



L-R Matt Hutnell, Director of Santander Universities UK with Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Chief Executive and Vice-Chancellor for Northumbria

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## **Northumbria University unveils its state-of-the-art Business Clinic in partnership with Santander**

**Northumbria University's highly successful Business Clinic has taken on a new dimension with a relocation to purpose-built, state-of-the-art premises in the heart of the city and a £150k boost from Santander Universities UK.**

The Business Clinic is part of Northumbria University's award-winning Business School; recognised as Business School of the Year in 2015 and more

recently the first North East Business School to win the Small Business Charter for services to SMEs.

The Clinic is an education scheme where business students participate in a 'consultancy firm' to provide advice for clients. The free service is available to all types of businesses from SMEs and multinationals to charities, social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations. Students are encouraged to get to the root of the problem and deliver genuine solutions for real businesses.

Areas of focus include strategic operations or company expansion, human resources, finance, brand development, digital marketing and social media strategy, planning, logistics, IT and strategic marketing.

To date, the Business Clinic has helped more than 600 students advise over 145 organisations including the Dyspraxia Foundation, Northumbria Police, North West Ambulance Service, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Greggs plc, Helix Arts and Parker Hannifin.

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The University has invested over £800,000 to move the Business Clinic into its own vibrant, 500 square metre premises on New Bridge Street. The building includes client briefing rooms, boardroom, reception area, a conferencing and event space and a state-of-the-art digital communications system.

The Business Clinic has also secured support from Santander Universities UK

to play an integral role in maximising the positive impact of the Clinic's activities. Through an annual donation of £50,000 per year for three years, the partnership will fund student placements and internships with business clients.

Since its formation in 1996, Santander Universities has donated over €1 billion to more than 1,200 universities in 20 countries through scholarships, research grants and mobility awards designed to enable enterprise, employability, internationalisation and innovation.

In 2015, Northumbria joined the UK network of 82 participating universities, furthering its ambition to work with leading organisations to enrich students' educational experiences and enhance their employability skills.

The new Santander Universities UK partnership was announced by Javier Roglá, Global Managing Director of Santander Universities and Universia and Matt Hutnell, Director of Santander Universities, during a special launch event for the Business Clinic's new premises.

The Santander Universities Internships Programme will provide Northumbria students and graduates with the opportunity to secure a paid summer internship in a small to medium sized business.

Speaking at the event, Matt Hutnell, Director of Santander Universities UK said: "Our purpose at Santander is to help people and businesses prosper. Initiatives such as the Business Clinic at Northumbria University are excellent examples of how this can be achieved, with students gaining an insight into the working world whilst at the same time helping to drive growth in local SMEs.

"We are delighted to support the University on such a great initiative. The Santander Universities Internships Programme will provide more Northumbria students and graduates with new opportunities to secure valuable work experience and we also look forward to continuing this rewarding partnership."

Northumbria is one of the largest universities in the UK with almost 34,000 students from 132 countries. Newcastle Business School is in the top 1% of business schools worldwide with a double accreditation from AACSB (the

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) – an international hallmark of excellence.

According to the latest figures on higher education start-ups by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) for 2015/16, Northumbria is also the number one university for start-ups based on the turnover of graduate businesses (£69.2m).

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: “Creating dedicated premises for the Business Clinic and re-affirming our partnership with Santander brings another dimension to the award-winning work of the Newcastle Business School at Northumbria University.

“The support that the University has received from Santander will help the Business Clinic's work with individual students, giving them skills informed by cutting-edge business research and improving their chances of securing highly-desirable jobs. It will help bring the University's talent, knowledge and expertise to bear in supporting a wide range of businesses and charities.”

Nigel Coates, Director of the Business Clinic, said: “Few universities in the UK offer their business students the opportunity to work directly with business leaders but Northumbria is an exception. Since 2013, the Business Clinic has been supporting our final-year undergraduate and Masters' students to provide clients with a free-of-charge, full consultancy service under the supervision of experienced staff.

“The Business Clinic's new premises also offers the ideal venue for growing numbers of SMEs and social enterprises that are expressing their need to us for external engagement and networking opportunities.

“The scheme undoubtedly strengthens University-business collaboration and the Business Clinic's ethos embodies Northumbria's belief in effective partnerships as one of the most powerful drivers for business success, especially in today's fiercely competitive and constantly changing economic environment.

“In addition to the Clinic's consultancy service, our internationally renowned academics and energised students can be mobilised to support businesses

through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Continuing Professional Development courses, Executive Coaching, Degree Apprenticeships, Intellectual Property advice, collaborative research and many other initiatives.”

The launch event was attended by partners from the North East business community including the NELEP, NEECC, CBI and businesses the Business Clinic has previously worked with.

Catherine Hearne, Chief Executive, Helix Arts worked with the Business Clinic last year. She said: “I’ve been blown away by the energy, enthusiasm and ideas the team brought to our brief. They went far beyond our expectations. We’d asked them to explore the feasibility of Helix Arts diversifying into events management and were highly impressed that they went several steps further and were able to make a recommendation that not only is there a gap in the market, they even highlighted the specific areas we could target our expertise.”

Newcastle Business School was the Times Higher Education magazine's UK Business School of the Year for 2015. Northumbria University is the number one university in the North East for 'good industry connections' according to the Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2015-16.

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