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Scottish Business makes the Swiss Connection

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A new project is encouraging Scottish companies to look for new business opportunities and partnerships in Switzerland.

Project Scotlink, which has been developed by GlobalScot Iain Martin and the British Swiss Chamber of Commerce, aims to help Scottish companies access the right information and support to foster strong trade links between the two countries. The project will also promote Scotland as a place with opportunities for Swiss companies.

A number of initiatives are being developed as part of the two-year project, including a new dedicated web-page on the British Swiss Chamber of Commerce website www.bscc.co.uk/scotlink, which aims to bring both countries closer together. Other ideas in development include industry meetings and a high-level 'Doing Business With Scotland' panel discussion in Zurich.

Iain Martin, who runs a global executive coaching firm from bases in Geneva and Zurich, has been the driving force behind Project Scotlink. As an active member of Scottish Enterprise's GlobalScot network and BSCC Counsellor, he is committed to using his expertise to help develop opportunities for Scotland and its businesses.

He said: 'Despite being a small country Switzerland is a real gateway to the world, and is a base for some of the globe's biggest companies'.

'Scotland and Switzerland have much in common, including a similar economic sector profile with expertise in areas such as financial services, life sciences, electronics, tourism and renewable energy. This project aims to capitalise on the many connections and initiatives which already exist as well as making new ones to ensure that both Scottish and Swiss companies make the most of the opportunities that each country offers.'

The project is also being supported by Scottish Development International through its offices in both Scotland and Dusseldorf. Joint initiatives include the development of events in Edinburgh and Glasgow where Scottish businesses will be able to hear first hand from members of the BSCC and GlobalScots based in Switzerland about the opportunities the country offers.

Anne MacColl, head of SDI's operations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa said: 'In the current economic climate it is more important than ever for Scottish companies to explore new business opportunities, which can really strengthen their operations and put them in the best position possible for when markets pick up again. Project Scotlink is an excellent initiative which will enable companies to see first hand what opportunities Switzerland has to offer and how best to take advantage of them.'

