



**Report to:** Development Committee

**Subject:** International Collaboration Events - ITLG Conference and South by Southwest

**Date:** 24 January 2012

**Reporting Officer:** John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

**Contact Officers:** Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the 14 September 2011 meeting of the Development Committee, a proposal to host a delegation from the ITLG (Irish Technology Leadership Group) was approved. Six representatives from ITLG took part in a two day visit to Belfast on 4 and 5 November 2011. Since the visit, discussions have been taking place to look at building on this relationship, including exploring the opportunity to develop a memorandum of understanding involving potential collaborative initiatives.
1.2	Members will also be aware that, at the 8 November 2011 meeting of the Development Committee, a proposal to support Council participation at the annual South by Southwest (SXSW) music and media conference in Austin, Texas was approved.
1.3	SXSW is an annual event and the 2012 event takes place from 12–17 March. ITLG also organises an annual conference to which all Members are invited and the 2012 event runs from the 12-13 March in Santa Clara, California.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Members will be aware that the Irish Technology Leadership Group is a group of Irish and Irish American senior executives based in Silicon Valley who are active in the global technology industry. They work to promote industry linkages between USA and Ireland through a range of collaborative initiatives including trade visits, award ceremonies and events in both USA and Ireland.
2.2	As part of their visit to Belfast in November, the ITLG representatives met a

	range of business, academic and community representatives. They offered to maintain contact with the organisations and individuals that they had met in Belfast and suggested that some consideration be given to the development of strategic international relations with key locations and organisations.
2.3	An invitation has been received to attend the ITLG Innovation Summit in San Jose, California on 12 and 13 March. The 5 <sup>th</sup> Annual ITLG Innovation Summit is a two-day gathering of top executives, entrepreneurs, and venture capital investors operating in Ireland and Silicon Valley. Through a programme of keynote presentations, panel debates and top company CEO showcases, attendees get an inside look at the cutting-edge technology, business and political trends shaping the technology sector. The awards also incorporate the Silicon Valley Top 50 awards, presenting an opportunity to meet the top 50 most influential Irish Americans in Silicon Valley. There is also an opportunity to organise individual meetings with key individuals and organisations as part of the visit.
2.4	Members will also recall that they agreed to support attendance at the South by Southwest (SXSW) music and media conference in Austin, Texas which takes place from 12-17 March 2012. SXSW is the premier global event focusing on the creative side of the music and entertainment business. It involves a conference and exhibition as well as a series of pre-arranged meetings, music shows and interactive media presentations. One officer from Belfast City Council will coordinate and manage the Council input into this event.
2.5	The official SXSW Belfast/Northern Ireland creative industries showcase takes place on 12 March at the UK Music Embassy in Austin, Texas, with local interactive, film and music businesses profiling their products and services to international buyers attending the conference. Belfast City Council, Digital Derry and Invest Northern Ireland will be profiled throughout the week at SXSW as part of the UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) exhibition stand and additional showcase events.
2.6	Members are asked to consider the opportunity for the Chair and Deputy Chair of Committee (or nominees) to take part in one or either of these important international events. Members should note the clash of dates – it will not be possible for individual representatives to attend both events.
2.7	Should Members agree to participate, they may wish to consider whether there is a requirement for an additional member of staff to accompany the delegation.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	Financial Travel and accommodation costs for each participant not likely to exceed £1,800.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	There are no specific equality and good relations considerations attached to this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the contents of the report.</li> <li>- Consider the opportunity for participation at either of these events by the Chair and Deputy Chair (or nominees) and one additional project officer</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Reports on outcomes of these visits to be presented to Committee in June 2012.	
Timeframe: June 2012	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay