

Global Cities CAN B Initiative Selects Edinburgh as Winning Applicant

Edinburgh has been announced as one of four cities to join the prestigious Global Cities CAN B programme after an intensive selection process, making the capital the first city in the UK to join.

Alongside Barcelona in Spain, Cordoba in Argentina and Asuncion in Paraguay, Edinburgh now joins a global movement of cities working to be increasingly more sustainable, prosperous, inclusive and resilient. Cities in the programme look to address the challenges laid down in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by making significant progress towards their ambitious targets for 2030.

Together they look to cultivate collaborative networks locally and globally, engaging the private sector in the city's challenges, whilst harnessing its entrepreneurial and innovative potential. They are supported by the wider Cities CAN B movement, which is on hand to offer both practical support and advice.

14 cities applied for the programme on this occasion, with four being successful. Existing cities in the programme include Mendoza, Rio de Janeiro and Santiago. Edinburgh's bid saw a number of leading entities in the city work together to submit the successful application, led by the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (ECC).

In submitting the bid, ECC worked in collaboration with partners from across the city including Scotland CAN B, the SDG Network Scotland, B Lab UK and Edinburgh Napier

University, and hosted a kick-off event attended by over 40 organisations. This engagement activity will increase as the CAN B movement in the city gathers pace.

Commenting, Ewan Aitken, Chair of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Inspiring Communities group and CEO of Cyrenians, said: "Scotland was one of the first nations to adopt the SDGs into its own National Performance Framework, so as one of the key drivers of our country's economic growth, Edinburgh has to lead by example. We now have a fantastic opportunity to take a globally recognised model of better sustainability and implement it here.

"For too long, we have divided different sectors into silos, with the end result being that the private sector, public sector and third sector compete against each other, rather than collaborating and becoming more than the sum of their parts. Now we can change that.

"Edinburgh is already a great place to live and work and Cities CAN B is a great opportunity for us to make it even better."

Commenting, Jane Clark-Hutchison, President of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, said: "We are all increasingly aware of the need to adopt more sustainable practices to meet the challenges of the 21st century, which is why the SDGs laid out in 2015 were so welcome.

"The next stage was to work out the practical steps and actions that we can take to meet such ambitious, yet necessary, goals.

"Cities CAN B is an outstanding, forward-looking programme that drives this agenda forward and we at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce are delighted that our city has been selected for inclusion. We want to make Edinburgh the best place to do business and a truly socially inclusive city.

“We will now look to bring together communities and businesses across Edinburgh to turn these ambitions into reality.”

Depute Council Leader Cammy Day said: “It’s fantastic news that Edinburgh’s trailblazing sustainability approach and ambition for the city to be carbon neutral by 2030 has resulted in Edinburgh becoming the first UK city to be selected to join the Global Cities CAN B programme.

“This prestigious global sustainability programme will support city partners’ work with fellow members worldwide, so that we can achieve more socially inclusive, sustainable, prosperous and resilient cities for future generations.”