



Y&H/14

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Tour de France Business Festival will boost jobs and growth in Yorkshire

A flagship International Business Festival to support the Yorkshire Grand Depart will generate £20m in new business and creating a lasting legacy to boost the regional economy for years to come.

Officially launched today (4 April) by Trade Minister Lord Livingston, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), Welcome to Yorkshire and partners, the three-day event this summer will showcase the very best the regional business community has to offer.

Organisers are striving to capitalise on the global appeal of Le Tour to promote the opportunities to visit and do business in Yorkshire, and deliver commercial benefits stretching far beyond the end of the race on the Champs Elysees.

Trade Minister Lord Livingston said:

“The eyes of the world will be watching Le Tour, and the Festival provides a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate on a global stage the strength of Yorkshire and UK business in terms of creativity, quality design and world-class manufacturing.

“The festival will also be an opportunity for Yorkshire firms to get support and advice from UKTI’s expert advisors on how to break into high growth international markets.”

The Festival will run from 2-4 July 2014 around two main business hubs at The Carriage Works in Leeds and the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield. York and Harrogate will also host events for the North Yorkshire community.

A packed programme will comprise dedicated events for specific sectors, such as retail, textiles and sport technology, as well target markets like China, and areas where Yorkshire businesses excel, including design and engineering, healthcare innovation, biotech and food and drink.

The festival will also see a 48 hour 'Gamejam' to provide a novel platform for regional game developers to demonstrate their innovative ideas and creative flair.

Mark Robson, regional director of UKTI, is urging the business community to embrace and support the festival. He said:

"The Grand Départ provides a fantastic opportunity to showcase the innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and leadership that has put local companies at the forefront of the global race. We're determined to deliver a flagship business spectacle befitting the arrival of the world's largest annual sporting event.

"Many local companies already have plans in place to bring clients or potential customers over for the race, and there will be unique opportunities to network and gain expert insight. That is the foundations of the legacy programme we are striving to deliver."

Gary Verity, chief executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, added:

"Hosting the Grand Départ here in Yorkshire is a once in a lifetime opportunity and we want to showcase what the county has to offer across all industries and sectors.

"This will be the first ever festival of its kind and it will be our chance to show that Yorkshire is the place to do business."

Roger Marsh, Chair of Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership, commented:

“As an emerging economic powerhouse the Grand Depart International Business Festival presents Leeds City Region with an unrivalled opportunity to showcase our strengths and opportunities to a global audience.

“Inward investment is a key pillar in our Strategic Economic Plan and working with Leeds and Partners we will be using the festival to demonstrate our compelling and competitive offer and present a transformational economic story for the North.”

Further details on all of the events will be available at www.letour.yorkshire.com/international-business-festival in the weeks ahead as the final programme takes shape.

Interested parties can also contact Adele Baig at UKTI on 0113 203 3705 or adele.baig@ukti.gsi.gov.uk

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) is the Government Department that helps UK-based companies succeed in the global economy. We also help overseas companies bring their high quality investment to the UK's economy – acknowledged as Europe's best place from which to succeed in global business. UKTI offers expertise and contacts through its extensive network of specialists in the UK, and in British embassies and other diplomatic offices around the world. We provide companies with the tools they require to be competitive on the world stage. For more information on UKTI, visit www.ukti.gov.uk or visit the online newsroom at www.ukti.gov.uk/media.
2. Next week sees the start of Export Week. This will run from 7th-11th April and will see over 70 events for small and medium sized businesses nationwide. Over 8000 companies have attended events across the country in previous two Export Weeks. The week runs in parallel with UKTI's Exporting is GREAT campaign, launched in November 2013, targeting almost 3 million people to generate 3,000 appointments with UKTI advisors and driving £1.2 billion in export revenue from the leads it generates.
3. Increasing exports is central to the Government's long term economic plan and the support we give to British firms as they trade around the globe is critical to securing our country's long term future. Boosting trade creates more UK jobs and helps reduce our budget deficit.

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