

# Venture capital flocks to Northern Ireland high growth firms

The amount of money invested in Northern Ireland firms by venture capital reached a record last year, according to new research.

Catalyst's annual Northern Ireland Deal Tracker showed high potential companies wooed £139 million of funding from the venture capital community, a jump of nearly one third on 2021. That was spread across 89 deals, an increase from 68 deals.

Encouragingly, more than two thirds of the funding came from sources outside Northern Ireland as the appetite for local companies continues to grow across the globe. During the year finds such as Google Ventures, Barclays, Clean Growth Fund and ExSight Ventures made investments in Northern Ireland companies.

The hike in venture capital investment comes against a backdrop of lower VC spending across the globe, Catalyst said. It added that the emergence of a number of high growth companies has proved a draw while more companies are turning to venture capital for funding over traditional sources.

The average amount invested in each deal was £1.6 million, an increase of £100,000 on the average funding round recorded in 2021. Catalyst's research also noted that there were 20 deals in the £1 million to £5 million range, 10 investments with a value of more than £5 million, and five deals worth more than £10 million.

"In light of a fall in venture capital investment in the UK market overall, the increase in venture capital investment into Northern Ireland companies is very welcome," Kieran

Dalton, Head of Scaling at Catalyst, said. “When we analyse the underlying data, we can see the cause of this increase has been the emergence of a cluster of growth companies which are redefining the aspirations for innovation companies within Northern Ireland.

“Raising venture capital investment is always a challenge, however, as more Seed companies in Northern Ireland continue to ‘graduate’ into Growth and Venture stages they can be confident that external investors are increasingly available to support their needs.”