#### Getting started

You may already have a salesperson in mind for your company. If so, they can be appointed to undertake your project straight away or we can help you to find and recruit the right candidate for the job. You will also be assigned an InterTradeIreland Acumen consultant who is responsible for supporting you throughout the project.

### Step 5:

#### Claims

Once you begin your project and the salesperson begins their role, you can claim financial assistance for eligible costs from InterTradeIreland each quarter in arrears.

## Companies we have helped



### PT Technologies

Manufacture of solvents, wipes & lubricants for aerospace, power and telecoms industries  
Watergrasshill, Co. Cork

Through InterTradelreland's Acumen programme, the company was able to engage a county Down-based consultant to help them to increase sales in Northern Ireland and access new markets.

*"Not only have we seen an increase in our business in the North, but we now have a better knowledge of the model that we need to use to pitch for work elsewhere – generating even more business for us. In my opinion, the Acumen programme is the essential ingredient for any business which is considering developing its cross-border business. The team there are experts in their own field and made the whole process very simple for us."*

James O'Brien, Managing Director



### Inishowen Engineering

Fabrication of metal components  
Clonmany, Co. Donegal

Through Acumen, they hired a sales consultant who developed a structured marketing plan, identified key potential customers and helped them to secure two major contracts.

*"As a result of the programme we have since launched two new significant products, resulting in a number of major contacts - the first, with the potential for a £250,000 contract with the world's largest manufacturer of farmed salmon and the second with a well-known UK tool manufacturer, which is predicted to generate a 7-figure sum for the company. Aside from the increased sales, we have developed our skills as a company and improved our confidence in winning large contracts which we would have previously considered out of reach."*

Josephine Noone, Administrator

The company identified the potential opportunity to do more business in Northern Ireland but didn't have the resources to be able to target the North effectively.



### McElwaine SMART Technologies

Provider of monitoring systems for telecare, telehealth and security sectors  
Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh

Recognising the potential for expansion within Ireland, the company took part on the Acumen programme and hired a sales consultant to explore new business opportunities in the public and private healthcare sectors in the South.

*"We initially focused on developing our contacts within the North Dublin area and within just five months we were seeing increased profits in the region of £40k from Southern sales alone. For us, Acumen has proved to be fantastic in helping us to reach into the Southern market. We have seen a notable increase in business there and an increase in our annual turnover as a result. I would strongly recommend for other companies to approach InterTradelreland if they are considering doing cross-border business."*

John McElwaine, Managing Director



## Financial support: Cross-border business advice

### Trade Accelerator Voucher Scheme

If you are considering doing business across the island, we can offer you financial support worth up to **£1000 / €1200** towards professional advice in areas such as sales and marketing, finance, taxation, employment law, currency, or regulation. It can also be used for market advice to help you scope the potential business opportunity in your opposite jurisdiction.

The voucher can help your business get advice from participating expert providers (legal, accountancy, market research firms etc) in Northern Ireland and Ireland and can be redeemed against the cost of practical advice and expertise on specific issues.

\*Note funding amounts are accurate as at September 2010.



## Benefits

Typical benefits as a result of the Trade Accelerator Voucher include:

- Free and impartial expertise to help your business trade across the island
- Better understanding of the cross-border market opportunity
- Solutions to overcome barriers to doing cross-border business
- Improved knowledge of the practical considerations when trading across the border (financial, tax, legal, currency, regulation etc)

## Am I eligible?

- Your company must be a registered small enterprise with an annual turnover not exceeding €10m/£9m
- The assistance requested must relate to cross-border trade and business
- Your business should be in the manufacturing or international tradable services sectors
- First time exporters (companies aspiring to do business within the other jurisdiction for the first time) are particularly welcome
- Small enterprises in the transportation and agricultural sectors are **excluded** in line with specific State Aid guidelines

## Contact Us

First Stop Shop

Tel: 00800 1010 5454

Email: [firststopshop@intertradeireland.com](mailto:firststopshop@intertradeireland.com)

Web: [intertradeireland.com](http://intertradeireland.com)

## How it works

### Step 1:

#### Complete a short application form

Complete a Trade Accelerator Voucher application which can be downloaded from our website, **intertradeireland.com**. You will need to include some company information and details about the type of expertise you need or problem which you are trying to solve. You can select the firm which you would like to advise you from our list of participating providers which are available online.

Once completed, submit your application via email to **firststopshop@intertradeireland.com**.

### Step 2:

#### Assessment & approval

Your application will be assessed and once approved you will be notified immediately.

### Step 3:

#### Getting started

The advisor you have selected to help your business will get in contact with you directly to understand your needs in more detail and provide the advice and assistance you need. Once they have completed the work to your satisfaction they can claim for financial assistance from InterTradeIreland to cover the costs of their expertise for the project.



**TENDER**

# Access the all-island public procurement market:

## Go-2-Tender Programme

Go-2-Tender is a workshop programme which aims to give your business the confidence, knowledge and practical skills to tender successfully for public sector contracts across the island. The all-island public procurement market is worth approximately €21 / £19 billion and represents an untapped market opportunity for many SMEs to increase their sales.

The programme consists of two days of workshops and an additional 1/2 day mentoring for every company taking part. Eligible participant companies can also apply for up to a further three days of mentoring from an experienced consultant to help with tender development, scoping potential markets and tailored advice and guidance.

You can also avail of:

- A tender helpline
- A tender alert service
- Assistance with consortia building

## Benefits

More than 400 companies that have taken part in our Go-2-Tender programme have won contracts totalling €49 / £41 million to date!

Through taking part in the workshop programme, you will gain a better understanding of:

- How public sector organisations buy their goods and services
- How to source tender opportunities
- The tender process and how it works North and South
- What buyers are looking for
- How to prepare a winning tender and increase your chances of success

## Am I eligible?

To take part in Go-2-Tender you should be able to demonstrate:

- A proven success in your home market
- A strong commitment to develop cross-border market opportunities
- Dedicated resources to identify, exploit and fulfil cross-border opportunities
- That you have less than 30% turnover in the opposite jurisdiction
- That you are an indigenous company (not multinational or foreign owned)

## Contact Us

InterTradeIreland Trade Team

Tel: 028 3083 4173 (048 from Ireland)

Email: [jenny.williamson@intertradeireland.com](mailto:jenny.williamson@intertradeireland.com)

## How it works

### Step 1:

#### Register your interest

There are usually around 10 workshops each year throughout the island. To find out when and where the events are taking place, visit our website [intertradeireland.com/go2tender](http://intertradeireland.com/go2tender) for information and to register your interest.

### Step 2:

#### Application process

You will need to provide some information about your company in the form of a short application form. Once approved, you will be booked onto the programme at a workshop of your choice. You will be required to provide a small fee (£85 / €105) to cover your attendance at the two-day workshop, ½ day mentoring support, catering and workshop materials.



#### Filestores

Document and data management  
Dublin, Kilkenny, Lisburn  
and Craigavon

Filestores took part on InterTradeIreland's Go-2-Tender programme to help them target the Northern Ireland public sector with their end-to-end secure document and data management services.

*"Our efforts have resulted in a 21% increase in sterling turnover and customer numbers are up in the North by 97%. We created a new purpose-built record centre in Craigavon and secured two major public sector contracts for confidential shredding."*

Sheelagh Carroll  
Filestores



# Cross-border information and advice

## First Stop Shop Service

One of the biggest challenges when thinking about doing business in a new market is getting the information, help and advice to get you started. We can help you to:

- Answer a cross-border business query with our 'simple guide to cross-border business'
- Access market intelligence reports, information and trade statistics across the island
- Find out about the range of supports available to your business across the island

## Get in touch!

Visit our website, [intertradeireland.com](http://intertradeireland.com) to access the latest cross-border information, advice and guides free of charge. You can also contact our free First Stop Shop service for anything you need to know about doing cross-border business.

**First Stop Shop information service:**

Tel: 00800 1010 5454

Email: [firststopshop@intertradeireland.com](mailto:firststopshop@intertradeireland.com)



# Exporting for the first time?

If you are thinking about doing cross-border business for the first time here are some helpful tips to get you started.

## 1. Take stock of your performance in your home market

- Identify your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis)
- How do you perform at home?
- How well have you the home market covered geographically?
- How do you compare against your competitors?
- Do you supply all the multiples – are any markets closed to you?

## 2. Discuss the opportunities and challenges of entering a new market with your team

- Lead the exercise yourself unless you really believe someone else in the team is better equipped to do this
- Discuss why you want to extend and grow – have facts and figures to hand, i.e. the size of the market, gaps identified in the market, contract opportunities and market entry costs
- Identify your readiness – do you have all the information you need?

- Fix any blockages or barriers presented – for example, tax, financial, legal considerations
- Set ambitious but achievable targets and milestones against timescales

## 3. Visit your target marketplace

- Spend time in your target marketplace
- Meet and talk to as many relevant people as possible even if they are unlikely to be immediate clients or customers. They are all sources of invaluable market information
- Understand the retail or distribution channels for your product
- Examine competitors closely
- Get as much on detail on “price” as possible: End or Retail Price, Wholesale Price, Discounts
- Understand the marketing and promotional approach of suppliers and retailers
- Estimate volumes and the size of work (the scale of the task in hand)
- Note any differences from home market

#### 4. Engage an experienced market research consultant who is resident in the target marketplace

- You and your team will have learnt a lot from the research process by this stage however a professional marketer based in the new market can assemble facts and figures and reach sources quicker than you may do yourself
- An independent professional can also provide realistic feedback on the opportunities and challenges
- Our Acumen programme offers a number of tailored supports to help you with this research or you could apply for our Trade Accelerator Voucher scheme

#### 5. Pull together all your information and research

- Collate all the various information and material you have researched
- Draw up a research analysis report - this will clarify many issues, needs and present possible opportunities for you

#### 6. Draw up a market entry plan

- A formal market entry plan will establish when you could be ready to enter the new market
- It should also identify the priorities and 'must dos'
- It will identify the physical, human, financial and technological resources required to achieve your objectives
- A market entry plan will give you the opportunity to test likely outcomes, before serious money and resources are committed
- It also increases risk of success!



## About us

InterTradeIreland is the only organisation which has been given responsibility by both Governments to boost North/South economic co-operation to the mutual benefit of Northern Ireland and Ireland. By encouraging better use of our collective resources we help to expedite trade and business growth across the island and create an environment where it is easier to do business.

We support SMEs across the island to identify and develop North/South trade and innovation opportunities. We do this through:

- **Business programmes**
- **Research and statistics**
- **Networks and partnerships**



The Trade and Business Development Body  
The Old Gasworks Business Park  
Kilmorey Street  
Newry  
Co. Down  
BT34 2DE

Tel: 028 3083 4100 (048 from Ireland)  
Fax: 028 3083 4155 (048 from Ireland)  
Textphone: 028 3083 4169 (048 from Ireland)  
Email: [info@intertradeireland.com](mailto:info@intertradeireland.com)  
Web: [intertradeireland.com](http://intertradeireland.com)