

The **Innovation** Accreditation Programme



Innovation
Turning ideas into value

What is **innovation**?

Innovation is not just about technology and multi-national corporations. It can, and should, be part of every type and size of business.

Innovation can be as simple as:

- developing a new product or service
- diversifying your existing products and services
- improving or changing processes, procedures or production methods
- adapting your business to reach a new market or audience
- upgrading or introducing new management systems, business models or organisational structures

Why **innovate**?

Businesses must innovate to adapt and thrive in a very competitive market place. Innovation is now a basic survival skill for all businesses. Products become outdated, customer preferences change, and the global market place is now available at the touch of a button.

Companies that innovate are more successful because:

- consumers want to buy from innovative businesses
- consumers are willing to pay a premium for innovative goods and services
- investors prefer them because they are more likely to be profitable
- they are more likely to attract and retain high-quality staff

The **Innovation** Accreditation Programme

The Department for the Economy has introduced a new Innovation Accreditation Programme for Northern Ireland. It will recognise innovative businesses & support them to achieve a globally recognised accreditation.

Innovation Recognition Levels

Innovation can be daunting; most local firms are SMEs and taking part in an innovation accreditation programme may not seem like a priority. But, if you're developing new products, services, or processes, you could be recognised as an innovator and receive help to continue the innovation journey. There are four innovation levels a business can achieve—bronze, silver, gold & platinum. Knowing your innovation level could help increase your chances of success and ultimately help you achieve an internationally recognised innovation accreditation from i360.



The i360 **Innovation** Accreditation

This accreditation offers local businesses a strong competitive advantage, in both local and global markets.

All Northern Ireland businesses are eligible to apply for the i360 Innovation Accreditation. However, businesses that have achieved at least Gold Level Innovator status should gain the most benefit and value from the process and also have a better chance of successfully achieving the full accreditation.

Businesses that have taken part in the programme may also may also benefit from a significant discount on the i360 Innovation Accreditation.

Contact

The Innovation Accreditation Programme

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