

Santander pledges to support SMEs in the North as part of its new partnership with the Northern powerhouse

- Thousands of SMEs in the North of England, from start-up to international exporters, will be supported by Santander over the next five years.
- The commitment comes as Santander opens its first ever Work Café in the UK in Leeds.
- As part of the partnership, Santander will be placing 5,000 interns with businesses in the North over the next five years through its Santander Universities.

Madrid, 19 de julio de 2019.- Santander is pledging to support thousands of SMEs in the North of England over the next five years, as part of its new partnership with the Northern Powerhouse. The SMEs, from start-up size to international exporters, will be supported with a wide range of solutions tailored to their needs.

As part of its partnership, Santander will also place up to 5,000 interns over the next five years with local businesses. This forms part of the Santander Universities internship programme which matches and partly funds internship schemes for graduates from partner Universities with local SMEs.

Susan Davies, Managing Director Santander Business said: *“The Northern Powerhouse Partners Programme is doing a fantastic job of working with a range of partners to connect business, transport, education and skills and ultimately improve the economy for all who live and work in the region. We are delighted to be working with the Northern Powerhouse and are committed to Northern SMEs of all size, from start-ups needing space in our incubator for developing their idea, to fast-growing businesses with ambitions to expand overseas”.*

“We are well placed to support SMEs in the region through access to interns, our masterclass events and trade missions to a number of different countries as part of our International programme.”

Yesterday, Santander announced a further commitment to the North with the opening of a Work Café in Leeds, a city with a growing reputation for innovation and attracting strong digital talent as the busiest financial hub outside of London, [ranked number two for co-working and number four for business start-ups]. The Work Café aims to create a vibrant hub for nurturing new business ideas and fostering collaboration in a relaxed atmosphere.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, said: *“The major economic and social contribution that Santander makes to the Northern Powerhouse has been further strengthened today with their pledge to support SMEs from coast to coast across the North. The opening of their high-tech Work Café in Leeds with ultra-fast digital connectivity and free co-working spaces is just another example of how they’re helping to support SMEs and businesses on the high street adapt and flourish. I’m very proud to be working with Santander, through our Partner Programme, to boost the economy of the Northern Powerhouse together.”*

In 2014, Santander launched a business incubator in Liverpool which provides space for budding new ventures and start-ups, with access to state-of-the-art systems and on a rent-free basis for the first 12 months. Since launching, the incubation hub has successfully supported 63 early stage businesses

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including RentalStep, a platform helping tenants to boost their credit score. As part of its Northern Powerhouse partnership, Santander is anticipating it will reach an additional 110 start-up businesses in the region purely through the incubator.

Mike Georgeson, CEO, RentalStep, said: *“The space and support were invaluable. We were given access to Santander’s innovation team who gave us their time and expertise and the bank also co funded an intern for us. Our service is already helping tenants boost their credit score by securing a record of their rental payments and we are confident that our business will only continue to grow.”*

The Northern Powerhouse Partner Programme aims to support the creation of the Northern Powerhouse. Government is building a network of partners who all believe strongly in the economic potential of the North and support the need for a combined effort by government and business to realise that potential. There are currently over 230 businesses and organisations signed up to the Partner Programme.

Notes to Editors

Santander UK is a financial services provider in the UK that offers a wide range of personal and commercial financial products and services. It has brought real competition to the UK, through its innovative products for retail customers and relationship banking model for UK SMEs. At 31 December 2018, the bank has c23,800 employees. It serves around 15 million active customers, via a nationwide branch network, telephone, mobile and online banking; and 64 regional Corporate Business Centres. Santander UK is subject to the full supervision of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) in the UK. Santander UK plc customers’ eligible deposits are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) in the UK.

About Us

Banco Santander (SAN SM, STD US, BNC LN) is a leading retail and commercial bank, founded in 1857 and headquartered in Spain. It has a meaningful presence in 10 core markets in Europe and the Americas, and is the largest bank in the euro zone by market capitalization. At the end of 2018, Banco Santander had EUR 981 billion in customer funds (deposits and mutual funds), 144 million customers, 13,000 branches and 200,000 employees. Banco Santander made attributable profit of EUR 7,810 million in 2018, an increase of 18% compared to the previous year.

Santander Universities

Banco Santander is the only European bank included in the 'Change the World' 2018 ranking of companies that are contributing to improving the world (Fortune magazine) for its positive impact on society. Our firm commitment to higher education also distinguished us as the company that invests most in Education in the world (Varkey Report / UNESCO / Fortune 500), which materialises through Santander Universities, one of our hallmarks. For 20 years, the Bank has been collaborating with more than 1,200 universities around the world in a unique initiative. Since 2002, the bank allocates more than 77% of its Social Investment budget to Santander Universities, which has meant an accumulated investment of more than EUR 1,500 million in support for higher education to date, a total of EUR 121 million in 2018.

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The Santander Universities Programme places interns with local SME businesses. 38% of interns go on to enjoy full time employment with the company they were placed in. Santander Universities has provided over £2m of funding each year to support entrepreneurship across its UK university partners, with almost a third of those based in the North.

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