



Scottish Council for
Development and Industry

PRESS RELEASE

SCOTLAND'S BUSINESSES URGED TO JOIN TEAM SCOTLAND

FIRST MINISTER LAUNCHES BUSINESSCLUB SCOTLAND

February 3, 2009

First Minister Alex Salmond has launched a new initiative to help Scotland's businesses capitalise on the massive economic opportunities offered by major events held in Scotland.

The First Minister was speaking to business representatives at the Touch House Business Centre, near Stirling which will be part of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge route taking place in November this year.

The BusinessClub Scotland initiative is a unique collaboration of Scotland's business organisations, supported and funded by the Scottish Government, to ensure that firms across Scotland capitalise on the business opportunities from the Year of Homecoming, the 2014 Commonwealth Games and other major events in Scotland. The new initiative will be led by the Scottish Council for Development and Industry but carries the support of all of the major business organisations in Scotland. The initiative is a part of the Scottish Government's six point economic recovery programme.

The key objectives of BusinessClub Scotland are to:

- Improve business competitiveness
- Build supply chain networks
- Facilitate procurement around events
- Extend the reach of existing networks
- Provide direct business engagement and targeted networking at events to win business
- Develop expertise in event management and delivery

The First Minister said:

"BusinessClub Scotland will help our businesses get in the running for the millions of pounds spent on major events every year in Scotland. We have already launched the first ever Scottish national portal for public contracting opportunities, as part of the Scottish Government's Economic Recovery Plan, and BusinessClub Scotland will open even more economic opportunities for small and medium sized businesses.

"BusinessClub Scotland is modelled on Australia's Business Club which helped 60 Australian companies gain more than 70 contracts for the Beijing Olympics, valued at #100 million, a further #150 million exports to Doha for the 2006 Asian Games and #26 million in exports to the Delhi Commonwealth Games to date.



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"We already have a great programme of sporting and cultural events, from the 2014 Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup, to the Annual Celtic Connections and the Edinburgh International Festival. This Homecoming year EventScotland have secured the climatic stage of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge which will be held throughout Stirling and Perth & Kinross attracting more than 30,000 visitors.

"There are great opportunities for businesses to supply services to events, to showcase their products and to make national and international contacts through targeted networking opportunities.

"Glasgow 2014 alone will be spending up to #200m on goods and services in the run up to the Games, and we want businesses based here in Scotland, and employing local people, to be in as strong a position as possible to be successful in winning these contracts.

"The experience gained from Scottish events will allow our businesses to start competing at an international level for global events contracts, generating further revenue to strengthen the economy, and provide a lasting economic legacy."

Dr Lesley Sawers, Chief Executive of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry, who will chair BusinessClub Scotland, said:

"BusinessClub Scotland aims to create a "Team Scotland" approach - ensuring that our companies are fully supported to take advantage of the commercial opportunities generated by Scotland's world-class events programme.

"There is a huge prize for Scotland's economy if we can seize the opportunity to deliver a real and lasting legacy from our events calendar. BusinessClub Scotland will play a key role and help to deliver significant economic and business benefits.

"From small start-ups to larger, more established companies, BusinessClub Scotland will provide SMEs with the support they need to grow their business, both at home and abroad."

Paul Bush OBE, Chief Operating Officer of EventScotland said:

"Scotland has a world leading events industry and over the past six years EventScotland has worked with partners to secure an impressive and evolving portfolio of events. BusinessClub Scotland will allow us to further capitalise on this success.

"The launch of BusinessClub Scotland will allow Scotland as a nation to harness the widest economic opportunities from cultural and sporting events for our business community. In turn the club will enable our events industry to tap into the opportunities which lie within Scotland's businesses to ensure we continue to sustain, grow and develop events in Scotland. "