



Innovation Case Study Derrie Danders Walking & Audio Tours

Innovation Recognition: Gold Award





Introduction

Derrie Danders owned by David Douglas, aims to provide informative and entertaining 'politically neutral but historically accurate' walking tours of Derry / Londonderry. Encouraging visitors to 'Linger longer in Londonderry' and enjoy a 'dander around Derry'.

“My business has been based on innovation since it started in 2018. I have developed a range of specialist history tours of the city, as well as a range of audio tours for guests who want a lower cost and flexible alternative to real tours.”

David Douglas
Derrie Danders Walking & Audio Tours

Embedding Innovation

Innovation has always been part of my business and now I have added digital or technological capability too. The Innovate NI framework has also allowed me to embed innovation into my business, so I can continue to follow a clear road map for coming up with new ideas and addressing any business and competitive challenges.

My current journey began with the thoughts of bringing characters to life for my Blue Plaques of the Maiden City tour. I had been exploring the possibility of involving real actors in costume to meet

my guests at their blue plaque, but this was too expensive and impractical.

After discussion with the North West Regional College, we came up with the plan to use augmented reality on my tours to film characters in costume and then using technology for them to appear to my tour guests.

We completed the filming in February 2024 and launched the tour for sale in May 2024 along with a new promotional video.



Innovation Outcomes

The Innovate NI Innovation Framework has helped guide me along the innovation process, enabling me to develop a new tour option primarily for my Blue Plaques tour. Due to the cross-over of some of the characters, I can offer this for four of my specialised tours and there is scope to add additional characters.



Supportive Ecosystem

The journey started in November 2023 with North West Regional College. At the same time, I registered my idea with Innovation NI and Tourism NI along with Go Succeed via my local Council.

I was awarded a Gold Level Innovator certificate from Innovate NI and spoke to Innovate NI advisers. The Gold Level allowed

me to understand that I was at the test/validate and develop stage of the innovation process and what I needed to progress.

I have availed of funding from Go Succeed to buy tablets for this tour and marketing and promotional video assistance.



Continuing the Innovation Journey

At this stage my focus is on marketing my Blue Plaques of the Maiden City tour and also other specialist history tours where the augmented reality characters can be an option, and increasing awareness about it. I am hoping to reach more tour operators, so it becomes a greater part of my sales mix.

