



# Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor

Partnership Action Plan

2022

# Disclaimer

## Commissioned by



**Belfast**  
City Council



**Armagh City  
Banbridge  
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Comhairle Ceantair  
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*meath county council*

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# About this report

## High level overview of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor project.

This report covers the action plan for DBEC

1

**Development plan:** describing how DBEC partnership can be structured, with key workstreams focused on: funding, governance, set-up, KPIs, resourcing, cost, cooperation and collaboration

Recommendations for the DBEC steering group to use when establishing the partnership

2

**Strategy:** build on findings from previous work to identify target areas for DBEC to invest resource and explore how the DBEC partnership will work collaboratively

Consultations with a range of key stakeholders to identify priorities and test the strategy elements

3

**Action plan out to 2030:** reporting on actions across enablers, funding, governance, set-up, KPIs, resourcing, cost, cooperation and collaboration for the DBEC partnership

Consultations with a range of key stakeholders to align DBEC partnership resource plan to meet their ambitions and needs

## Key sources

Workshop and conversation with the **Councils Executives, Councillors and DBEC steering group members** from the following councils:

- Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
- Belfast City Council
- Dublin City Council
- Fingal County Council
- Lisburn & Castlereagh Council
- Louth County Council
- Meath County Council
- Newry, Mourne & Down District Council



**Consultations with the following economic corridor partnerships:**

- Oresund Committee/ Greater Copenhagen
- Greater Phoenix Economic Council
- Canada Northern Corridor
- Research Triangle Regional Partnership
- Oxford-Cambridge Arc
- East Border Region

**Consultations were also undertaken with close to 50 other entities. These include but are not limited to:**

- Drogheda Chamber
- InterTradelreland
- DCU & UU
- North-South Ministerial Council
- Enterprise Ireland
- IDA
- InvestNI
- SEUPB
- Chambers Ireland
- Dundalk IT
- Fintech Corridor
- M1 Corridor



**Desktop research** of third party papers and reports, including from:

- CSO
- Council development plans
- DCU/UU
- DBEC research to date
- Enterprise Ireland
- ESRI
- InterTradelreland
- IDA
- Invest NI
- NISRA
- Other economic corridor partnerships report
- Shared Island research



Workshops with Council Executives, Councillors, CEOs were held in November 2021 and throughout 2022 (February, June, August, October)

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# Executive Summary

Samuel Beckett Bridge –  
Dublin City Council

# Progress Update

● Completed
 ● In progress
 ● To be completed

This Action Plan is the third deliverable as part of KPMG’s overall support to the DBEC partnership, and builds on the Development Plan and the Strategy.



- This report is part of KPMG’s work to support the DBEC partnership with an Action Plan for the Partnership’s growth. It builds on two previous reports, the Development Plan and Strategy, prepared in H1 2022
- The central focus of this report is to identify key actions for DBEC and DBEC personnel to implement in the early years of the Partnership’s evolution. This Plan outlines a range of actions across DBEC’s key enablers: skills, infrastructure, R&D, and ways of working
- Actions identified in this report include both general actions applicable across enablers (e.g. networking, communications) and targeted actions focused in DBEC’s priority sectors (e.g. Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Life Sciences)
- A number of soft KPIs (largely qualitative) and hard KPIs (largely quantitative) are included alongside the respective actions.

# Action Plan development process

The actions in this Action Plan draw on DBEC's overall vision, key enablers, and objectives.



2022 - 2030

## Vision and ambition

**Ambition:** To become a leading economic corridor in Europe, achieving sustainable growth through collaborative R&D, a highly skilled workforce and enabling infrastructure

**What we want to be world renowned for:** A major international centre in growth sectors like Professional Services, Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Life Sciences and Advanced Agriculture

## Key enablers

1

Skills

2

Infrastructure

3

Research and development

## Objectives

Increase **skills and training** to meet the labour requirements of the region, building on and expanding the existing workforce

Align with and support economic development partners to increase **trade & investment** along corridor

Advocate for **cross-border infrastructure** to strengthen connectivity and access to markets and labour





Promote **sustainable and climate-conscious growth** along the corridor, aligned with councils' development plans and wider policy objectives

Enhance cross-border collaboration in **R&D and Innovation**, targeting investment in high growth sectors and the green economy

Market the region and elevate the DBEC brand so that the region becomes **globally renowned** as an attractive place to live and do business

# Sample short-term priorities





Immediate actions undertaken in the first 12 months will generate momentum for the partnership. Full details on pages 16-27.

Enabler	Short-term
<p><b>Skills</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake <b>research on existing skills strategies and enterprise plans</b> and identify key barriers to skills development. Advocate for funding to be allocated to help overcome the barriers identified</li> <li>Undertake an <b>inaugural survey of employers and employees</b> based along the corridor to gather insights on economic and workforce trends. Prepare and publish a skills barometer in Q4 2023 and annually thereafter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review the baseline level of inter-council business cases</b> prepared by member councils. Prepare a <b>schedule of external specialists</b> who could (1) support the PM and PO with the development of business cases, and (2) provide training and capability building</li> <li>By 2024, <b>appoint a qualified team to lead a review of planned major infrastructure projects and gaps along the corridor</b>; using the review, identify 10-15 key cross-border infrastructure gaps applicable to the corridor</li> </ul>
<p><b>R&amp;D</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Undertake relationship building</b> with (1) key public sector stakeholders, including in Higher Education (HE) and (2) senior representatives from high potential innovative SMEs. Identify existing strong levels of co-operation between member councils and higher education institutions and prepare a <b>schedule of key R&amp;D funding opportunities</b> relevant to the corridor's R&amp;D ecosystem</li> <li><b>Work with member councils and HE partners to identify existing or new locations for Innovation Hubs along the corridor</b>, with the aim of preparing an application for external funding by Q4 2023 to develop a Hub along the corridor</li> <li>Hold a <b>corridor-specific R&amp;D</b> event that brings together agencies that fund SME R&amp;D, innovative companies, member councils' staff, and wider stakeholders</li> <li>In parallel to circular economy activities at BCC and DCC, <b>gather insights on circular economy initiatives</b> along the corridor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ways of working</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a <b>Programme Manager</b> and <b>Partnership Officer</b> to the DBEC office on a secondment basis by end Q1 2023</li> <li>Explore the potential development of a <b>collaboration agreement</b> for all member councils to agree to</li> <li><b>Arrange a programme of activities</b> for Year 1 (2023), and annually thereafter, to include short-term actions set out in this Action Plan and their related KPIs</li> <li>In the first 3 months, <b>prepare a schedule of current and future funding opportunities for DBEC</b> directly and for specific initiatives and projects</li> <li><b>Develop a coherent marketing and communications strategy</b> with a clear editorial line</li> <li>By end-2023, develop and <b>publish a newsletter</b> to a mailing list of subscribed recipients. Highlight relevant DBEC activities and upcoming events.</li> </ul>



# Sample longer-term actions

Longer-term actions will provide ongoing growth, helping DBEC to achieve its vision by 2030. Full details on pages 16-27.

Enabler	Medium-term	Long-term
<p><b>Skills</b></p> 	<p><b>By early-2025, develop a clear skills policy and strategy.</b> Identify key skills shortages and provide input to wider ecosystem conversations on skills development and training programmes. Apply learnings from Fingal Skills Strategy and plans for Dublin Regional Skills Strategy</p>	<p><b>In the long-term, actively engage with partner delivery organisations to support labour market needs,</b> building on the outputs of the DBEC skills policy (2024)</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> 	<p>Undertake <b>mapping of key assets along the corridor with development potential and</b> infrastructure needed to unlock the land (e.g. opportunities in/near L&amp;CCC, ABC, LCC, NMD). Publish a report on infrastructure projects hindering development of undeveloped assets</p> <p>Building on initial reviews and analysis in 2024, <b>shortlist 5-10 key infrastructure projects for which DBEC could prepare business cases</b> which meet Public Spending Code/Green Book requirements</p>	<p><b>Become the lead coordinator for key business cases</b> and aim to submit 2-3 business cases annually, targeting success with 1-2, to central government by 2025</p>
<p><b>R&amp;D</b></p> 	<p>Through the relationship building, internal research on funding, and events, <b>become an active player in highlighting cross-border R&amp;D funding opportunities.</b></p>	<p>Work with member councils to <b>identify an appropriate location for an R&amp;D centre along the corridor</b> and become a presence across the European R&amp;D ecosystem</p>
<p><b>Ways of working</b></p> 	<p><b>Build the capabilities of the team</b> by hiring additional resources either through secondment or direct recruitment through 2023 to 2025. <b>Grow relationships internationally</b> with more established economic partnerships. <b>Organise workshops and training events</b> for council members' staff to share initiatives with peers and opportunities for networking. <b>Secure funding from a range of different funding bodies</b> across multiple programmes.</p>	

# Acronyms

Acronyms used throughout the report are listed below.

AAM	— Advanced Air Mobility	MNCs	— Multi National Corporation
DBEC	— Dublin Belfast Economic Council	MOU	— Memorandum of Understanding
DfC	— Department for Communities	NI	— Northern Ireland
DfE	— Department for the Economy	NDP	— National Development Plan
DfI	— Department for Infrastructure	R&D	— Research and Development
DoT	— Department of Transport	RoI	— Republic of Ireland
DTTAS	— Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	SFI	— Science Foundation Ireland
EI	— Enterprise Ireland	SWOT	— Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
ENI	— Enterprise Northern Ireland	UK	— United Kingdom
EU	— European Union		
FDI	— Foreign Direct Investment		
GPEC	— Greater Phoenix Economic Council		
HEI	— Higher Education Institute		
ICT	— Information Communication Technology		
IDA	— Industrial Development Agency		
INI	— Invest Northern Ireland		
ITI	— InterTradeIreland		
KPI	— Key Performance Indicator		
L&CCC	— Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council		
LA	— Local Authority		
LCC	— Louth County Council		
LEO	— Local Enterprise Office		
MCC	— Meath County Council		





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# Vision and Ambition

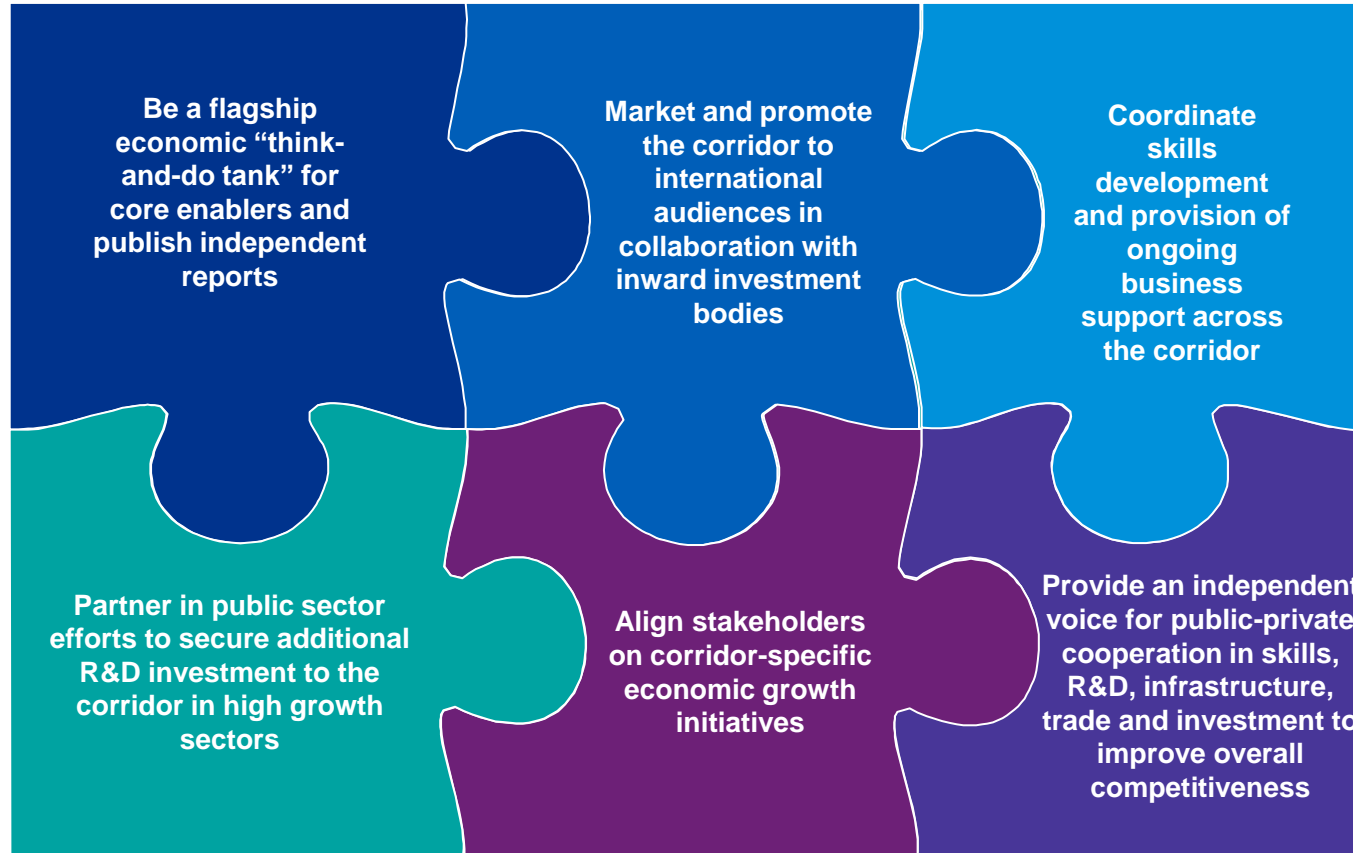


Houth Lighthouse  
- Fingal County Council

# Potential role for DBEC

**DBEC's focus lies outside what existing bodies are doing on national and regional levels.**

DBEC's role across the corridor's economic development ecosystem



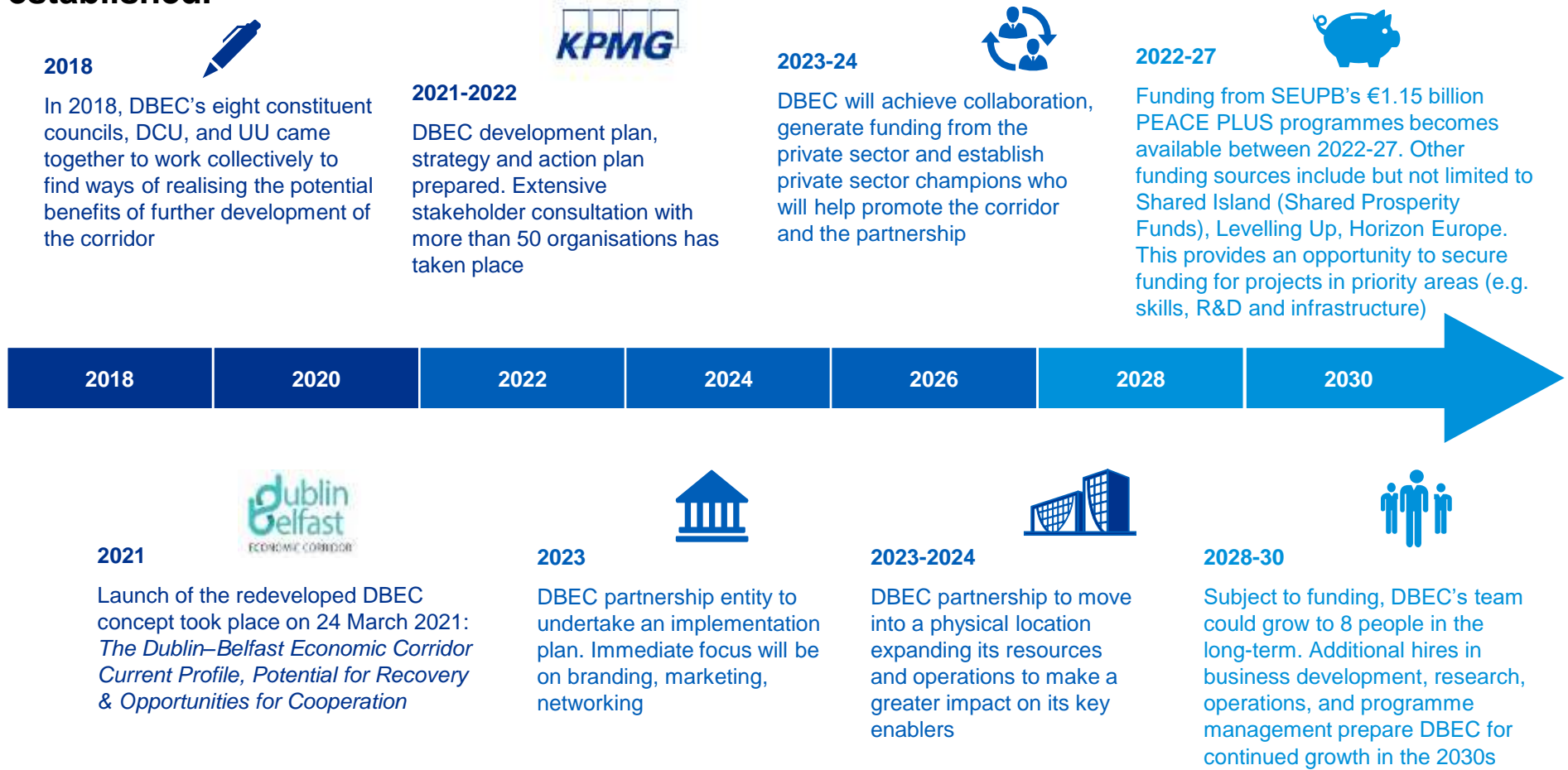
In the context of the key enablers **skills, infrastructure and R&D**, there is opportunity for DBEC to align and collaborate with stakeholders on corridor-specific economic growth initiatives.

DBEC can use its independent voice to play a vital role in economic growth and overall competitiveness across the corridor, NI, and RoI.

To deliver successfully, the DBEC partnership will need to work effectively. Success in three core pillars **delivery, governance and resourcing, and communication and marketing** will enhance delivery of actions undertaken.

# Evolution of DBEC

The DBEC concept has developed over time and will continue to grow as the partnership is established.



# Strategic objectives

**Ambition:** To become a leading economic corridor in Europe, achieving sustainable growth through collaborative R&D, a highly skilled workforce and enabling infrastructure

**What we want to be famous for:**

*A major international centre in growth sectors like Professional Services, Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Life Sciences and Advanced Agriculture*

## Strategic objectives:



Increase **skills and training** to meet the labour requirements of the region, building on and expanding the existing workforce



Enhance collaboration in **R&D and Innovation** on a cross-border basis, targeting investment in high growth sectors and the green economy



Promote **sustainable and climate-conscious growth** throughout the corridor, aligned with councils' development plans and wider policy objectives



Align with and support economic development partners to increase **trade and Investment** in the corridor



Advocate for **cross-border infrastructure** to strengthen connectivity and access to markets and labour

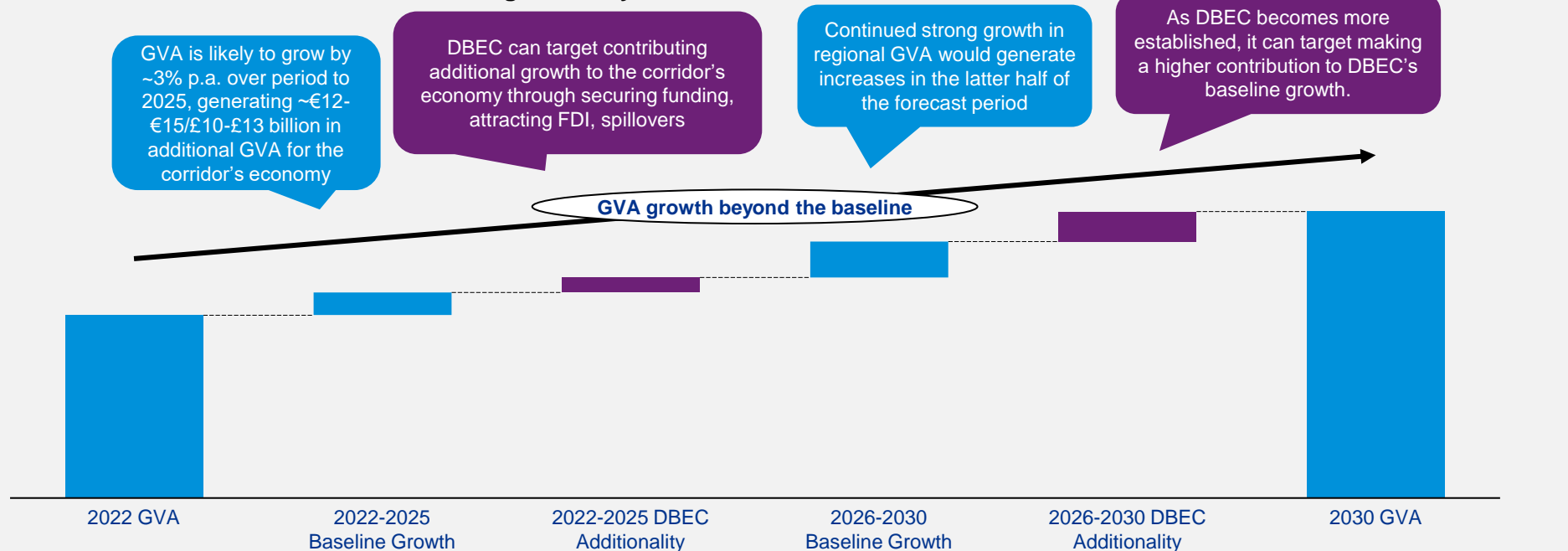


Market the region and elevate the DBEC brand so that the region becomes **globally renowned** as an attractive place to live and do business

# Context and ambition

Baseline economic growth can be bolstered by DBEC. The entity can target generating additionality on top of the baseline, through securing funding for cross-border projects, attracting FDI alongside partners, and creating economic spillovers through projects' supply chain impacts.

## 2030 Ambition: Contribute additional GVA growth beyond the baseline



**DBEC's ambition can be achieved through three key enablers:**





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# Actions

Castle Gardens - Lisburn &  
Castlereagh City Council




# Skills (1/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## In the first year, analyse the corridor’s workforce and publish snapshots of insights.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source	
 <p>Skills</p>	Undertake targeted research on the corridor’s labour market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Undertake research on existing skills strategies and enterprise plans</b> relating to the corridor and identify overlap, gaps, learnings (e.g. strengths of Fingal Skills Strategy). Gather relevant insights as part of a short paper for internal consumption by DBEC Board and member councils</li> </ul>	DBEC (PM)	DBEC (PO)	DBEC staff costs	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Undertake research to identify the barriers to skills development</b> in DBEC’s priority sectors along the corridor (e.g. levels of funding for skills programme, availability of apprenticeships, residency requirements, career pathways). Hold workshops with key stakeholders and collate findings for publication</li> </ul>	DBEC (PM)	Member Councils, DCU, UU	PEACEPLUS 2.3/6.1*	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Advocate for funding to be allocated to help overcome the barriers identified.</b> Collaborate with delivery partners to prepare funding applications for inter-council initiatives that address skills development barriers, e.g. via SEUPB</li> </ul>				
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>					
		<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soft:</i> Grow DBEC’s profile across the corridor’s skills development ecosystem</li> <li>• <i>Hard:</i> Hold 1 workshop in 2023 on skills development barriers along the corridor; hold 1-2 skills events p.a.; publish a skills barometer in Q4 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> Online targeted survey of businesses operating along the corridor</li> <li>• <i>Secondary:</i> LinkedIn Data and Insights, CSO, NISRA, other publications on the labour market in RoI and NI</li> </ul>		2023-2024; annual workshops/ events thereafter	DBEC


\* Estimated funding requirement of <€25k for discreet support on skills research, possible under public procurement rules. PEACEPLUS 2.3 guidance notes indicate that funding is available for “Programmes that enable area-based cross community and cross-border clusters to respond to the sub-area skill gaps and requirements (including reskilling and upskilling)”. PEACEPLUS 6.1 guidance notes indicate that funding is available for “Dialogue between different actors to establish the challenges and possible solutions to facilitate increased cross-border collaboration in key sectors including Business, Health Care, Tourism, Environment (including air quality) and Energy”.

# Skills (2/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## In the medium-term, develop a clear skills policy and strategy specific to the corridor.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source	
 Skills	Develop a clear skills policy and strategy	★ Undertake an annual survey of employers and employees to gather yearly insights on workforce trends along the corridor. Prepare and publish a skills barometer by Q4 2023 and annually thereafter, utilising outputs from research, workshops, events, and the industry survey. Track and report on the changing needs of the labour market. Market the barometer and engage with key stakeholders	DBEC (PM)	Member Councils, DCU, UU	DBEC staff costs, PEACEPLUS	
		★ By early-2025, develop a clear skills policy and strategy. Identify key skills shortages and provide input to wider ecosystem conversations on skills development and training programmes. Apply learnings from Fingal Skills Strategy and plans for Dublin Regional Skills Strategy	DBEC (PM, PO)	Member Councils	DBEC staff costs, PEACEPLUS 2.3/6.1*	
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>					
		<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard: Publish a skills barometer in Q4 2023; develop and publish a corridor-specific skills strategy focused on priority sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary: Industry survey, LinkedIn Data and Insights</li> <li>Secondary: skills barriers analysis, Member Council and Central Government policies, other sources in the public domain</li> </ul>		Q2 2024, then every 3 years	DBEC


\*Estimated funding requirement of >€50k-75k for support to develop a skills policy/strategy. PEACEPLUS 2.3 guidance notes indicate that funding is available for “Programmes that enable area-based cross community and cross-border clusters to respond to the sub-area skill gaps and requirements (including reskilling and upskilling)”. PEACEPLUS 6.1 guidance notes indicate that funding is available for “Cross-border feasibility studies and data collection activities designed to develop solutions to address current obstacles to cross-border collaboration in key areas. For example, research related to the cross-border labour market and future skills mapping”.

# Skills (3/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## In the long-term, become active in skills development in priority sectors.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source			
 <p>Skills</p>	<p><b>Become an active player in skills development in priority sectors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>In the long-term, actively engage with partner delivery organisations to support labour market needs</b>, building on the outputs of the DBEC skills policy (2024). Potential programmatic activities include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing centres of excellence for specific skills development and training in priority sectors (e.g. Advanced Manufacturing in Belfast/Lisburn, ICT and FinTech in Louth/Newry, Life Sciences in Meath/ABC)</li> <li>▪ Hosting workshops and supporting knowledge sharing and capability building programmes (e.g. work with Education and Training Boards (RoI) and Skills for Life and Work (NI))</li> <li>▪ Investigate opportunities to deliver training through associated bodies and to develop pilots to test innovative training processes (e.g. Industry 4.0 apprenticeship schemes)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	DBEC (PM & PO)	InvestNI, Skillet, HEIs, EI, SFI, Intertradelreland	DBEC staff costs, PEACEPLUS 6.1 (Ref: Skills Research Hub)*			
		<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>						
		<b>KPI(s)</b>				<b>Information source(s)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soft:</i> Become known as the go-to entity for corridor-specific skills information</li> <li>• <i>Hard:</i> Secure funding for 1 skills centre by 2025; higher share of labour force enrolled in further education relative to baseline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> <li>• <i>Secondary:</i> DfE, HEA, CSO, NISRA, Skillnet</li> </ul>	2025 (funding); Skills change monitored annually	DBEC					


\*Funding for events to be provided through DBEC core funding and potentially via external sources. For projects requiring higher levels of funding, PEACEPLUS 6.1 guidance notes indicate that funding is available to “support the establishment of an all-island skills research hub, in cooperation with relevant agencies and stakeholders to commission and foster cross-border research and innovation, driven by the social and economic needs of the Programme Area”.

# Infrastructure (1/2)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Initially, identify infrastructure gaps and map assets with development potential.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 Infrastructure	Identify infrastructure gaps and map assets with development potential	● By 2024, <b>appoint a qualified team to lead a high-level review of planned major infrastructure projects and gaps</b> along the corridor (e.g. utilities upgrades, investment to accommodate EVs, active transport modes, Freeports, etc)	DBEC (PM)	DfI, DTTAS	DBEC staff costs, PEACEPLUS 5.6*
		★ Deliverable due within 6 months for internal consumption (DBEC and member councils)			
		● Using the review, and accounting for key central government policies and strategies, <b>identify 10-15 cross border infrastructure projects applicable to the corridor</b> (e.g. underfunded infrastructure, major development opportunities)	DBEC (PM)	Intertrade, Shared Island, DfI, DTTAS	DBEC staff costs
		★ Undertake mapping of key assets along the corridor with development potential to gain a greater understanding of infrastructure needed to unlock the land (e.g. opportunities in/near L&CCC, ABC, LCC, NMD). <b>Publish a report on infrastructure projects</b> hindering development of undeveloped assets	DBEC (PM)	DfI, DTTAS, Member Councils	DBEC, PEACEPLUS 5.6*
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>					
	<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Soft:</i> Grow DBEC's profile amongst infrastructure stakeholders along the corridor</li> <li><i>Hard:</i> appointment of qualified team by 2024 to prepare infrastructure review; by end-2024, publish a report on infrastructure gap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Primary:</i> DBEC workshops, project management process, published government policy documents</li> <li><i>Secondary:</i> DfI, DTTAS, Member Councils</li> </ul>		End-2024 and reviewed every 2 years	DBEC


\*Estimated funding requirement of <€25k for high-level review, up to €75k required for more detailed review. Potential funding for initial review and project identification through PEACEPLUS 5.6, which is an agreed stream of funding to support Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity (e.g. improvement of the rail service linking the two capital cities and the smaller adjacent urban centres of Portadown, Newry, Dundalk and Drogheda can exploit this dynamic to its full potential).

# Infrastructure (2/2)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Contribute to the development of business cases for relevant infrastructure projects.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 Infrastructure	Contribute to the development of business cases for corridor-specific infrastructure projects	● <b>Review the baseline level of inter-council business cases (BCs) prepared by member councils</b> , to identify recent and existing activities BCs, status of applications, project types, funding, etc (e.g. NI and RoI councils' co-applications)	DBEC (PM)	Member Councils	DBEC staff costs
		● <b>Prepare a schedule of external specialists</b> who could (1) support the PM and PO with the development of business cases, and (2) provide training and capability building to DBEC staff and to member councils' staff on best-practice in the development of business cases	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
		★ Aligned with the outputs of the asset mapping activity (previous page), <b>identify 5-10 key infrastructure projects for which DBEC could prepare business cases which meet Public Spending Code/Green Book requirements</b> for submission to central government funding bodies	DBEC (PM)	DfI, DTTAS	DBEC, Shared Island Fund, PEACEPLUS 6.1*
		● <b>Become the lead coordinator for these business cases</b> and aim to submit 2-3 business cases p.a., targeting success with 1-2, to central government by 2025			
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>					
	<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Soft:</i> grow internal business case drafting capabilities</li> <li><i>Hard:</i> secure funding for 1-2 projects p.a. post-2025</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Primary:</i> Qualified team inputs, gap analysis, DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> <li><i>Secondary:</i> DfI, DTTAS, Member Councils</li> </ul>		1 successful BC by 2025; 1-2 annually p.a. thereafter	DBEC


\*Estimated funding requirement of >€40K per business case. PEACEPLUS 6.1: Guidance notes indicate that funding is available for "Feasibility studies and data collection"

# Research & Development (1/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Grow DBEC’s profile within the R&D community and support relationship building.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 <p>Research &amp; Development</p>	Grow DBEC’s profile within the R&D community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Undertake relationship building with (1) key public sector stakeholders and (2) senior representatives of high potential innovative SMEs, working in priority sectors located along the corridor. Understand the R&amp;D funding landscape, high potential sub-sectors, cross-border opportunities, new climate change initiatives, etc</li> </ul>	DBEC (PM)	Member Councils, DCU, UU, INI, SFI, Innovate UK, UKRI	DBEC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify existing strong levels of co-operation between member councils and higher education institutions. Prepare a schedule of potential R&amp;D funding opportunities across DBEC’s priority sectors. Publish and promote major opportunities to the region’s SMEs e.g. digital manufacturing, cyber security, energy generation, emission reductions, etc</li> </ul>	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ In 2024, hold a corridor-specific R&amp;D event that brings together agencies that fund SME R&amp;D, innovative companies, member councils’ staff, other public sector funders, private sector funding (e.g. Private equity/Venture Capital). Showcase the capabilities of 15-20 innovative businesses. Hold R&amp;D event annually and grow footprint over the medium-/long-term</li> </ul>	DBEC (PM & PO)	DCU, UU, INI, SFI, Innovate UK, UKRI	DBEC, PEACEPLUS 6.1,* Shared Island, INI
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
	<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soft:</i> Grow DBEC’s profile amongst R&amp;D players and funders</li> <li>• <i>Hard:</i> By Q2 2023, have a database of key stakeholders on file; hold a corridor-specific R&amp;D event in 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> <li>• <i>Secondary:</i> DBEC, Councils, SFI, DETE, DfE, INI, EI, IDA</li> </ul>		Database in place in 2023; start hosting R&D events from 2024	DBEC


\*Estimated funding requirement of >€100K. PEACEPLUS 6.1: Guidance notes indicate that funding is available for “exchange of experience and demonstration initiatives to share solutions and increase the impact in key areas and training, peer reviews and staff exchanges to enhance institutional capacity”

# Research & Development (2/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Prepare to apply for, and ultimately secure, funding for innovation hubs along the corridor.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source					
 <p>Research &amp; Development</p>	<p>Contribute to cross-border funding applications to grow R&amp;D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Through the relationship building, internal research on funding, and events, <b>become an active player in highlighting cross-border R&amp;D funding opportunities</b>. Highlight cooperative projects through DBEC’s communication channels. Regularly re-publish public sector funding calls</li> <li>● <b>Work with member councils and HE partners to identify existing or new locations for Innovation Hubs along the corridor, with the aim of preparing an application for external funding by Q4 2023</b> (e.g. Shared Island), aligned with priority sectors and/or sub-sector R&amp;D (e.g. software development, clinical trials, etc). Engage with partner organisations to grow the corridor’s R&amp;D profile (e.g. accelerator centres in Fingal, Belfast’s Innovation Factory)</li> <li>● In the medium- to long-term, <b>become a presence across the European R&amp;D ecosystem</b> through networking, marketing, and promoting the benefits to a business of operating and investing in R&amp;D along the corridor</li> </ul>	<p>DBEC (PM &amp; PO)</p>	<p>Member Councils, DCU, UU, INI, SFI, Innovate UK, UKRI</p>	<p>DBEC; PEACEPLUS 6.1; Shared Island</p>					
		<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>								
						<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soft:</i> Grow DBEC’s network in the corridor’s R&amp;D ecosystem</li> <li>• <i>Hard:</i> Secure funding for 1-2 major research centres by 2027</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> <li>• <i>Secondary:</i> SFI, DETE, DfE, INI, EI, IDA</li> </ul>	<p>Target initial seed funding by 2027</p>	<p>DBEC (PM)</p>						


\*Estimated funding requirement of >€30K. PEACEPLUS 6.1: *Guidance notes indicate that funding is available for cross border feasibility studies and data collection activities designed to develop solutions to address current obstacles to cross border collaboration in key areas.*

# Research & Development (3/3)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Explore the potential for developing a circular economy approach along DBEC.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source	
 Research & Development	Be a voice for the potential of the circular economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In 2023, stay informed about developments in the DCC and BCC Circular Economy feasibility assessment (undertaken late 2022/early 2023)</li> <li>● In parallel, PO to <b>collate information on circular economy initiatives along the corridor</b> (e.g. schemes, projects, social enterprise/not-for-profit activities and <a href="#">Irish Bioeconomy Forum</a>). Procure external expertise and research as required to support aims</li> </ul>	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ As the DCC/BCC feasibility assessment is developed, identify learnings applicable to broader application on a corridor-wide basis. <b>Host 1-2 Circular Economy events in 2024</b>, bringing together HEIs, SMEs, central government agencies, and highlight opportunities for cooperation on circular economy initiatives along the corridor. By end-2024, publish a report on circular economy along the corridor</li> </ul>	DBEC (PM & PO)	Member Councils	DBEC, PEACEPLUS 6.1, Shared Island*	
		<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
		<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soft:</i> Engage BCC&amp; DCC around learnings</li> <li>• <i>Hard:</i> 1 circular economy event held in 2023; report on circular economy published by end-2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> </ul>		Event held in 2023; report published in 2024	DBEC PM

\*Estimated funding requirement of >€100K. PEACEPLUS 6.1: *Guidance notes indicate that funding is available for cross border feasibility studies and data collection activities designed to develop solutions to address current obstacles to cross border collaboration in key areas.*




# Ways of working (1/4)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Be an active player in the corridor’s ecosystem, through activities, workshops, and events.

Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 Ways of working	Be an active player in the corridor’s ecosystem, through activities, workshops, and events	● <b>Finalise DBEC governance and explore the potential development of a collaboration agreement</b> for all member councils to agree to, which sets out the framework for cooperation, similar to the approach used by Greater Phoenix Economic Council (see example in Appendix 3)	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
		● <b>Arrange a programme of activities at the start of each year.</b> Year 1 (2023) activities to include short-term actions set out in this action plan and related KPIs, e.g. workshop on skills, establish CRM system, develop communications plan, prepare labour market survey, attend key regional and national events)	DBEC (PM & PO)	Member Councils	DBEC, PEACEPLUS 6.1*
		● <b>Organise workshops and training events for council members’ staff</b> to share initiatives with peers and opportunities for networking. Actively identify successful initiatives for wider roll-out amongst member councils. Communicate events through newsletters and outreach	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	PEACEPLUS 6.2*
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
	<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Soft:</i> Agreement from Member Councils relating to collaboration</li> <li><i>Hard:</i> Run 2-3 council presentations/ workshops each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> </ul>		Annual	DBEC


\* PEACEPLUS 6.1: Guidance notes indicate that funding is available to support “Dialogue between different actors to establish the challenges and possible solutions to facilitate increased cross-border collaboration in key sectors including Business, Health Care, Tourism, Environment (including air quality) and Energy”, \*\*PEACEPLUS 6.2: Guidance notes indicate that funding is available to support “North-South joint events and activities that develop mutual understanding and cement partnership”.

# Ways of working (2/4)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Resource the Partnership with skilled staff and provide capacity to continue to grow.


Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 <p>Ways of working</p>	Resource the Partnership and support its capacity to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Appoint a Programme Manager and Partnership Office</b> to the DBEC partnership office on a secondment basis by end Q1 2023. Each staff member to focus on identified short-term actions set out in this report (e.g. research on existing skills strategies and enterprise plans and in particular growing DBEC's profile)</li> </ul>	DBEC	Member Councils	Member councils' seed funding
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Build the capability of the team by hiring additional skilled resources either through secondment or direct recruitment through 2023 to 2025.</b> Recruit staff with complementary skillsets (e.g. research, PR, funding). In the long-term, recruit staff to lead on specific research activities and/or priority sectors (e.g. Advanced Manufacturing, ICT)</li> </ul>	DBEC	Member Councils	DBEC annual funding; programmatic / project-based funding
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Build relationships internationally with more established economic partnerships</b> (initially virtual meetings with potential for in-person visits). Examples include: Oxford–Cambridge Arc, Greater Copenhagen, Greater Phoenix Economic Council</li> </ul>	DBEC	Member Councils	DBEC
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
	<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>		<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flexible:</i> Grow the team to four staff members by 2025; grow the team to seven staff members by 2030 (KPI flexible and dependent on growth and funding)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primary:</i> Member Councils' staffing panels, public jobs advertisements, international networks</li> <li>• <i>Secondary:</i> Recruitment agencies</li> </ul>		Annual	DBEC

# Ways of working (3/4)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Complement member councils' seed and ongoing funding with external funding sources.


Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 <p>Ways of working</p>	<p><b>Complement member councils' seed and ongoing funding with external funding sources.</b></p>	<p>● In the first 3 months, <b>prepare a schedule of current and future funding opportunities</b> for DBEC directly and for specific initiatives and projects. Initially, these could include Shared Island Fund, PEACE PLUS, Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity, Intertrade Ireland and Local Authority Development Funding</p>	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
		<p>● <b>Coordinate and, where appropriate, apply directly for funding from different funding bodies.</b> Deliver strong applications which promote the ambition of DBEC and secure the required funds to deliver on the actions across the respective enablers and focused on DBEC's priority sectors. Details on which thematic area of PEACEPLUS funding to be applied for is describe in the relevant actions</p>	DBEC (PM & PO)	Member Councils	DBEC; PEACEPLUS 5.6, 6.1 & 6.2
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
		<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Soft:</i> Grow network within economic development agency funding bodies</li> <li><i>Hard:</i> Schedule of potential funding prepared by Q1 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Primary:</i> DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> <li><i>Secondary:</i> SFI, DETE, DfE, INI, EI, IDA</li> </ul>	Ongoing	DBEC	

# Ways of working (4/4)

Time period	Short	Medium	Long
Action timing	●	●	●
Milestone/report	★	★	★

PM: Programme Manager; PO: Partnership Officer

## Develop a clear marketing strategy and actively engage with stakeholder groups.

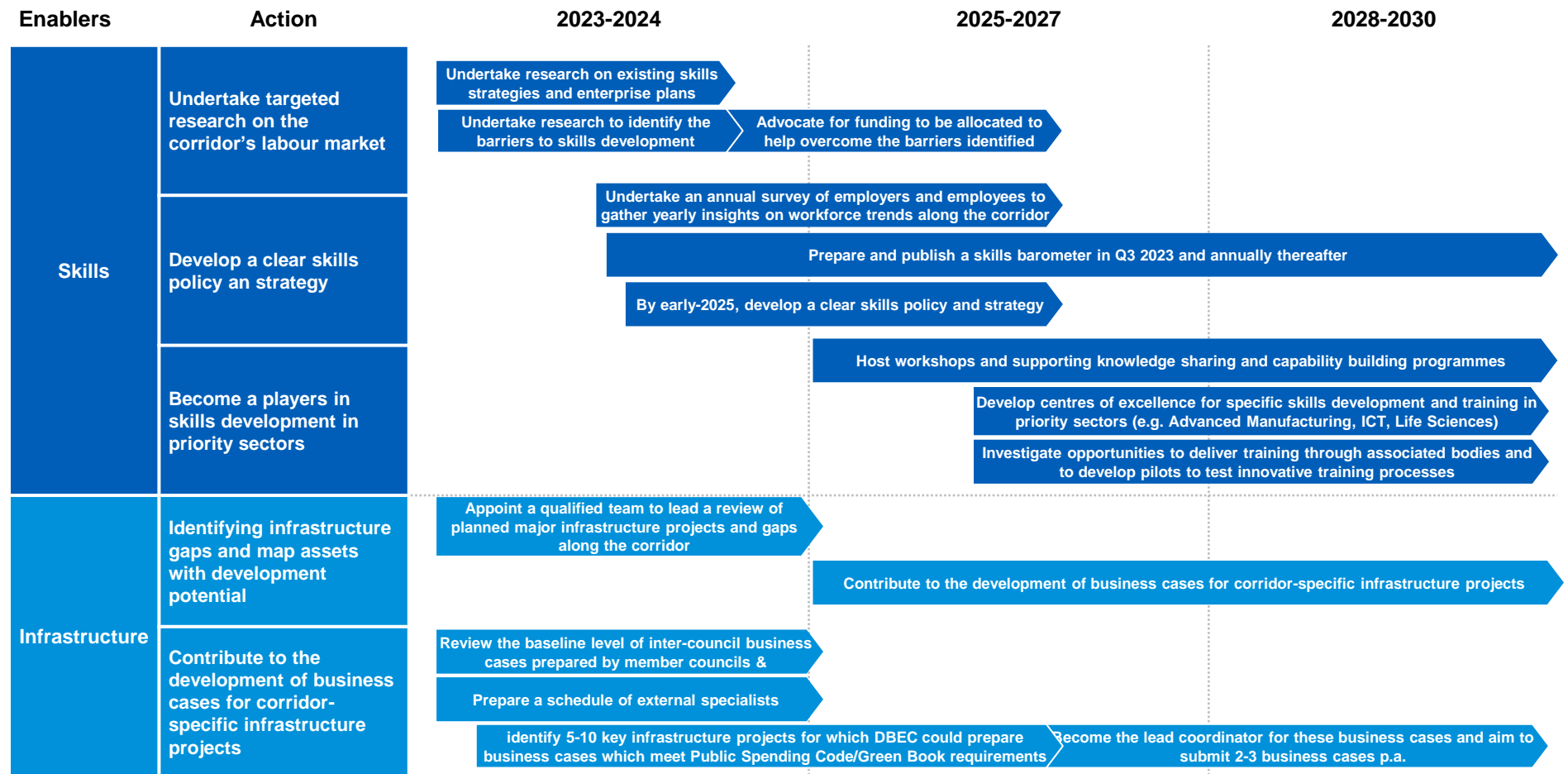
Theme	Action	Initiative/steps	Primary owner(s)	Secondary owner(s)	Funding Source
 Ways of working	Develop a clear marketing strategy and actively engage with your stakeholders	● By end-2023, develop a coherent <b>marketing and communications strategy</b> with a clear editorial line. Initially, this could include a document setting out the benefits of the corridor, dedicated communication channels and consideration of comparator corridors to learn lessons from (e.g. GPEC, RTRP, and Greater Copenhagen)	DBEC (PM & PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
		● By end-2023, <b>develop and publish a newsletter to a mailing list of subscribed recipients.</b> Highlight relevant DBEC activities and upcoming DBEC events. Add a mailing list sign-up function to the DBEC website and promote DBEC across member councils' respective communications channels to encourage sign-up from interested stakeholders for regular updates. Examples of format and material for the newsletter can be taken from the GPEC, RTRP, and Greater Copenhagen	DBEC (PO)	Member Councils	DBEC
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>				
		<b>KPI(s)</b>	<b>Information source(s)</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Data manager</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Soft:</i> Grow DBEC's presence across key social media channels</li> <li><i>Hard:</i> Marketing and communications strategy developed by end-2023; first bi-annual newsletter distributed to stakeholders by end-2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Primary:</i> Google Insights, LinkedIn Insights, DBEC internal project management and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	Initial strategy by end-2023, reviewed annually; firstly bi-annual newsletter by end-2023	DBEC	

Acronyms: GPEC: Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Arizona, US; RTRP: Research Triangle Regional Partnership, North Carolina, US

# Implementation Roadmap

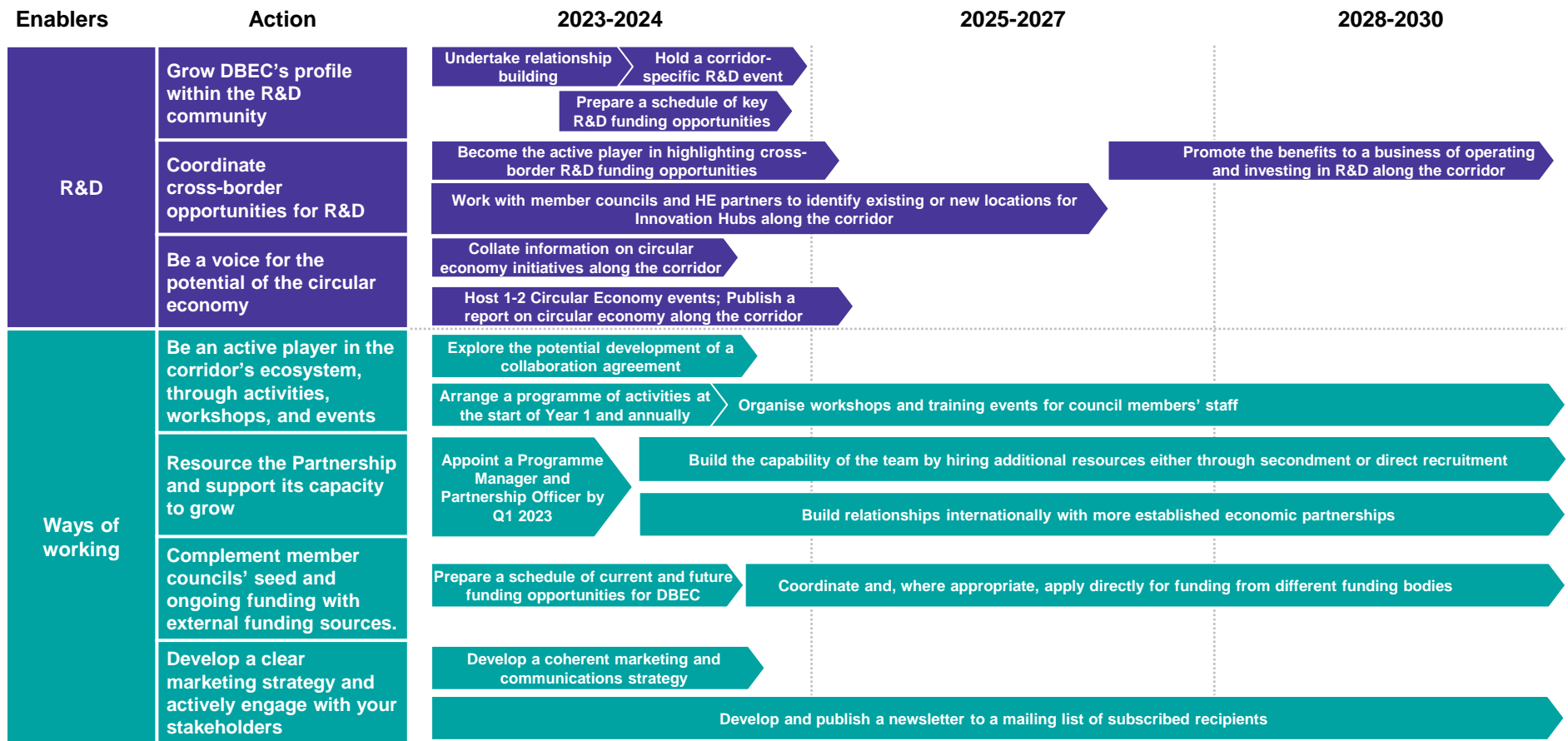
# Implementation Roadmap (1/2)

Indicative implementation roadmap across enablers and actions.







# Implementation Roadmap (2/2)

Indicative implementation roadmap across enablers and actions.



# Activities in 2023





**In year 1, focus on growing DBEC’s profile across the economic development ecosystem.**

Enabler	Priority activities for 2023	Secondary activities for 2023
<p><b>Skills</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake research on existing skills strategies and enterprise plans and identify key barriers to skills development. Advocate for funding to be allocated to help overcome the barriers identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an inaugural survey of employers and employees based along the corridor to gather insights on economic and workforce trends. Prepare and publish a skills barometer in Q4 2023 and annually thereafter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the baseline level of inter-council business cases prepared by member councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a schedule of external specialists who could (1) support the PM and PO with the development of business cases, and (2) provide training and capability building</li> </ul>
<p><b>R&amp;D</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake relationship building with (1) key public sector stakeholders and (2) senior representatives from high potential innovative SMEs. Identify existing strong levels of co-operation between member councils and higher education institutions and prepare a schedule of key R&amp;D funding opportunities relevant to the corridor’s R&amp;D ecosystem</li> <li>Work with member councils and HE partners to identify existing or new locations for Innovation Hubs along the corridor, with the aim of preparing an application for external funding by Q4 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold a corridor-specific R&amp;D event that brings together agencies that fund SME R&amp;D, innovative companies, member councils’ staff, and wider stakeholders</li> <li>In parallel to circular economy activities at BCC and DCC, gather insights on circular economy initiatives along the corridor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ways of working</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a Programme Manager and Partnership Officer to the DBEC office on a secondment basis by end Q1 2023.</li> <li>Arrange a programme of activities for Year 1 (2023), and annually thereafter, to include short-term actions set out in this Action Plan and their related KPIs</li> <li>In the first 3 months, prepare a schedule of current and future funding opportunities for DBEC directly and for specific initiatives and projects</li> <li>Develop a coherent marketing and communications strategy with a clear editorial line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the potential development of a collaboration agreement for all member councils to agree to</li> <li>By end-2023, develop and publish a newsletter to a mailing list of subscribed recipients. Highlight relevant DBEC activities and upcoming events.</li> </ul>



# KPIs

**KPIs will be act as a means of tracking progress against the agreed actions.**

Theme	Soft KPIs	Hard KPIs
<b>Skills</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow DBEC’s profile across the corridor’s skills development ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold 1 workshop in 2023 on skills development barriers along the corridor; hold 1-2 skills events p.a.</li> <li>Publish a skills barometer in 2023; develop and publish a corridor-specific skills strategy focused on priority sectors</li> <li>Secure funding for 1 skills centre by 2025; higher share of labour force enrolled in further education relative to baseline</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become known as the go-to entity for corridor-wide skills development</li> <li>Grow DBEC’s profile amongst infrastructure stakeholders along the corridor</li> <li>Grow internal business case drafting capabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a qualified team by 2024 to prepare infrastructure review; by end-2024, publish a report on infrastructure gap</li> <li>Secure funding for 1-2 projects p.a. post-2025</li> </ul>
<b>R&amp;D</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow DBEC’s profile amongst R&amp;D players and funders</li> <li>Engage with BCC and DCC around circular economy learnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By Q2 2023, have a database of key stakeholders on file; hold a corridor-specific R&amp;D event in 2024</li> <li>Secure funding for 1-2 major research centres by 2027</li> <li>Hold 1 circular economy event in 2023; report on circular economy published in 2024</li> </ul>
<b>Ways of Working</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement from Member Councils relating to collaboration</li> <li>Grow network within economic development agency funding bodies</li> <li>Grow DBEC’s presence across key social media channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run 2-3 council presentations/workshops each year</li> <li>Schedule of potential funding prepared by Q1 2023</li> <li>Marketing and communications strategy developed by end-2023; first bi-annual newsletter distributed to stakeholders by end-2023</li> <li>Flexible: Grow the team to four staff members by 2025; grow the team to seven staff members by 2030 (KPI flexible and dependent on growth and funding)</li> </ul>








# Appendices

# Appendix 1 – Funding sources

# External funding sources (1/2)








**DBEC can draw on additional funding from multiply sources on the island of Ireland and EU.**

**Sample of Funding Initiatives in RoI and NI**

Funding source	Name of programme	Total budget	Period	Description of funding
 Northern Ireland Executive	Belfast Region City Deal	£850bn	2021-2035	City & growth deals are package of funding negotiated between the UK government and local authorities, aimed at helping to harness additional investment, create new jobs and accelerate inclusive growth
 Northern Ireland Executive	Mid South West Growth Deal	£250m	N/A	Developed as a collaboration between Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council, the strategy is centred on boosting productivity.
 HM Government	Shared Prosperity Funding	£127m in NI	Until 2023	Allocated fund which is intended to reduce inequalities between communities, as part of the UK Government's "levelling up" agenda
 HM Government	Levelling Up Funding	£4.8bn in UK	N/A	€4.8bn to be invested in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK
 HM Government	InvestNI	£195M	N/A	For the 2021/22 financial year InvestNI budgeted £195 million to be put towards areas of innovation, job creation, R&D, skills and exporting to new markets.
 Northern Ireland Executive  Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland	InterTradeIreland	£12.5m	N/A	InterTradeIreland has an annual budget of £12.5m (average of 2020-22) to support small businesses in Ireland and Northern Ireland to explore new cross-border markets, develop new products, processes and services and become investors.

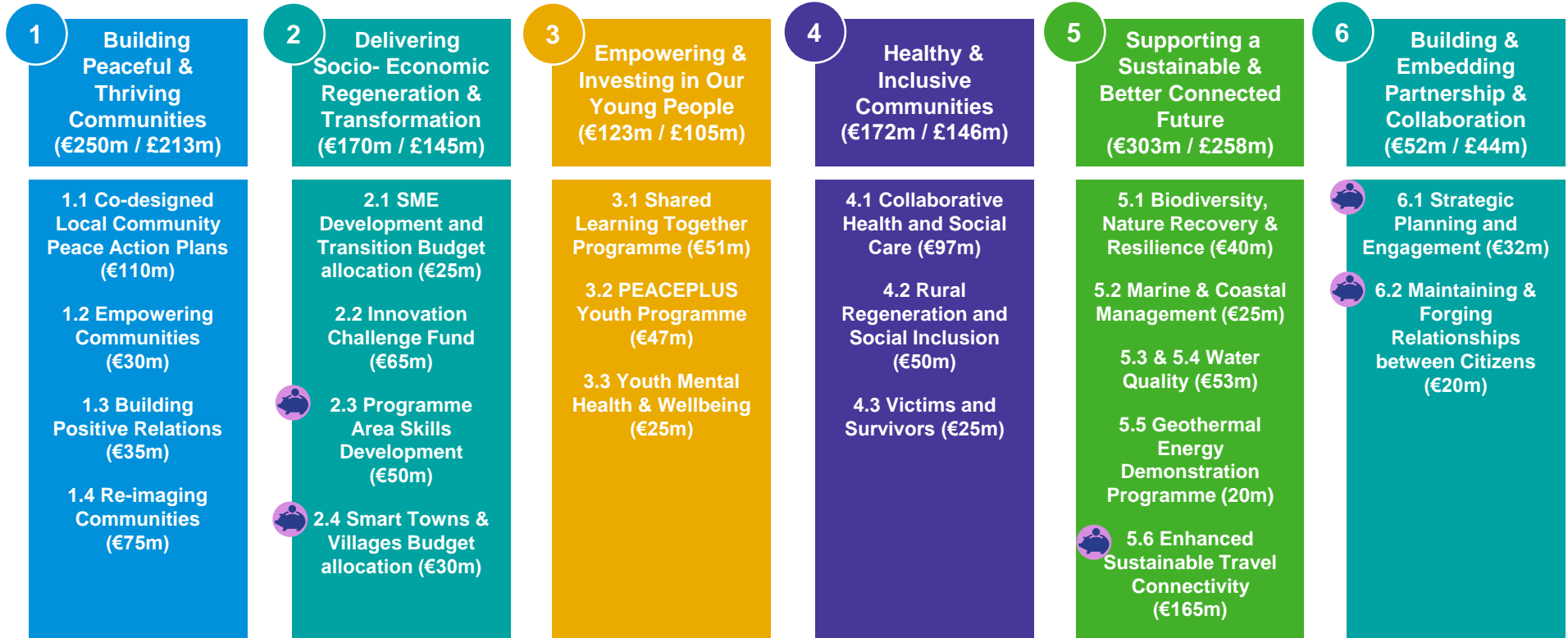
# External funding sources (2/2)

**DBEC can draw on additional funding from multiply sources on the island of Ireland and EU.**

Sample of Funding Initiatives in Rol and NI				
Funding source	Name of programme	Total budget	Period	Description of funding
 Northern Ireland Executive  Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland	Waterways Ireland	£33.8m/ €38.8m	N/A	Waterways Ireland has an annual budget of £33.8m (€38.8m) which is put towards the management, maintenance, development and promotion of over 1,000 km of inland navigable waterways, principally for recreational purposes.
 Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland	Enterprise Ireland	€581M	N/A	Enterprise Ireland has an annual budget of €581M to be used towards developing and growing Irish enterprises in world markets.
 Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland	Shared Island Initiative	€500m/ £425m	2021-25	€500m in capital funding available between 2021-25, for investment in collaborative North/South projects on the island of Ireland. This includes the allocation of Shared Island Fund for Local Authority Development Funding.
 European Commission	PEACEPLUS Programme	£0.9bn/ £1.1bn	2021-2027	PEACEPLUS is the EU's new funding programme designed to support peace and prosperity across NI and the Rol's border counties, building upon the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.
 European Commission	The Brexit Adjustment Reserve	€920m	2021-2023	European Commission allocated €920m funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve to Ireland to help Ireland's economy in mitigating the impact of Brexit
 European Commission	The EU Just Transition Fund	€85m	2021-2027	The EU Just Transition Fund is a fund to assist communities to meet the challenges of the green transition. In line with the objective of achieving EU climate neutrality by 2050.

# PEACEPLUS Funding

PEACE PLUS: 2021- 2027 has six thematic area of funding totalling €1.1 bn / £0.9bn



Notes: This funding is approved by the NI Executive, Irish Government and North-South Ministerial Council but is not yet approved by the European Commission and is therefore subject to change  
 Sources: SEUPB

# Shared Island Initiative

The RoI government has allocated €500 million in funding over the period 2021-2025 for investment in collaborative North/South projects as part of the Shared Island Initiative.

## Sample of Shared Island funding

- 1 Contribution for delivery of Phase 3 of the Ulster Canal restoration (€40m / £34m)
- 2 Shared Island strand to the Community Climate Action Programme (€15m / £12.8m)
- 3 Shared Island Arts investment projects (€7.4m / £6.3m)
- 4 Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme (€5m / £4.3m)
- 5 Shared Island strand to the Community Climate Action Programme (€3m / £3.5m)

DBEC has secured funding through the Local Authority Development Funding Scheme to undertake a feasibility of the development of sectoral enterprise hubs located along the corridor, identifying new or repurposed facilities based around sectoral clusters, and identifying sectoral strengths and existing and emerging business clusters, including FinTech, Digital Health, Agri-Tech and Advanced Manufacturing.

DBEC can apply to Shared Island as new funding calls are announced in 2023 and 2024.

# Appendix 2: Communications planning



# Communication

As the DBEC partnership grows, communication methods will adapt to reach stakeholders.

## Developing a communications plan

- 1
  - Identify **target audiences** and stakeholders to create an extensive contact list of entities in the corridor. Audiences may include internal, external, primary, secondary, domestic, and international organisations
  - Establish key metrics for evaluation and targets
- 2
  - **Engage with stakeholders** to establish opportunities, challenge and common themes. Consider international perspective in messaging
  - Identify content leads / authors / spokespersons
  - Narrow down the key issues the content will address and key messages to be communicated
- 3
  - Identify the **relevant channels** for key messages
  - Ensure channel selection is suitable to reach identified target audiences
  - Coordinate announcements with partner organisations
- 4
  - Illustrate **ambition** for the content
  - Develop a brand creative
  - Develop assets e.g. Blog / video / podcast / memes etc.
- 5
  - Develop schedule for **content roll-out**
  - Ensure strong relationships with organisations and stakeholders
  - Undertake an annual stakeholder satisfaction survey to track views and perceptions of DBEC's progress

## Communications methods

It is suggested that the DBEC partnership use combinations of:

- Traditional website, print and broadcast platforms
- Blogs, podcasts, video, photography
- Digital advertising, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram to bring content to life for a broad range of audiences

Using a mixture of content streams will help ensure the DBEC message reaches the right audience, delivered through the right channels. We suggest the partnership has the following short-term targets:

- Use available databases to create an outreach list of mid-sized companies, private equity or venture capital backed players
- Hire a resource to advocate for the corridor, promote key sectors and to advertise the corridor as a great place to live and work
- Connect local companies and foreign companies with business advisory services.

DBEC and its constituent member councils will need to agree on the type of content to be shared and the balance across councils.



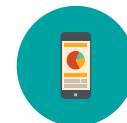
Print media



Podcast



Events



Social Media



Video



Webinar

# Marketing (1/4)

DBEC has four audiences to target which would each require a unique marketing approach.

## International companies

**Target:** International companies that are looking to expand their operations through foreign direct investment. This can be achieved through establishing themselves in DBEC either through acquisition or opening a new branch or plant



## Local private businesses

**Target:** Businesses located along the corridor that would benefit from collaborative R&D, greater access to a skilled workforce and infrastructure improvements. Promoting research that is undertaken to these businesses will facilitate and encourage their participation



## Public Sector

**Target:** Public sector entities DBEC will be collaborating with or receiving funding from. DBEC will need to promote the partnerships' activities to help maintain public sector and government support and keep a steady stream of funding opportunities



## Skilled workers

**Target:** Skilled workers located outside the corridor as well as recent graduates can be attracted to join the corridor's workforce. This can be achieved by promoting the quality of life, local attractions and providing information for new residents



Market the region as a major international centre in growth sectors like Professional Services, Advanced Manufacturing, ICT, Life Sciences and Advanced Agriculture.

# Marketing (2/4)

DBEC can build on existing marketing to promote the corridor to each target group.

## Current marketing strategy



KPMG undertook an outside-in review of DBEC's current marketing and communications found that whilst each medium has useful content, the social media platforms could be used more effectively to generate interest and provide timely updates.

DBEC communications used are:

- **Website** has a lot of useful content on the strengths of each council, as well as links to resources, research and reports
- The DBEC Ireland **Twitter account** was used to launch the report and promote meetings happening initially, with the video report being re-tweeted 136 times. However, it has been inactive since March 2021
- The DBEC Ireland **LinkedIn** page was also used to promote the report and early meetings, attracting 255 followers. However, recent updates have been limited and the page is hard to find
- **The DBEC YouTube** channel has videos of several case studies and the first board meeting. However, each appears to have minimal views and new content has not recently been added
- **DBEC printed communications** are recognisable with good branding.



## Opportunities for DBEC partnership

### ▪ Update the website to include:

- A map that provides the boundary of the corridor and lay of the land. This is particularly important for international parties without local knowledge
- Key statistics on the corridor such as economic growth forecasts, demographic information and labour market indices
- Additional information around the partnership's role, vision and objectives
- Contact details or function to enable stakeholders and interested parties to get in touch
- Improve search engine optimisation to increase online reach

### ▪ Use Twitter to regularly post content on:

- Key events such as trade shows, conferences and workshops happening in the corridor
- Promote companies and core industries

### ▪ Create a LinkedIn page to:

- Hire talented staff to work for the DBEC partnership
- Promote the work of DBEC to a professional audience

### ▪ Expand current digital marketing reach by:

- Undertaking targeted marketing campaigns by specific persona
- Attending and presenting at events
- Providing printed content.

DBEC partnership is due to hire resource to start in late 2022 and can build on the marketing work undertaken to date.

# Marketing (3/4)

DBEC could learn from international corridors who use a range of marketing techniques.



## Reach people on their preferred medium

**How**

- Target people on different social media platforms where they spend time
- Develop materials such as research reports and podcasts (e.g. interviews with businesses, public entities) which can deliver entertaining content to engage with the audience



## Use marketing spend effectively

**How**

- Use available council marketing resources where possible
- Promote the corridor and partnership at conferences and events to generate branding interest



## Promotion and advertising material

**How**

- Invest in appropriate promotional activities such as networking events
- Cast a wide net to ensure resources and research materials produced by the partnership are getting good coverage



## Consistent messaging

**How**

- Set and uphold brand guidelines (colour, theme, format, structure, logo placement)
- Organise marketing assets, repurpose quality content and keep a consistent marketing schedule to build reputation and recognition of the DBEC brand



## Instant delivery of heavy information

**How**

- Create easy to digest visual or audio materials to deliver messages and generate interest
- Use as summaries to supplement other published content or as stand alone advertising material



## Increasing DBEC's material impact

**How**

- Develop impactful content by focusing on the problem statement for the target audience and how DBEC can answer these issues
- Create effective content by condensing information to a digestible length

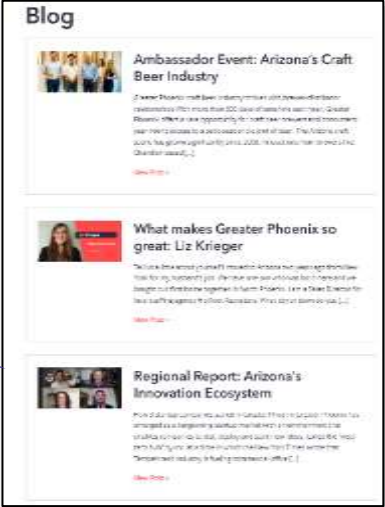
# Marketing (4/4)

Examples of marketing from other international corridors highlights the breadth of approaches that DBEC can explore in order to grow its profile.

Greater Phoenix Economic Council provides an **operational cost comparison**



Greater Phoenix Economic Council has a **blog** of up-to-date news and events in the region



Research Triangle Partnership has a function that **translates its website** into eight different languages



Greater Copenhagen sponsors and presents at conferences such as the H22 City Expo

Sources: Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Research Triangle Partnership, Greater Copenhagen

# A framework for engaging with stakeholders

**Early-stage strategic identification and engagement with stakeholders will drive momentum.**

## Engaging with stakeholders

- For each project, consider why stakeholders will be engaged, e.g.:
  - Levels of interest in respective projects
  - Desire to be involved in governance/delivery
  - Expectations of returns
  - Approaches to collaboration



## Who should be engaged?

- Identify the respective cohorts and their potential roles , e.g.:
  - Central government/semi-state: funder/regulator
  - Local authorities: delivery/governance
  - Corporates and SMEs: beneficiaries/funders
  - Third sector and households: recipients/workers



## Cost/Funding

- Identify costs and potential funding sources e.g.:
  - Resource/salary: temporary/permanent/part-time
  - Communications/marketing: event/conference/sponsorship
  - Research and delivery: external support/consultation
  - Potential sources: Shared Island Fund (Local Authority Development Funding), PEACE PLUS, Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity, Intertrade Ireland, Horizon Europe, InvestNI and Enterprise Ireland, corporate sponsorship



## Engaging with stakeholders

- Take a targeted approach to engaging with stakeholders, e.g.:
  - Delivery partners: project meetings/workshops/virtual
  - Funders: financial and project reports/effective governance
  - Clients/customers: digital marketing/newsletters/emails/LinkedIn
- Have clear priority stakeholders and engage with these regularly
- Involve senior leadership from DBEC's member councils in relevant local project opportunities



**DBEC staff to consider each of these when engaging with different stakeholder groups.**

# DBEC stakeholder list

Partner with a range of stakeholders working across the economic development ecosystem.

DBEC stakeholder list by sector/enablers				
Tourism and Connectivity Reference Group	Trade and Investment Reference Group	Research and Development Reference Group	Skills and Education Reference Group	Infrastructure Reference Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfE</li> <li>• DfC</li> <li>• DAERA</li> <li>• Tourism Ireland</li> <li>• Tourism NI</li> <li>• Failte Ireland</li> <li>• NI Tourism Alliance</li> <li>• Visit Belfast</li> <li>• Sectoral bodies</li> <li>• DTGASM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfE</li> <li>• Invest NI</li> <li>• Intertrade Ireland</li> <li>• Enterprise Ireland</li> <li>• DIT</li> <li>• Chambers Ireland</li> <li>• British Irish Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• American Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Fintech Corridor</li> <li>• IBEC</li> <li>• DA</li> <li>• IoD</li> <li>• KPMG</li> <li>• NI Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• IBEC</li> <li>• Federation of Small Businesses</li> <li>• CBI Northern Ireland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest NI</li> <li>• Enterprise Ireland</li> <li>• Catalyst</li> <li>• Ulster University</li> <li>• Queens University</li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin</li> <li>• Maynooth University</li> <li>• Technical University Dublin</li> <li>• Dublin City University</li> <li>• NESCC</li> <li>• Relevant Competence Centres/Centres of Excellence/Sectoral bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfE</li> <li>• DfC</li> <li>• INI</li> <li>• Ulster University</li> <li>• Queens University</li> <li>• Belfast Metropolitan College</li> <li>• Trinity College Dublin</li> <li>• Maynooth University</li> <li>• Technical University Dublin</li> <li>• Dublin City University</li> <li>• DETE</li> <li>• IDA</li> <li>• DTGASM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DAA</li> <li>• Irish Rail</li> <li>• DfI</li> <li>• DfC</li> <li>• Translink</li> <li>• Belfast Harbour</li> <li>• Northern Ireland Environment Link</li> <li>• NIHE</li> <li>• DfI</li> <li>• DHLH&amp;H</li> <li>• Dept of An Taoiseach</li> <li>• NTAT/II</li> </ul>

DBEC to actively engage and collaborate with stakeholders along the corridor

# Appendix 3: Sample collaboration agreement



# Sample collaboration agreement (1/2)

## **A collaboration agreement ensures all members of the partnership play fair.**

The foundation of this policy is built on trust and the spirit of regional cooperation among the entities involved. DBEC and its Member Councils agree and acknowledge that it is important that they work together as partners on projects involving the communities which DBEC represents, regardless of the source of the lead, as follows:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to the positive promotion of the DBEC, specifically, DBEC members directors, as a globally competitive region
2. Maintain the highest standards of economic development prospect handling, including confidentiality, without jeopardising a prospect's trust to secure the probability of a regional location. Partners agree to respect the prospect's request for confidentiality but also agree to notify each other as to the existence of a project with a confidentiality requirement when able and shall make a good faith effort to involve the appropriate entities at the earliest possible time
3. Unless otherwise restricted, agree to coordinate through DBEC for any prospect considering a project in any of the communities that DBEC represents, understanding that DBEC is in a unique position to represent and speak on regional economic development issues and on characteristics of the region's economy. Likewise, DBEC acknowledges that communities are in the best position to speak about local incentives and efforts surrounding the local economy
4. For projects that originate with a DBEC member Council, DBEC will be available for confidential research access, topical expertise or as a service provider, to add value to the Council in securing the project. Additionally, DBEC will not track the project unless the Council lead makes such a request to do so
5. Provide accurate and timely information in response to specific requests by all prospects. When a client has narrowed sites to specific DBEC member Council, DBEC will make a good faith inform those affected members first. Members agree to provide information solely on their own Council when the information requested is site-specific (i.e., cost of land, taxes, development fees, utility availability and cost, zoning process timing, permit timing and local incentives). When site-specific information related to other DBEC communities is requested, executives of its member communities agree to (i) direct DBEC prospects back to DBEC or (ii) direct non-DBEC generated prospects to contact the affected communities directly, and as a courtesy, contact the affected communities

# Sample collaboration agreement (2/2)

## A collaboration agreement ensures all members of the partnership play fair.

6. Agree that regardless of the lead source, public locate announcements shall be coordinated among the company, members directors, and DBEC to reflect inclusiveness and cooperation of all partners (subject to any confidentiality requirements).
7. DBEC and members directors will advocate for a robust operating budget for the respective government economic development agency, and champion sound regional economic development programs and policies.
8. Discourage the offering of local, municipal financial incentives for existing jobs to companies with current operations in another DBEC Council.
9. Inform DBEC member Council when a company visits or physical site visit within that Council will occur. Members directors will be the primary point of contact for the company when Council information is needed.
11. Formalise a meeting process for DBEC and members directors of DBEC member communities biannually, and cooperate in the exchange of information and ideas reflecting practices, procedures and policies relating to prospect handling and regional economic development.
12. Work collectively to maintain a high level of trust and integrity by and between DBEC and the members directors of DBEC, utilising differing views as an opportunity to learn.
13. When conducting market intelligence initiative objective, DBEC staff will coordinate with member executives to ensure coordination and communication.
15. It is understood DBEC will or may host annual executive(s) and/or other marketing familiarisation tour(s) to promote the regional communities. DBEC will make every attempt to provide as much interaction time between the executive guests and member executives. It is understood member executives will inform DBEC of any upcoming executive(s) and/or other marketing familiarisation tours scheduled by their office.

**Note:** Members directors are the head of entity that is a member of DBEC and agreed to these terms

# Appendix 4: Sources



Armagh Cathedral- Armagh City, Banbridge  
and Craigavon Borough Council

# Sources: General

## Sources used in this report include:

- Central Bank of Ireland, (2022). Quarterly Bulletin, June 2022
- Council respective development plans: Belfast Local development plan 2035 (currently draft), Lisburn & Castlereagh local development plan 2032 (currently draft), Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon local development plan 2030, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council local development plan 2030, Louth County development plan 2021-27, Meath County development plan 2021-27, Dublin City Council development plant 2022-28 (currently draft)
- CSO, (2022). CSO Statistical Databases
- ESRI (Quarterly Economic Commentary, Summer 2022),
- Department of Finance, (2021). Budget 2021
- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2021) National Development Plan 2021-2030
- Fáilte Ireland, Stats and Figures
- International economic corridors consultations and respective websites; Greater Copenhagen, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Malaysia Northern Econ Corridor, Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Oxford-Cambridge Arc, Northern Corridor (Canada)
- InvestNI, (2021). InvestNI Performance Council Area 2021
- ONS, Statistical Databases
- NIRSRA, (2022). Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- Northern Ireland Executive (2021) Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland – Draft Consultation Document
- SEUPB, PEACE PLUS Business Sector Navigation Paper April 21
- Ulster Bank, (2022). Northern Ireland PMI, May 2022

*The document and information contained herein (“Information”) is specific in nature and is only intended to address the circumstances of the Belfast City Council (“BCC”), as set out in the services contract dated 2nd November 2021, and not any third party individual or entity. KPMG accepts no responsibility whatsoever and accepts no liability for any loss or damage suffered or costs incurred by any third party individual or entity arising out of or in connection with this Information, however the loss or damage is caused. No third party should act on such information without appropriate professional advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation*

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