



NI Tourism Apps - BRIEF

An introduction to SBRI

SBRI competitions are open to all companies and designed to stimulate new technology either as a standalone solution or underpinning a service solution for specific public sector needs. Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) is a mechanism which enables public sector bodies to connect with innovative ideas and technology businesses to provide innovative solutions to specific Public Sector challenges and needs.

The Public sector is able to find innovative solutions by reaching out to companies from different sectors including small and emerging businesses. New technical solutions are created through accelerated technology development, whilst risk is reduced through a phased development programme. SBRI also provides business with a transparent competitive and a reliable source of early-stage funding.

The SBRI scheme is particularly suited to small and medium-sized business, as the contracts are of relatively small value and operate on short timescales. Developments are 100% funded and focused on specific identified needs, increasing the chance of exploitation. Suppliers for each project will be selected by an open competition process and retain the intellectual property generated from the project, with certain rights of use retained by the contracting Department. This is an excellent opportunity to establish an early customer for a new technology and to fund its development.

Summary

Travel & Tourism is a key driver to the global economy. More than 1 billion people travel every year¹. It is now estimated that travel and tourism contributes more than US\$5.75 trillion to the world economic activity – just over 9% of global GDP. Travel and tourism supports 236 million jobs worldwide-just over 8% of jobs globally².

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is the body responsible for marketing Northern Ireland as a tourism destination in the island of Ireland. NITBs remit is governed by the Tourism Order (1992) with its core objective being to ‘champion the Northern Ireland tourism experience.’ The NITB achieves this through:

¹ Source: United Nations World Tourism

² World Travel & Tourism Council

- Growing visitor numbers and spend from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland using integrated above and below the line marketing activities.
- Funding tourism projects, e.g. new attractions and improvements to the visitor experience.
- Supporting and equipping the industry through a comprehensive industry development programme.
- Provision of visitor information via websites, communications and through coordinating an integrated visitor information network.
- Shaping tourism strategy with the data, research and intelligence produced.

The NITB services 2,400 accommodation properties and it is estimated that a further 3,900 businesses in Northern Ireland have an interest in tourism.

What does tourism deliver to the Northern Ireland economy today?

- 1.8 million People visited Northern Ireland from the domestic market and from the Republic of Ireland last year. (2009)
- The total revenue generated by the Northern Ireland tourism industry is £529 million.
- Tourism contributes 4.9% to Northern Ireland's GDP (gross domestic product).
- In 2009, 1.9 million domestic visitors generated £192 million.
- In 2009, 1.4 million out of state visitors spent £337 million.
- Over 40,000 jobs are sustained by tourism activity.

What motivates visitors to take a break in Northern Ireland?

People are increasingly motivated by the experience or memory they are likely to create and share from their short break and holiday. NITB have identified four main motivations which influence people to select a short break/holiday destination.

1. Because I'm worth it –people who believe that they deserve a treat, or wish to celebrate a special occasion.
2. Because the kids' rule – families seeking a holiday that is tailored to keeping the kids happy. Happy kids equal relaxed parents.
3. Because I want to indulge a passion and learn something new.
4. Because I have no responsibilities and can take off at the drop of a hat.

The Northern Ireland marketing plan provides additional details on the 21st century family and may be downloaded from <http://www.nitb.com/downloads/marketingplan2010.pdf>. Further, the Visitor Attitudes Survey 2009 provides additional motivational detail categorised by geographical region.³

³ Please navigate to: <http://bit.ly/fQIacN>

What are the 2020 targets for tourism in Northern Ireland?

- The total revenue generated by the tourism industry will be £1 billion.
- 4.5 million Visitors will experience Northern Ireland.
- Over 50,000 jobs are sustained by tourism activity.

The priorities and actions required to realise the potential for tourism in Northern Ireland are laid out in the Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland 2010-2020⁴. The strategy is led by the Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment (DETI). Furthermore, the Draft Visitor Information Plan⁵ (developed by the NITB) articulates the vision and associated actions to deliver a proactive, integrated, visitor information network, which extends across Northern Ireland. The aim of the Draft Visitor Information Plan is to provide visitors with the information they need, in the format they want it in, when they want it.

Problem Specification

NITB need to increase the number of visitors to Northern Ireland and how much visitors spend when here.

Visitors to Northern Ireland currently spend less than those to other parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland⁶.

NITB understands that increased data distribution presented in engaging formats, tailored to the individuals needs and interests will encourage more visitors to Northern Ireland and encourage greater spend. (Help us tell our story.) In addition to providing information in the format(s) preferred by the visitor, NITB also believes that information should be 'pushed' to visitors encouraging them to 'explore more'.

This understanding is supported by research completed to develop the Draft Visitor Information Plan which provided that 30% of visitors to Northern Ireland did not access any information when in destination⁷ while 55% of visitors who did access visitor information (when in destination) amended their itinerary including an additional experience⁸. To increase visitor spend, and to reach those visitors which are not seeking information, NITB believes that engaging experiences should be 'pushed' to visitors.

What is the activity being procured?

Using the SBRI process, the NITB wish to purchase the development of 3-7 innovative Apps, which will be suitable for download across mobile platforms. The Apps should seek to increase

⁴ http://www.detini.gov.uk/ni_tourism_20100308-4.pdf

⁵ www.nitb.com/viplan

⁶ England £65; Scotland £63, Republic of Ireland £62.50, Wales £47.00, Northern Ireland £37.00. (Based on 2009 average exchange rates.) Extracted from 'Campaigning for Tourism. One Voice. One Team.'

⁷ Draft Visitor Information Plan: Appendix 1

⁸ Draft Visitor Information Plan: Appendix 1

visitor numbers and visitor spend in Northern Ireland, through providing visitor information in a creative and engaging form, that can be tailored to personal preferences and interests. In particular NITB is seeking to stimulate information provision that will compel visitors to 'explore more' of Northern Ireland. (NITB anticipate that a maximum of 7 Apps may be purchased from this competition. A total value of £90,000 including VAT is available for this competition. It is anticipated that the maximum sum NITB will pay for the development of any single App will not exceed £30,000 including VAT.)

It is anticipated that completed Apps should:

- Utilize Geographical Information held by Northern Ireland Government and available under EU Inspire Regulations and other relevant information held by NITB and other government bodies. (The government data available and specific terms associated with this will be provided on application.)
- Be available for download by visitors to Northern Ireland by Easter 2011.
- Be available on more than one platform (e.g. iOS, Android, Blackberry, Windows)
- A key component of the selection process will be the distribution plan and business model to sustain the App.

Commercial use of the government held data will be subject to licensing which may in some cases include a royalty charge. The intellectual property (IP) created under this project will remain the property of the developer for the purposes of exploitation with some rights retained by NITB as will be stated in the development contract (to be available before the close of the competition). The original IP supplied by the government bodies will remain the ownership of those bodies.

What have our visitors told us?

NITB regularly assess visitors' experiences in Northern Ireland with a view to gaining an understanding of where we can improve. Details of this research may be downloaded from [www.nitb.com/Research/Visitor Attitude Surveys](http://www.nitb.com/Research/Visitor%20Attitude%20Surveys). The 2009 Visitor Attitudes Survey provided visitors top five reasons for visiting Northern Ireland:

1. To visit the Giant's Causeway;
2. To enjoy the natural environment ;
3. To experience the unique local culture;
4. To discover somewhere a bit different;
5. To relax and unwind.

Visitors have told us through these surveys how we can improve their experience, with reference to information these include:

- What's on today, and specifically Sundays & evenings across Northern Ireland.
- Orientation and transport information enabling access around Northern Ireland.

- Where to eat shop, stay and be entertained.
- Tell the stories of Northern Ireland engage visitors with the unique experiences that they will enjoy.

Who is tomorrow's visitor?

The scenarios below depict the typical customers that are holidaying in Northern Ireland. NITB would intend that the innovative outputs from this competition would enhance visitors' experiences and change the way they would typically plan, research and receive information regarding their trip.

Tessa and Larry Connor fly into Belfast from their home in Boston USA. They are in their early 60s, recently retired and this is their first visit to Northern Ireland. Larry's grandfather was born in Londonderry so he has always wanted to explore his family background and Tessa loves scenic walking and is interested in Irish history. They have been planning their trip for over a year using the Tourism Ireland channel on their interactive TV, selecting places to visit and accommodation storing these on their smart phone.

Katie and James are in their mid twenties and live in Manchester. They are graduates and have management positions which involve working long hours. They like to take several weekends away each year as a means of relaxing, discovering new places and escaping from the humdrum of domesticity. They are heavily influenced by recommendations from social networks and actively utilise their network to plan their trip, proactively asking questions of where to go, and what to experience while in Northern Ireland.

Pat and Paul O'Neill live in Tipperary and have 2 children aged 10 and 8 and a dog. They plan to take a touring holiday around the North in August, as they are keen that their children learn about geology using the stories and legends of Northern Ireland. When in Northern Ireland they also want to visit some beaches and spend a day in Belfast. They have planned their trip using a range of paper and digital guides, storing the selected locations on their Satellite Navigation.

What budget does NITB hold to move this forward?

£90,000 including VAT.

Application Process

Directions on how to enter this competition can be found in the Invitation to Tender (SBRI_NITB_058_001 Invitation to Tender).

More information on this and other competitions may be obtained at www.innovateuk.org/SBRI