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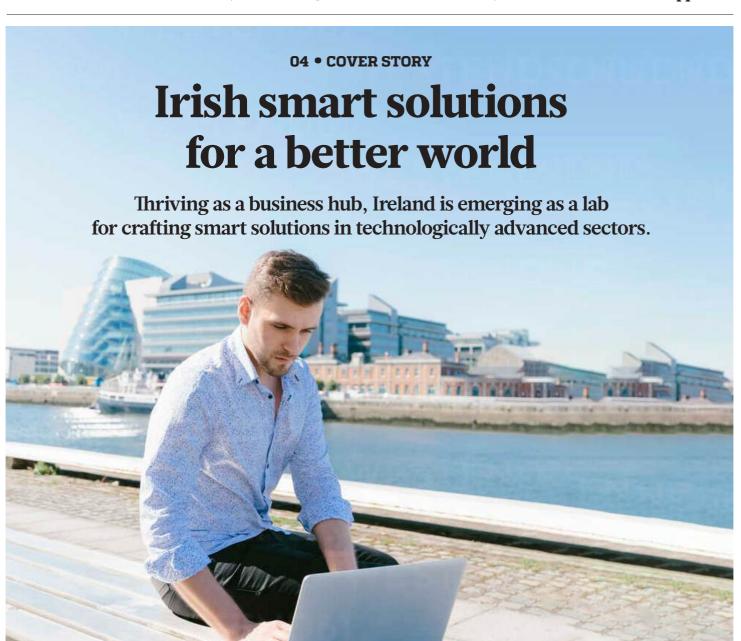
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has a strong
entrepreneurial
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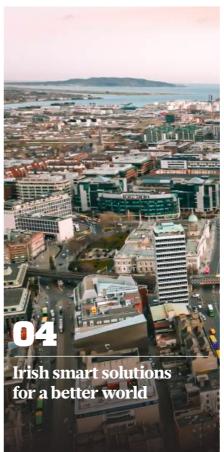
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Future-focused approach to education elevates Ireland's international appeal



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Director of Publication: CAROLINE VIEIRA LIMA Editor: PEDRO AMARAL Sub-editor: IVANA POPCHEV 4 | IRELAND

By CAROLINE VIEIRA LIMA

caroline@the-businessreport.com

mid an era of remarkable technological advancements, the Emerald Isle is igniting big ideas, transforming industries, and shaping the future of global innovation. Ireland has established itself as a beacon of progress, positioning itself as a global leader in technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing.

Bolstered by an open economy, supportive government policies, and a skilled workforce, the country offers a vibrant environment for research, development, and entrepreneurial growth. The Irish government plays a crucial role in fostering innovation through policy and funding. Programs like Enterprise Ireland, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), and Impact 2030, the national R&D strategy, provide financial support and resources to encourage startups, scale-ups, and established companies to invest in innovation. "Investing in Ireland is investing in Europe," says Oliver O'Connor, CEO of the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (IPHA), placing emphasis on the crucial role that the pro-business and pro-innovation government plays in bolstering growth in all industries.

Aligning research and industry

In recent years, Ireland's innovation ecosystem has expanded significantly, attracting multinational companies, fostering local startups, and leading groundbreaking research projects that contribute to solving some of the world's most pressing challenges. Companies such as Google, Facebook, and Novartis, have set up significant operations in Ireland, contributing to the country's status as a European tech hub.

These companies bring capital, knowledge, and employment opportunities, as well as initiatives that drive local R&D activities. The clustering of these global giants, particularly in the "Silicon"



Irish smart solutions for a better world

Thriving as a business hub, Ireland is emerging as a lab for crafting smart solutions in technologically advanced sectors such as biopharma and MedTech.

Docks" area of Dublin, has created a dynamic network effect, spurring the growth of tech-focused small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and innovative startups that thrive alongside these industry leaders.

A remarkable 14 of the top 15 global biopharma companies have operations in Ireland.

As part of the government's forward-looking policies, the Impact 2030 strategy fosters strong connections between academia, enterprise, and public policy, driving progress in technology and digital transformation.

A global leader in medical innovation

As a powerhouse of research, innovation, and manufacturing, Ireland is recognized as one of the world's top five MedTech hubs. More importantly, the country already hosts the largest global pharmaceutical firms, alongside a burgeoning group of local companies dedicated to cutting-edge healthcare solutions.

"It's remarkable that 14 of the top 15 global biopharma companies have operations in Ireland," remarks Caitriona Walsh, Country President of Novartis Ireland. This achievement is even more striking given Ireland's population of just over five million people. Global pharmaceutical giants

have long integrated Ireland into their international supply chains. Swiss-based Novartis, one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, has consistently invested in Ireland for the past seven decades. "Our global corporate center in Dublin's Elm Park supports Novartis operations worldwide, and we employ around 1,000 people in Ireland," notes Walsh, highlighting the company's commitment to the Irish healthcare sector. The Dublin corporate center provides a range of services, positioned strategically between Novartis' headquarters in Switzerland and its major US operations.

just over five million people. Ireland's strong healthcare sector Global pharmaceutical giants is supported by a network of

IRELAND IN NUMBERS

1st

country in the eurozone in international competitiveness

Source: Institute of Management Developmen (IMD) World Competitiveness Yearbook 2024



nd country globally in healthcare innovation

Source: World Index of Healthcare Innovation



rd freest economy in the world

Source: Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom 2024



richest country in the world based on GDP per capita (PPP)

Source: World Economic Outlook 2024

best country in the world for higher education

Source: The Campus Advisor 2024 report

leading research institutions and universities. Organizations such as Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Irish MedTech Association offer funding and facilitate research partnerships, allowing companies to push the boundaries of healthcare.

"Novartis collaborates with Irish universities and research institutes on advancements in areas like oncology, immunology, and gene therapy," Walsh adds, citing partnerships with University College Dublin, University of Galway, and Trinity College Dublin.

Ireland's emphasis on innovation and product development has been instrumental in the health-care sector's success. Research and development (R&D) fuels the healthcare industry, leading to advancements that improve patient care, enhance efficiency, and lower costs.

Novartis Ireland's R&D efforts span diverse areas, from drug and medical device development to cutting-edge cancer therapies and advanced diagnostics. "Dublin's unique ecosystem, combining a strong pharma and tech industry, enables us to attract top talent and drive innovation," Walsh states.

The future of Ireland's life sciences sector lies in digital health and artificial intelligence, with companies integrating these technologies to create smarter, more efficient medical solutions. The Novartis Global Service Center in Dublin serves as a "leading digital science hub," says Walsh, adding that it generates economic impact through highly skilled employment.

"Ireland offers a highly educated workforce, and we find excellent talent locally. We also attract international talent, drawn by the opportunities here," she emphasizes. Oliver O'Connor of IPHA agrees, noting that continued investment in education and skills is fundamental to Ireland's global positioning as a healthcare innovation leader.



CAITRIONA WALSH

Managing Director, Innovative Medicines & Country President, Novartis Ireland

"Novartis is deeply invested in local innovation"

By IVANA POPCHEV

ivana@the-businessreport.com

What are the main focus areas and key initiatives at Novartis Ireland?

Novartis prioritizes five therapy areas—oncology, cardio-vascular, immunology, neuroscience, and hematology—supported by three key platforms: new drug development, cell and gene therapy, and radioligand therapy. The company pioneered CAR T-cell therapy and is advancing radioligand therapies in oncology. In Dublin, teams oversee global clinical trials and manage complex logistics to ensure timely patient access. Novartis also emphasizes digital integration in healthcare, as exemplified by the LEAP patient support program.

What lessons can we learn from Novartis as a successful FDI case study in Ireland?

Ireland has evolved from a manufacturing center to a leader in value-added life sciences, largely because of a comprehensive strategy that spans research to patient access. Sustained government backing for innovation and business-friendly policies are vital for maintaining Ireland's competitive advantage. Novartis leverages local partnerships and the dynamic ecosystem to ensure a thriving and sustainable future for Ireland's pharmaceutical sector.

How engaged is Novartis Ireland with the local healthcare ecosystem?

Novartis is deeply invested in local innovation, collaborating with Irish companies such as LetsGetChecked and HealthBeacon and partnering with academic initiatives like the FutureNeuro program. These efforts drive global impact while supporting employee health, sustainability, and economic growth in Ireland. For example, our partnership with HealthBeacon has achieved energy savings equivalent to making over five million cups of tea, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability.

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"Monaghan has a strong entrepreneurial tradition"

By IVANA POPCHEV

ivana@the-businessreport.com

Monaghan, a county in the historic province of Ulster, strategically positioned near Dublin, Belfast, and Derry, boasts a rich entrepreneurial tradition and offers access to a talent pool of half a million people within a 40-minute drive. A major recent development in the county is the €22 million, 80,000-square-foot Peace Campus, an EU-funded initiative focused on peace and reconciliation. Robert Burns, Chief Executive of Monaghan County Council, discusses the county's competitive edge and international draw.

What makes Monaghan competitive within Ireland and internationally?

Monaghan's strong entrepreneurial culture supports indige-

of the population self-employed. Successful local businesses, such as CombiLift-a material handling company employing over 800 people and exporting to 75 countries-highlight our global presence, exporting US\$1 million worth of goods to the United States daily. Monaghan also attracts foreign direct investment (FDI) due to affordable housing-60% cheaper than Dublinand a skilled workforce within easy reach. Our strategic location near Northern Ireland gives access to two markets, strengthening cross-border supply chains, particularly in food and engineering sectors.

nous economic growth, with 22%

Where do you see the best fit for US investment in Monaghan?

Food, engineering, and manufacturing present key opportunities

for US investment. Monaghan's bioeconomy sector, bolstered by the soon-to-open BioConnect, a biotechnology R&D facility, offers a comprehensive ecosystem for startups, from research to large-scale production. The Ballybay Food Hub and Lough Egish's 60-acre food park provide robust support for companies at every stage. Other areas of interest include modular construction. Volumetric Building Companies, a major US firm, established its European Center of Excellence here. leveraging Monaghan's strengths and contributing to local housing and community projects. The growing demand for affordable housing aligns with their expertise, making Monaghan an ideal operational base.

We're developing a tourism and economic strategy to attract North American visitors and investment. Unlike tourism-dependent areas, Monaghan's strong manufacturing and logistics sectors allow us to focus on quality tourism experiences, such as walking and cycling in natural landscapes. Strengthening ties with the Irish diaspora, particularly in North America and the UK, remains central to our international outreach.

How does the Peace Campus project impact Ireland?

The Peace Campus focuses on peace and reconciliation. It commemorates Monaghan's rich and varied history, including the Troubles, and promotes unity among a diverse community, with over 10% of residents born outside Monaghan and Ireland. The campus, housing the County Museum and peace-building organizations like Cooperation Ireland and offering various community programs, fosters cultural understanding and reconciliation. We're also partnering with Project Children, a US-based charity offering respite to Northern Irish children during the Troubles. The Peace Campus will preserve their archives and celebrate the program's 50th anniversary, drawing thousands of US visitors with strong Irish ties.

By PEDRO AMARAL

pedro@the-businessreport.com

reland's outstanding food, drink, and horticultural produce are an integral part of its cultural appeal, and Bord Bia's mission is to bring them to the world. "The food and drink sector in Ireland is very heavily export-focused," explains Jim O'Toole, CEO of Bord Bia, Ireland's food board. "Our domestic population is small – just about five million people. With our climate and agricultural heritage, we produce multiples of what the domestic market can absorb."

This export-driven ethos has paid off handsomely, with Irish agrifood exports surpassing €16 billion for a second consecutive year in 2023. "We export to 180 different countries," O'Toole says. "It's remarkable when you consider that reach – whether in retail, food service, or as a manufacturing ingredient." This expansive footprint underscores Ireland's ability to maintain a resilient global presence despite economic turbulence and rising inflation.

Building 'Brand Ireland' with iconic products Irish brands like Kerrygold,

Jameson, and Baileys carry not just market value but also cultural clout, symbolizing the country's dedication to quality. "These brands are the flag bearers of our food and drink industry," says O'Toole. "They showcase the positive attributes of Irish agriculture-our clean, quality-driven production systems, family-run farms, and grass-fed agricultural practices." Kerrygold, with its premium butter derived from grass-fed cows, exemplifies these values and enjoys strong demand in the United States.

Irish whiskey, led by Jameson, tells a similar success story. Resurgence in distilling has fueled growth, with over 40 distilleries now operating across the island. "The consumers we target value provenance, the story behind the product, and high-quality ingredients," O'Toole notes. He further



Bord Bia's quality drive boosts Irish agrifood's global success

Renowned for its sustainable practices, the Irish agri-food boasts a deep-rooted heritage that connects tradition with innovation.

highlights how leading global brands have cultivated a cooperative spirit within the industry, where seasoned producers assist newcomers in navigating international markets. "The Irish food and drink sector thrives on this unique camaraderie, with brand owners sharing their expertise to elevate the entire sector."

Leading in sustainability with 'Origin Green'

Sustainability sits at the core of Bord Bia's mission, evident in initiatives like Origin Green and Food Vision 2030, the Irish government's strategy for being a world leader in sustainable food systems.

Origin Green, launched over 12 years ago, is the world's first national sustainability program for food and drink. O'Toole describes

it as a collaborative effort, uniting farmers, government bodies, and academic institutions.

With 61,000 farms and 300 man-

ufacturing companies engaged, Origin Green showcases practical, measurable sustainability. "Each week, approximately 800 audits are conducted on Irish farms," O'Toole points out. "This data-driven approach allows us to demonstrate progress on climate action, environmental performance, food safety, and biodiversity." This rigor has drawn international attention, with other countries and industries seeking to emulate Ireland's success. "The secret sauce of Origin Green is collaboration," he adds. "It's a shared ambition, with every stakeholder contributing resources toward a higher common

Making inroads in the US Market

For Ireland, the US is a critical market with strong demand for its premium dairy and drinks. "We've seen impressive strides with branded dairy products, especially Kerrygold," O'Toole says, noting the introduction of a grass-fed dairy standard specifically for the US to bolster transparency and appeal. Irish drinks have also flourished, with the US accounting for a substantial share of Irish beverage exports.

Bord Bia supports Irish brands' success in the US through targeted programs, such as a marketing fellowship initiative and the Origin Green Ambassador program. "We place professionals in the US market to help Irish companies capitalize on opportunities," O'Toole explains. "Our Origin Green Ambassadors also collaborate with major US firms, sharing Ireland's sustainability narrative while gaining valuable insights."

Investing in technology for future growth

Looking ahead, O'Toole sees technology as pivotal for Irish agrifood's continued evolution. "Technology is reshaping how every sector engages with consumers," he states. Digital tools are transforming marketing efforts, enabling companies to tailor messages for specific audiences. "We're working with businesses to integrate more digital resources," O'Toole notes, predicting that digital innovation will remain a major focus for the industry.

With iconic brands leading the way, a pioneering stance on sustainability, and an embrace of technological advancements, Irish exports are poised to capture even greater global attention. As O'Toole puts it, "It's about more than selling products; it's about representing Ireland, our values, and our unwavering commitment to quality."

Dairy from Ireland

Our country on the edge of Europe, with its lush, green fields, fresh, clean air and plentiful rain is the perfect environment for rearing grass-fed cows.

Together with an agile industry that responds speedily to changing production requirements, we're able to ensure a consistent, secure supply of premium quality dairy produce.



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By CAROLINE VIEIRA LIMA

caroline@the-businessreport.com

reland's higher education landscape is experiencing significant advancements, driven by a commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability. From fostering global partnerships to enhancing research and infrastructure, Irish universities have embraced a future-focused approach to education. At the forefront of setting new benchmarks in higher education is Ireland's largest and most influential university, University College Dublin (UCD).

Reflecting on what makes Ireland an influential force internationally, Professor Orla Feely, President of UCD, attributes much of its soft power to the global network of talented individuals shaped by Ireland's education system. "As a small island on Europe's edge, Ireland's greatest resource has always been talented people who have contributed both at home and across the globe," she underscores. "This global network is a significant source of Ireland's soft power."

Expanding international partnerships

Irish universities are increasingly leveraging global partnerships to strenghten their educational offerings, and UCD is exemplary in this regard. Recognized for its robust international presence, UCD has forged partnerships with prestigious institutions worldwide, including ties with US universities such as Northeastern University and UC Davis, highlighting the strong academic ties between the two countries.

UCD's emphasis on internationalization not only enhances its global footprint but also offers students a uniquely interconnected educational experience. "Our US alumni network is a tremendous asset," Professor Feely notes, adding that strengthening these relationships is a key priority.

Additionally, UCD has established collaborations with leading



Future-focused approach to education elevates Ireland's international appeal

UCD's achievements not only contribute to the advancement of Irish higher education but also position it as a significant player on the global stage.

multinationals headquartered in Ireland and with Irish companies that have significant overseas operations, focusing on areas like technology, healthcare, and data science. These alliances provide students and faculty with access to industry expertise, real-world applications of research, and opportunities to impact areas critical to Ireland's economy.

Advancements in research and innovation

UCD has consistently prioritized research excellence, as evidenced by its high-ranking research programs across disciplines. With initiatives in artificial intelli-

gence, climate science, and digital health, UCD's researchers are contributing to solutions for global challenges. Investments in infrastructure, such as the O'Brien Centre for Science and the UCD Energy Institute, underscore the university's commitment to research-intensive education. These facilities provide state-of-the-art resources that enhance the quality of research and offer students hands-on experience in cutting-edge environments.

Under UCD's ambitious Strategy to 2030: Breaking Boundaries, the university is consolidating its reputation as a global institution with

a mission to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges. "UCD has long been outward-looking, with a history of global influence," Professor Feely remarks. "As we educate students for a disruptive century, we must consider how to integrate AI, foster community, and provide an education that prepares students for the workforce well into the second half of this century."

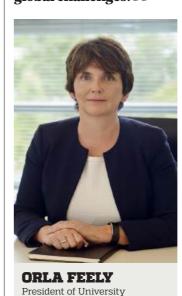
The strategy will expand student opportunities, lifelong learning, and impactful research in AI, sustainability, and policy. UCD will enhance cultural facilities, cut carbon emissions by 51% by

2030, and strengthen global and industry partnerships, aiming to lead innovation, sustainability, and societal impact by its 175th anniversary.

Addressing global challenges

Sustainability is a cornerstone of UCD's mission, aligning with Ireland's national goals to promote environmental consciousness and address climate change. UCD has made substantial strides towards sustainability through initiatives aimed at reducing its carbon footprint, including sustainable energy systems, green building practices, and biodiversity projects, making UCD a model of sustainable practices in Irish higher education.

"Our work on wind energy has been transformative, contributing significantly to Ireland's success in integrating renewable energy onto the grid," Professor Feely says. She highlights UCD's educate young minds, produce innovative companies, and tackle global challenges. JJ



College Dublin

leadership in projects like a zero-carbon farm in County Cork and its contributions to sustainable food systems and clean agriculture.

Beyond Ireland, UCD's collaboration with Ethiopia exemplifies its commitment to shared global challenges. "We're learning so much from each other in regions like Africa. These partnerships are built on mutual respect and genuine collaboration," she adds. In addition to environmental sustainability, UCD is committed to social responsibility and inclusivity. The university's efforts to make education accessible to a diverse student body are reflected in initiatives that support underrepresented groups, improve accessibility for students with disabilities, and promote gender equality. While STEM fields are crucial for addressing global challenges, Professor Feely stresses the equal importance of the humanities. "UCD, the university of James Joyce, has a rich tradition in the humanities," she says. "In this AI-driven era, the intersection of creativity and technology is where some of the most exciting developments are happening."

Focus on the future

In an era where higher education is a key driver of national progress, UCD's efforts are instrumental in preparing Ireland's next generation of leaders, thinkers, and innovators.

"I want UCD to be recognized as a university that makes great things happen, delivers research solutions, and excites people around the world. Our mission is to educate young minds, produce innovative companies, and tackle global challenges. I want our university to be a name that inspires," Professor Feely concludes.



University College Dublin

A world-leading research intensive university for a modern Ireland







"Employee wellbeing is central to our culture"

By PEDRO AMARAL

pedro@the-business report.com

Dornan Engineering, a leader in delivering complex mechanical, electrical, and HVAC solutions to blue-chip clients across Ireland, the UK, Europe, and the Nordics, is entering a transformative phase. Recently acquired by Turner Construction, North America's largest building contractor with €17 billion in annual revenue, Dornan is poised to enhance its services and leverage complementary strengths to meet evolving client needs in sectors such as biopharma and data centers. Committed to being an employer of choice, Dornan fosters a culture of excellence and innovation among its 1,000 employees. Micheál O'Connor, Group Managing Director, discusses the company's trajectory and leadership position in Ireland and Europe.

How does Dornan Engineering reflect Ireland's global competitiveness?

Dornan Engineering specializes in mechanical and electrical contracting, primarily serving the data center and life sciences sectors. Ireland, a hub for the pharmaceutical industry since the 1960s, has fostered a deep pool of expertise that helped Dornan grow alongside it. For decades, pharma was our foundation. The rise of data centers provided a natural extension of our skill set. During the late-2000s recession, we expanded internationally, delivering projects across the UK and Europe by following a simple principle: follow the client. Today, 90% of our business is repeat work with blue-chip clients like Novo Nordisk. Our focus on exceptional service and trust ensures that when clients relocate or expand, we meet their needs wherever they go.

What advantages will the Turner acquisition bring to Dornan Engineering and its clients?

This partnership combines the best of both worlds: Dornan retains its identity and expertise while gaining access to the resources of a global powerhouse. It creates a significant business scale in Europe, enabling us to deliver an expanded portfolio of work and a broader range of services. For clients, this means enhanced capacity to meet growing demands, especially in data centers, green technologies, and semiconductors.

Turner shares our people-centric values, emphasizing safety and quality. The acquisition offers our employees greater career prospects and opportunities to work on groundbreaking projects in life sciences, data centers, green technologies, and battery development. We actively recruit individuals eager to work in Ireland or Europe, offering career growth in a company committed to delivering innovative solutions for global clients.

GG We offer career growth in a company committed to delivering innovative solutions for global clients. 33

How does Dornan look after its employees?

Employee wellbeing is at the heart of our culture. During COVID, we launched a robust virtual wellness program to keep staff active and connected. Internal surveys reveal that over 75% of employees feel safe discussing mental health issues—a testament to our efforts.

On diversity, we invest in STEM education to encourage more women to pursue careers in engineering and construction. We aim to improve gender balance by widening our recruitment pool and fostering inclusivity. Actively

hiring across engineering, construction, quality, and planning, we remain dedicated to providing an optimal work environment.

Why do clients stay loyal to Dornan?

Several factors set us apart. Ireland's legacy in pharma provides a unique skills base, but our operational model is equally important. Our flat, autonomous leadership structure enables quick decision-making and agility in seizing opportunities.

Client trust is paramount in a model that relies on repeat business. We invest significantly in innovation, including an offsite manufacturing facility that enhances efficiency and quality. Our commitment to safety, quality, and engineering excellence ensures clients' stringent standards are consistently met.

What are some of your recent projects and future expansion plans?

For a major life sciences client in County Meath, we executed their largest vendor package, combining mechanical, electrical, and engineering services. Offsite manufacturing delivered 380 prefabricated assets, reducing timelines and increasing efficiency.

The client described the project as a benchmark in speed and success. In the data center sector, we've expanded to include general contracting. For a leading client in Belgium, we managed mechanical and electrical work alongside flooring, partitions, and finishes. This adaptability strengthens relationships and meets evolving client needs.

Geographically, data center technology improvements enable expansion into Southern Europe, including Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Sectorally, we anticipate growth in green technologies like hydrogen and green steel, and battery and semiconductor manufacturing. These align with our expertise, and we're excited to support emerging industries.







Build the Future With Dornan

At Dornan Engineering, we don't just build world-class projects—we build world-class careers. Voted #1 Best Place to Work in 2023 and 2024, Dornan's commitment to employee well-being and a diverse, inclusive workplace is at the heart of our success. As we join forces with Turner Construction Company, we keep expanding globally, offering exciting opportunities for engineers, planners, and professionals across the industry. If you're ready to shape the future and work with the best, join us at Dornan and be part of something extraordinary.