

HATS impact report 2021/2022

Addressing talent attraction and retention through collaboration

The HATS network is committed to working closely with employers, education, government and delivery partners to transform perceptions of the hospitality and tourism industry and to attract, retain and develop talented people with the skills it needs both now and in the future.

This year, as industry continues to build back from the impact of the pandemic, employers have been facing fresh challenges. Supply chain issues, surging inflation and labour shortages have created a series of new disruptions for businesses.

We have been supporting employers to tackle the challenge of staff shortages and retention head on. Building on the momentum gained over the past two years through the network, we have maximised our partnerships to secure support for skills and professional development, a campaign to attract recruits to the industry, and sharing best practices. Our focus firmly remains on helping to grow a future talent pipeline and an industry reputation as a place that people of all ages aspire to work in.

Our ambition

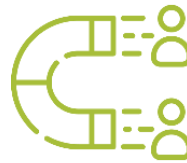


“We are united in our ambition to ensure the tourism sector is able to access the skills it needs to achieve its growth potential and to transform the image of the industry once and for all. The prize is substantial: a thriving hospitality and tourism sector with a motivated and talented workforce that will sustain all our businesses in the long-term and ensure we maximise our contribution to the future prosperity of the Northern Ireland economy.”

Ciaran O'Neill Chairman, HATS network

Our objectives

ATTRACT



Improve the awareness and attractiveness of the hospitality & tourism sector & the range of career opportunities

RETAIN



Raise employer awareness of available skills support and increase retention of people working in the industry

ENGAGE



Support collaborative delivery of skills and careers strategies and activities across key stakeholders aligned to employer demand

ATTRACT

A guide to hospitality apprenticeships

Pathways to a rewarding career in hospitality



Our new **Hospitality Apprenticeship Guide** has helped to promote apprenticeship pathways and inspire young people to actively consider apprenticeships as a viable entry route and career option. Featuring a range of successful apprentice stories, the guide signposts directly to employers offering apprenticeship opportunities.



We facilitated a **sector collaboration to showcase hospitality and tourism careers** at the School Summit NI on 3 and 4 October at the EIKON Centre which helped inspire potential future talent to consider a career in the industry. Industry partners including Galgorm Collection, Titanic Belfast, Beannchor Group, Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Fitzwilliam Hotel Belfast, W5, Hastings Hotels, National Museums NI joined HATS at the event, along with Tourism Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Hotels Federation and Springboard.



We partnered with Tourism NI to support the implementation of a 12-week high reach **multi-channel sector recruitment and awareness campaign** which responded to sector need to attract new talent and tackle staffing challenges.



The **Pilot Housekeeping Academy** we secured delivery support for, in partnership with Belfast Labour Market Partnership and the NI Hotels Federation, has prepared jobseekers to secure employment opportunities with participating hotels.



We have helped profile the breadth of opportunities available and inspire jobseekers to actively consider a career in the industry through **28 career testimonial videos**. The videos showcase a variety of opportunities from housekeeping and kitchen roles through to visitor servicing and events.



The **sector insight events** we delivered with the Department for Communities and School Employer Connections reached 185 work-coaches and 170 students across 9 schools and helped to challenge perceptions and promote the industry as a great place to work.



We supported the development of a **Sector Occupational Bulletin** with the NI Careers Service which has ensured information on the sector is available to the careers advisory network and schools. The bulletin shares insights from those working in the industry as well as information on the variety of entry routes.



Over **100 employers signed up to 'Our Hospitality & Tourism Commitment'** to change perceptions and commit industry to work together and pledge to being an 'employer of choice', providing good quality training, work-life balance and support to their people.



The **Employer Guide to Recruitment Support** we developed in 2021 has been updated with the latest information helping sector businesses to access a range of support programmes and services to recruit the right talent.

RETAIN



Our 8-episode on-demand [Recruitment & Retention Webinar Series](#) featuring industry experts sharing best practices in recruitment and retention provided employers with insights, tips and advice on approaches to help attract, retain and engage their workforce.

We secured funding that has enabled eighteen ambitious team leaders and supervisors to successfully complete a transformative **management and leadership programme**, providing new skills, insights, tools and techniques to empower participants to get the best performance from their team.

Our [Employer Guide to Skills Funding Support](#) was updated to highlight the current range of available skills support for hospitality and tourism businesses to retain talent and develop the skills needed for the future.



Through our **'What Matters' employee retention survey** which received over 170 responses from employees across the sector, we revealed the top areas for employers to focus on to retain talent. The findings we published also shared best practices in recruitment and retention.



The **best practice** we've shared at **partner events** has helped explore skills challenges and provide inspiration on what employers can do differently to attract and retain talent and make hospitality a great place to work.

ENGAGE



We've **strengthened our stakeholder engagement** across a wide range of delivery partners, including local labour market partnerships to profile sector skills challenges which has informed their activities and delivery plans and aligned them to sector needs.



We have **presented the sector's skills challenges and solutions** to the Department for Economy Minister in conjunction with the NI Tourism Alliance to help further leverage demand-led skills solutions.



We **leveraged additional funding support** for a programme of activity to support the attract campaign which helped us to promote the industry as a great place to work at a series of events where we engaged future talent, influencers and careers advisors.



Our **active participation in government advisory forums** has helped influence and inform skills policy, funding and interventions to support the sector's skills needs in the short, medium and long term.

Looking ahead

Our focus for 2023 will be progressing partnerships across industry, government and education to drive greater impact and deliver on our objectives to attract, build and retain a sustainable workforce.

To find out more about HATS and sign up for updates visit www.hatsnetwork.co.uk

The HATS network project is supported by Invest Northern Ireland under its Collaborative Growth Programme.

We would also like to acknowledge sponsorship support from Tourism NI which enabled a programme of activity to promote the industry as a great place to work, development of a webinar series for SME's and delivery of a management and leadership programme for supervisors.