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# Embrace a Giant Spirit:

EXPERIENCE PORTFOLIO

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TOURISM  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND

# Introduction

**Tourism Northern Ireland is responsible for the development of tourism, the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination and works closely with Tourism Ireland to sell the destination overseas.**

The Northern Ireland - Embrace a Giant Spirit: Experience Portfolio is Tourism Northern Ireland's managed collection of market ready, saleable tourism businesses that deliver visitor experiences within the context of Northern Ireland's Embrace a Giant Spirit brand.

Since the launch of the tourism brand in 2019, the tourism landscape has significantly changed and Tourism NI is keen to re-engage with experience operators to be able to best facilitate support for a wide variety of tourism experience businesses.

With a focus on authentic and distinctly Northern Irish experiences, businesses within the portfolio may range from larger 'destination-driver' attractions to intimate, smaller experiences that wish to benefit from the proven quality assurance benefits of the tourism brand, suit a range of key markets and add value to our tourism offer. Northern Ireland - Embrace a Giant Spirit: Experience Portfolio businesses are integrated into Tourism NI's annual domestic and out-of-state marketing efforts and will have opportunity to avail of tailored industry opportunities and support throughout the year.

The portfolio is an opportunity for tourism experience businesses to enhance their engagement with the NI tourism brand, designed to:

- Raise the bar by stimulating innovative and authentic product development aligned to the tourism brand, enhancing the profile of the depth and breadth of quality visitor experiences across Northern Ireland
- Offer an assured standard of visitor experience through a market-ready criteria to gain competitive stand out in an increasingly competitive global market and respond to changing tourism trends
- Offer an inclusive framework for tourism businesses to recognise their important and crucial role in promoting NI as a must see destination; extending stays, increasing spend and boosting tourism's positive impact to Northern Ireland's economy
- Ensure that Tourism NI have up to date, accurate information on tourism experiences to best promote the destination to our partners nationally and internationally

To continue their inclusion within the portfolio year on year, businesses will be required to annually review, submit and update key metrics and business data to ensure that Tourism NI are equipped with up-to-date and accurate details to best promote our range of portfolio businesses.



# What makes a Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience?

Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit experiences are saleable visitor experiences which respond to market demand and the desire to share the world-renowned giant spirit of Northern Ireland, in addition to awakening that giant spirit in our visitors. Embrace a Giant Spirit tourism businesses should embody the brand inspirers, the four key pillars at the heart of the giant spirit of Northern Ireland and the things that we want visitors to discover, think about and talk about during their experience and long after.

## Big-Hearted

Being Big-hearted means that you put the people of Northern Ireland and their warm approach to visitors front and centre in your experience. The people your visitors meet and the stories they encounter of our people past and present should all reflect bigheartedness.

Big-hearted experiences help visitors to meet and get to know the people of Northern Ireland.

## Legends & Stories

Using Legends and Stories means experiences will draw on Northern Ireland's great tradition of storytelling, creating compelling offers that both attract and delight visitors which leave lasting memories.

Stories are well told through careful planning and focusing on characters, imagination and inspiration.

Embrace a Giant Spirit experiences also deliver on the brand 'awakeners' – the desires and motivations of our key visitors:

- Distinctly Northern Irish
- Innovative
- Connect with Local People
- Participatory
- Welcoming to Everyone
- Authentic
- Sustainable
- Available all year round

For more information on Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit and how to develop experiences that align with the brand values please refer to our Experience Development Toolkit [embrace-a-giant-spirit-experience-development-toolkit.pdf \(tourismni.com\)](https://www.tourismni.com/embrace-a-giant-spirit-experience-development-toolkit.pdf)

## Original

Being original lies in showcasing our ability to be forward-thinking, imaginative, creative, ambitious, hard-working – and thinking creatively to offer unique, authentic experiences.

Original Giant Spirit experiences can spotlight the pioneering inventiveness of Northern Ireland's people, its contemporary creative industries and industrial heritage.

## Land, Water & Sea

Experiences that reflect Land, Water and Sea maximise the potential of our rich natural resources, celebrate locality of provenance and apply sustainable practices.

Experiences that engage with land, water and sea are 'rooted' in the destination and connect visitors with diverse landscapes and outdoor adventures.



# What are the benefits of signing up to the Embrace a Giant Spirit: Experience Portfolio?

The Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit tourism brand enhances the unique and authentic image of Northern Ireland that we offer our visitors and creates an opportunity for us to work together to create unforgettable visitor experiences. Bringing it to life requires us to be continuously reflective, innovative and challenging of our offering and ideas.

The portfolio aims to enhance the relationship between Tourism NI and experience operators and create deeper engagement with the tourism brand; ensuring the integrity of our offer to visitors through meeting a general market-ready criteria and maintaining up to date information to best promote to our key markets.

Participation in the Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio is an opportunity for tourism business to develop their offer and use the brand characteristics to deliver what our key tourism markets are seeking when visiting Northern Ireland. Benefits of participation within the collection will vary from business to business, however key advantages include:

- Access to a range of guidance and training modules to build and expand your business, develop your experiences and confidently respond to market demand within the Northern Ireland tourism brand
- Opportunity for the Tourism NI Experience Development team to conduct a site visit to new participants to feedback on your experience within the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand characteristics
- Enhanced knowledge to grow your sales and bookings through tailored learning and development opportunities
- Enhanced confidence of delivering experiences that meet visitor expectations
- Strengthened alignment to brand-related criteria within TNI funding and development opportunities
- Priority consideration for Tourism NI marketing opportunities
- Priority consideration for Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland opportunities such as trade shows, FAM Trips and media opportunities
- Prestige and market credibility



# Eligibility Criteria:

The portfolio aims to work with established tourism experience businesses who have the ambition to promote their experiences within the context of the tourism brand. To be eligible to enter the Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio, business must meet our general portfolio criteria:

- Be a tourism business in Northern Ireland, offering visitor experience(s) that align strongly with the NI tourism brand characteristics and that have a clear USP (unique selling point)
  - Have engaged with your local authority tourism team and regional Embrace a Giant Spirit brand ambassador in addition to Tourism NI
  - Commit to sharing key performance and business metrics with Tourism Northern Ireland through the Business Hub on an annual basis
  - Have been operating as a tourism business for a minimum of one year
  - Be currently receiving visitors from international markets or actively invested in building the business to respond to these markets
  - Have a dynamic online presence with a website or experience listing where your experience(s) are advertised with booking mechanisms in place for direct bookings and/or enquiries via the travel trade network
  - Have relevant pricing structures in place for your experience(s), where required
  - Have clear contact methods such as email and telephone, maintained year round even if your experience is seasonal
  - Have an active business listing on our consumer website [www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com)
  - Have rights-free, high-resolution images to promote your business experience(s)
  - Have appropriate licensing and permissions in place where required
- Evidence of meeting this criteria will be requested during the application process. For businesses who do not meet this criteria, or for any queries please contact us via our online contact form [Contact Us | TNI \(tourismni.com\)](#)
- The Northern Ireland Embrace a Giant Spirit Portfolio is specifically for tourism experience operators and the following businesses are therefore ineligible to register:
- Local Authority or Destination Management Organisations
  - Business Start-Ups
  - Visitor Information Centres
  - Businesses which are primarily craft, hospitality or retail outlets who do not offer a participatory visitor experience
  - Tourism clusters



## Ongoing inclusion within the portfolio:

Tourism NI will annually review the Northern Ireland Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio to ensure continued integrity of the collection. To retain inclusion in the portfolio, operators must:

- Continue to sell their experience(s), as per the approved submitted and published details
- Maintain an up-to-date business listing on [www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com)
- Maintain a digital business presence all year-round, even if the experiences are seasonal. This is to ensure that travel trade, media and consumers can obtain information about the experience all year-round
- Communicate changes in their experience(s) in a timely manner to the Tourism NI Experience Development Team
- Complete an annual member survey that provides feedback and core business performance metrics for their experiences
- Participate in media or travel trade FAM trips if requested by Tourism NI or Tourism Ireland
- Use the Embrace a Giant Spirit logo in their marketing materials when promoting their experiences
- Participate in periodic Tourism NI trade webinars, information updates and trade events

## Adding new experiences to your offer:

Participation within the Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit: Experience Portfolio is structured around ensuring your tourism business is aligned with the brand and sales-ready therefore there is no requirement to re-submit an expression of interest should your business grow and develop new experiences. Should you wish to notify us of a new experience within your business, this can be done through direct communication with the Tourism NI experience development team who will provide you with a template to complete to share key information for us to share your experience with our stakeholders.



## How to apply

To apply, please complete the Northern Ireland – Embrace A Giant Spirit: Experience Portfolio expression of interest form via our website. Your expression of interest will be assessed by members of the Tourism NI experience development team and if it meets the criteria, you will be sent a further questionnaire to complete which gives us the key information we require to promote your business or experience.

Please note that to complete the application following expression of interest you will be required to sign up to Tourism NI's business portal, if you have not already done so. You can find more information on signing up to our business portal here: [Sign up with Tourism NI](#)

Remember that the answers you give help us to determine how well you meet the criteria for membership of the portfolio. Support with completing the application may be available from your local council tourism team.

## Appeals Procedure

An appeals procedure is in place for those applicants who deem the process of assessing their business for inclusion within the experience portfolio has been conducted unsatisfactorily. Further detail on the appeals procedure is available on request.



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