



GREATER MANCHESTER  
**INTERNATIONAL  
STRATEGY 2022-2025**  
SUMMARY

**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

## Introduction

**In 2017, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership published a three-year internationalisation strategy outlining a long-term ambition to become a Top global City-region and playing a critical role in delivering the ambitions of the Greater Manchester Strategy.**

The strategy set out a series of international objectives against which to measure our success including our attractiveness to global audiences as a place to invest, visit and study, increasing exports, securing further direct connectivity and developing new partnerships overseas. During this three-year period, we saw an increase in international students; tourist volume and value; and foreign direct investment; and in addition secured further long-haul connectivity to Manchester Airport.

A refresh of this strategy was due in 2020 but was delayed due to the pandemic. Instead a one-year roll over International Strategy was agreed, published in-line with the Living with COVID Resilience plan in October 2020.

Despite an increasingly complex national and international landscape, Greater Manchester has seen significant economic growth in recent years, with internationalisation and our growing reputation as global city-region having been a catalyst for much of this activity. Our strong asset base, understanding of our sector strengths, clear strategy frameworks and a more coordinated and sophisticated approach to delivering activity has led to strong performance across our international priority areas.

The world is rapidly changing. Climate change requires us to look after our planet better and rethink how we do things. The pandemic has had a severe impact on key sectors whilst shaking up supply chains and accelerating the adoption of digital technology. Brexit has changed our relationship with one of our largest markets and renewed focus on engagement with others. And instability in eastern Europe has served as a reminder of the importance of international relations.

These uncertain times present the city-region with an opportunity to reflect on our experience and performance in recent years and look to identify new opportunities.

Greater Manchester has been shaped by generations of residents from all parts of the globe. We are a city-region built on a fusion of cultures, talent and creativity.

The Manchester brand is recognised globally thanks to our world-famous football clubs, our iconic music scene and international institutions such as the Manchester International Festival.

We are proud of Greater Manchester's long history of international appeal and success and want to continue building on its reputation, drawing in talent and investment and ensuring our strong sporting and cultural offer continues to draw in visitors from around the world.



## Aims

### The overarching aims of the Greater Manchester International Strategy are to:

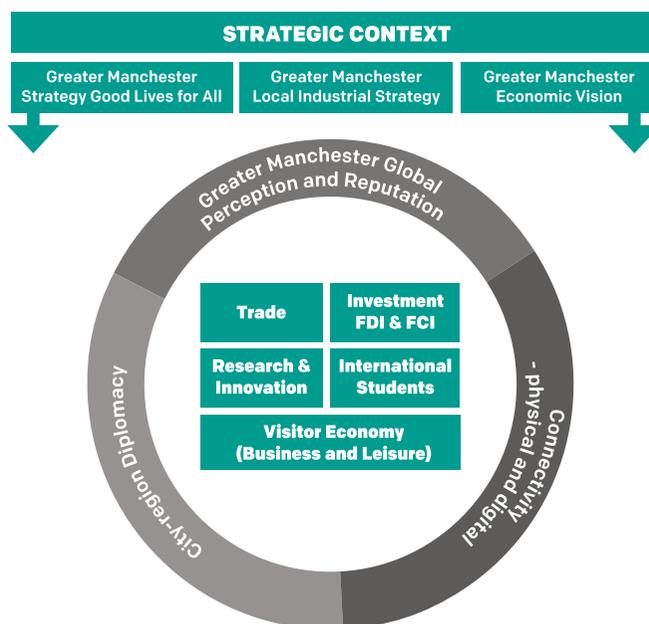
- Address the most immediate international challenges facing our city-region following the pandemic and ensure we continue to respond to any emerging opportunities and challenges following the UK's formal departure from the EU.
- Outline our international ambitions, priorities and markets under a single framework and collective narrative, highlighting the inter-connectivity of all our priorities and their links to Greater Manchester's wider strategy portfolio, ensuring our international delivery is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Highlight Greater Manchester's areas of global competitiveness, identifying clear areas where Greater Manchester can play a transformational role in supporting the UK government to deliver on Global Britain.
- Emphasise the transformational benefits of internationalisation, highlighting the ways in which it can deliver on the Greater Manchester Strategy vision of a greener, fairer and more prosperous Greater Manchester, bringing benefits to all of our residents.

## Strategic framework

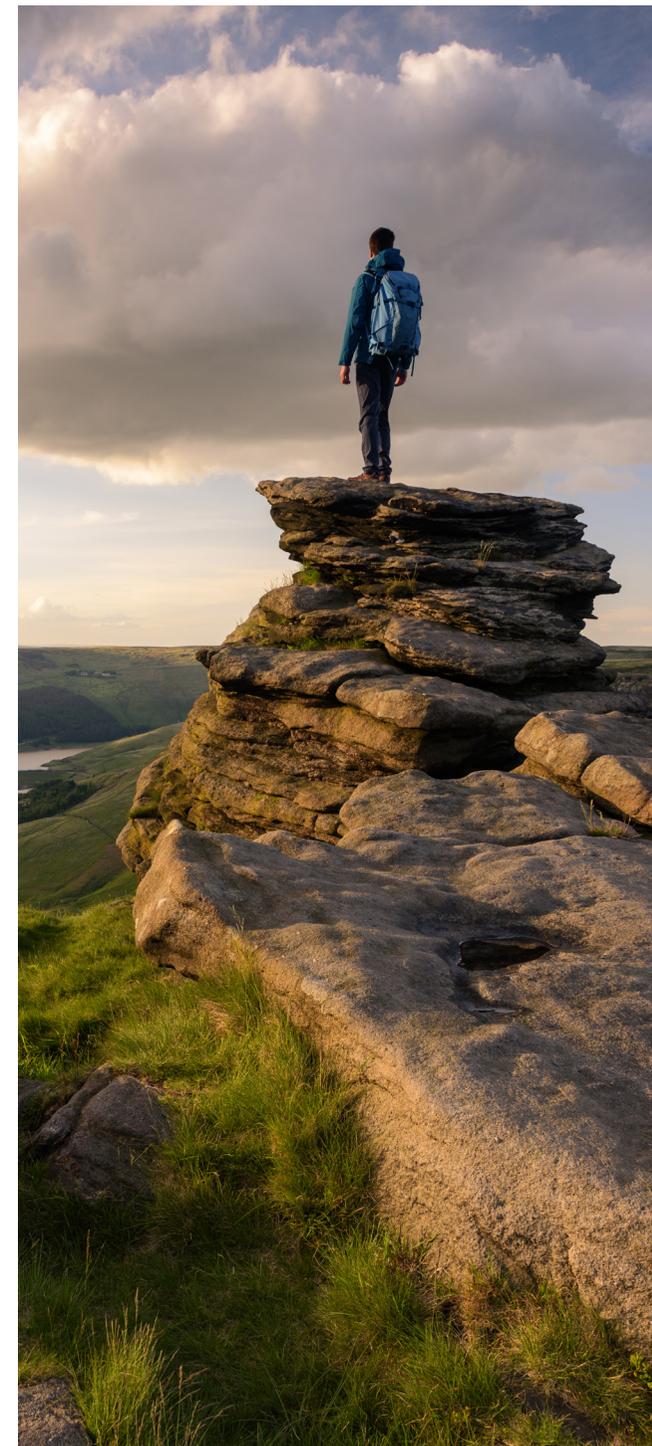
The International Strategy supports the delivery of Greater Manchester's

wider strategy portfolio including the Greater Manchester Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy.

Greater Manchester's international framework recognises the interconnectivity and mutual dependence between our international priorities. To illustrate this, priorities have been grouped under two different categories – Core Priorities and Enablers.



Core Priorities are the central blocks of internationalisation, adding economic value to the region, driving growth and creating jobs. Enablers help drive and deliver our Core Priorities, help us connect us with the world, learn from others, share our way of working and tell Greater Manchester's story well.



## Vision

To be a leading city-region in the UK and globally and an international influencer in green and digital.

Supporting Greater Manchester to become a place where everyone can live a good life, growing up, getting on and growing old in a greener, fairer and more prosperous city-region.

## Shared ambitions

Raise the profile of Greater Manchester as a welcoming, vibrant and diverse city-region with a strong cultural, sport and place offer, continuing the work to make our city-region a great place to visit, invest and study.

Work with partners nationally and internationally to leverage the benefits of internationalisation and deliver on our economic vision by increasing trade, attracting foreign direct investment, and fostering cross-border international partnerships to support the creation of better jobs and good employment to build a more prosperous, fairer and globally competitive city-region.

Position Greater Manchester at the heart of the UK's global competitiveness and forefront

of innovation with world-leading strengths in Digital/Cyber, Health Innovation, Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, and Clean Growth Technology, driving investment in these sectors and improving our ability to turn research into solutions that are shared with the world.

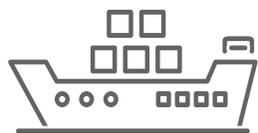
Work with partners across the world to achieve our carbon neutrality by 2038, helping to accelerate the UK's and global transition to net zero by sharing our expertise, learning from others, and working with the world's most innovative companies.

## Delivered by

We will work with our delivery partners and wider stakeholder ecosystem at home and overseas to deliver on our economic priorities and raise our profile internationally. Partners include the GM local authorities, the Growth Company including MIDAS, Marketing Manchester and the Business Growth Hub, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, The Department for International Trade, The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, The British Council, Manchester Airport, our Universities, the British Council, Foreign Diplomatic Missions, and many others.



## Core Priorities



### TRADE

**In 2019 Greater Manchester exported £6.6bn worth of goods and £8.8bn worth of services, equating to approximately 18% of our total GDP.**

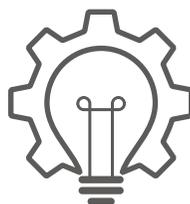
Nationally our export performance is below average (18% of GDP – UK average is 30%). Growth in exports is central to improving productivity and ensuring the benefits of internationalisation are felt across the city-region. Greater Manchester aims to increase our goods and service exporters, working closely with DIT and other local stakeholders such as The Growth Company, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, business organisations and academic institutions.



### INVESTMENT (FDI & FCI)

**Foreign owned companies are worth a total of £37billion to Greater Manchester's economy, employing approximately 172,000 people.**

Greater Manchester aims to continue attracting the most innovative and ambitious investors from around the world, creating high value job opportunities for our residents, enabling us to deliver our economic vision. We will do this by promoting our sector offering, working closely with Department for International Trade, the new Office for Investment, as well as key intermediaries across the public and private sector.



### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Innovation has always been at the heart of Greater Manchester, with the city-region boasting an impressive history of "world firsts" and today recognised as the UK's Top Digital Tech City .**

Our ambition is for Greater Manchester to be recognised as an international leader in research and innovation, with strengths in Digital/Cyber, Health Innovation, Advanced Materials and Manufacturing and Low Carbon, a place where the economic benefits of innovation are felt across the conurbation and our ideas are turned into solutions that are shared with the world, helping to address some of society's greatest global challenges.



### VISITOR ECONOMY (BUSINESS AND LEISURE)

**In 2019, tourism contributed £9bn to Greater Manchester's economy, sustaining over 101,000 jobs. Conferences alone contributed a spend of £862m.**

Our ambition is for Greater Manchester to be a world class visitor hub for business and leisure tourism, continuing to sustainably increase the value and volume of visitors to the city-region and ensuring that the economic impact and benefits of tourism are felt across the whole of Greater Manchester.



### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

**Greater Manchester has the largest international student population outside of London with over 21,000 international students from more than 160 different countries.**

Our ambition is to increase the number of international students in Greater Manchester at our universities, whilst ensuring we continue to expand the diversity of our international student base.

## Enabling priorities



### CONNECTIVITY

Physical connectivity via Manchester Airport is a key for delivering our core international priorities. The pandemic has had a devastating impact on long-haul connectivity and we must work with Manchester Airport to reinstate these lost routes. We recognise the significant net zero challenge facing the aviation industry and are committed to working closely with Manchester Airport as they work towards full net-zero operations by 2038.

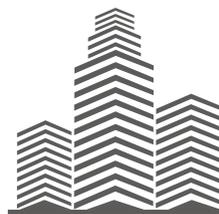
Digital connectivity has diminished geographical borders, enabling us to collaborate more innovatively and effectively with international partners. We will continue to increase our online international activity to drive our core priorities and amplify our voice on key policy areas.



### MARKETING AND PERCEPTION

Greater Manchester has successfully continued to communicate its story to the world, making strides to increase its rankings in a range of global indices. We regularly outrank large competitor regions, joining capital cities in global indices.

We will continue to invest in our international marketing campaigns and branding, ensuring we deliver on our ambition to remain a globally recognised and competitive international city-region.



### CITY-REGION DIPLOMACY

Greater Manchester is recognised as a key diplomatic hub in the north of England, hosting a total of 15 foreign diplomatic missions and has strategic partnerships with city-regions in Europe, China, South Asia, Japan, and the USA.

City-region Diplomacy is a powerful enabler for our International Strategy, facilitating engagement on the global stage on agendas that are important to us, strengthening links with other global cities and supporting the delivery of our core international ambitions. Our aim is to further strengthen and develop these relationships to deliver on our international priorities and wider policy ambitions.



**GMCA** GREATER MANCHESTER  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Visit: [greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/international](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/international)