

The first International Business Club meeting was held yesterday (29 March 2012) at Surgical Innovations (SI) in Leeds, where top SME business leaders from across the region met up to discuss export issues to help stimulate international trade.

The club is run by companies – for companies to ensure that pursuing overseas trade is coupled with limited mistakes, limited cost and maximum benefit.

The inaugural meeting outlined the aims of the International Business Club and how best to develop the group in the future.

It includes representatives from a wide spectrum of business sectors and industries with those involved each established in differing international markets, thus giving other members the opportunity to learn about and break into these markets.

Sharing experiences and discussing problems is integral when attempting to conquer overseas trade, particularly with the diversity of foreign markets. The International Business Club gives its members, which already includes some of the region's top business leaders, an opportunity to both help each other, identify market opportunities and network.

Graham Bowland, Chief Executive Officer of SI, said: "SI is well established in markets around the world - including Europe, US and Australasia. The International Business Club gives me the chance to give advice on breaking into these markets and how to overcome potential barriers." Mr Bowland added: "Leeds city region is quickly becoming established as a business centre in the UK and the International Business Club provides the perfect opportunity for businesses to share experiences and learn from each other ultimately driving economic growth in the area from overseas trade across a broad spectrum of industries."

Other attendees included Jim Hart, TEMA, Richard Kaye, Fired Up Group, Ian McAleese, Orbis HR, Ben Pindar, Yorkshire Business Insider as well as UKTI and LCR representatives. The next International Business Club meeting will involve discussing the opportunities and pitfalls of the Brazilian market.

