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Manchester: Soft Power Entrepreneur

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Manchester: Soft Power Entrepreneur

1. The Original Modern City was a global city: the qualities that made it successful still count today.

- Manchester Liberalism, the intellectual expression of the economic independence and entrepreneurialism of its industrial pioneers, practically invented our modern understanding of internationalism.
- Through Peterloo, the Chartists and the Suffragettes, Manchester has a tradition of political radicalism and fighting for democratic rights.
- The City's success has depended on a certain kind of Manchester ingenuity that still endures today: "hardy and boisterous" with "shrewdness and perseverance of mind".

2. Manchester's resurgence has been outward-looking and international from the start.

- At every stage of its rejuvenation, Manchester weaved an international outlook into its objectives: world-class cultural and urban infrastructure; the Commonwealth Games; Manchester International Festival; the Manchester China Forum.
- The success of Manchester's regeneration allowed it to lead the national conversation on devolution.

3. Manchester is now a globally fluent city. As at the moment of its industrial Origin, it faces challenges but has an opportunity to lead again.

- The 2014 City Growth Commission identified Greater Manchester as the only UK City region outside London ready for the top rank of international competitiveness.
- The City has carefully managed its international reputation. In GaWC rankings, tourism, trade, football, music, Manchester achieves far more than a city of 2.8 million people would expect.

- It has a strong track record in the four key areas of future industrial competitiveness: artificial intelligence and the data revolution; the global shift to clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society.
- Long-term consistent leadership and unique levels of devolution have put Manchester in a winning position. It needs to lock-in its successful approach under the new City Region Mayor and secure investment in infrastructure.

4. The Northern Powerhouse can use Manchester's global reputation to mutual advantage.

- Manchester is the most economically prominent of the six city regions making up the Northern Powerhouse.
- Manchester will benefit from tighter agglomeration with the huge economic resources it provides: 23 universities, seven international airports and twelve ports located in the region.
- Through co-operation between the city regions, the wider Northern Powerhouse can use Manchester's existing global presence to forge stronger international links.

5. Manchester is a global city defining the UK's international character: its story is a lesson to emerging global cities across the world.

- Manchester's international success has been built on a consistent vision of the city's development over 20 years. It will be crucial to maintain the global outlook through the transition to the new City region governance arrangements.
- Over the last 20 years, Manchester has taken control of the story of its own development and how it is presented internationally. That story provides a lesson for city regions, and the UK and more widely in how to make their mark on the world stage. 



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Foreword by Sir Howard Bernstein


□ For any city to succeed it must find its way in a global marketplace which has become increasingly dynamic and complex. Today, there is unpredictable growth from mature and emerging markets, while technology is disrupting industries and redefining the competitive landscape. There are complex regional and global political dynamics at play, not least Britain's uncertain relationship with Europe. At the same time there is significant uncertainty about the direction of the UK as a whole, and here in Manchester and the north of England, we are getting used to devolution and the growing push to deepen our regional links.

For Manchester, however, challenge always brings opportunity. One of our strengths as a city is our ability to adapt and reinvent, as we have seen with digital, creative and service industries, along with cultural and education assets, successfully replacing our industrial past. So now is a good time for our city to reflect on where next. Also, while it's more important to look forward than back, this report is a useful reminder that we've come a long way on many fronts.

It is a reminder too that it is difficult if not impossible to separate what we have done to improve the lives of people in Manchester,

and what we have done to boost the city's international attractiveness as a place for anyone who wants to come and make things happen. The two goals go hand in hand, whether it is in the regeneration of entire neighbourhoods, building links with global centres of growth in China & India, or establishing Manchester as a recognised international destination for art and culture.

So as we plan for the future, we must use disruption, innovation and technology to our advantage to ensure Manchester is embedded with the new drivers of global growth.

This is a journey that can never stop. Manchester will continue to reinvent itself, and we will need to develop new structures and approaches to reflect our changing needs. This report does a decent job of explaining, particularly for a non-Manchester audience, what has happened here and how it links to our growing international success. I hope it will play a small role in provoking some of the discussions we need to continue writing the next chapter of Manchester, and other cities, to ensure the jobs, prosperity and opportunities we need for current and future generations will continue to be delivered in an uncertain world. 



The Lowry Theatre

1.

Original Modern, a city of global influence

The Original Modern City was a global city: the qualities that made it successful still count today.

Manchester is today considered to be the world's first industrial powerhouse. It describes itself as 'the original modern city', a technological innovator and inventor of the modern world. Its appearance on the world stage has a sudden and dramatic quality. In 1750 Manchester was little more than a small town in the north of England, yet by the middle of the next century it had grown into one of the world's leading centres for ideas, commerce and technology. By 1850 it had become a crucial node of the emerging world economy as the home of the British Empire's textiles industry. The city's growth was explosive, it had become a magnet for those seeking work

Below: Female war workers, Manchester munitions factory, 1918

Opposite (top): The Lowry Arts and Entertainment Centre;

Bottom: Wall mural, Manchester



and by early 20th century had a population of almost 1 million, with only London and Glasgow greater in size. Manchester's stature and reach as a global city was established from the very outset.

Manchester Liberalism, the intellectual expression of the economic independence and entrepreneurialism of its industrial pioneers, practically invented our modern understanding of internationalism.

As the UK grew to dominate the world economy through Empire, Manchester's technological and economic talents were a defining part of its international success, but it was by no means a dependent of London or simply a willing participant in colonial adventurism. The city has always been able to establish and assert an independent identity based upon its own distinct characteristics. Manchester's technological prowess and geographical attributes drove its success, but just as significant was an entrepreneurial and spirited attitude towards the fast changing world it was entering. Manchester's international outlook was well known across the country. This outlook, of its political and intellectual groups, was described variously as Manchester Liberalism and the Manchester School. It was a view formed by the ideas and actions of the likes of Richard Cobden and John Bright who had established the Anti-Corn Law League advocating principles of free trade. As such Manchester's tradition is one of both



internationalism and progressiveness. The historian of urbanism and empire, Tristram Hunt, has ascribed the Manchester School a progressive role in transforming backward colonial economic ideas into progressive contemporary notions of free trade¹. In this context the Manchester School practically invented our modern understanding of internationalism. Alongside theoreticians such as Adam Smith, entrepreneurs such as Cobden and Bright were in the business of defining our contemporary understanding of international engagement and possibly even what is now known as soft power.

¹ T. Hunt – *10 Cities That Made an Empire*



Through Peterloo, the Chartists and the Suffragettes, Manchester has a tradition of political radicalism and fighting for democratic rights.

Manchester's fast-paced industrial development nurtured political awakening and would ultimately define democratic reform in the UK, influencing definitions of democracy at home and internationally. From Chartism to the Suffragettes, Manchester's political tradition is one which is often radical, bold and ahead of its time. The experience at the Peterloo massacre in which demonstrators calling for reform were attacked by the Cavalry helped to usher in domestic transformation in the shape of Great Reform Act of 1832 ultimately bringing proper political representation for the city. This moment is perhaps a defining perspective in Manchester's outlook and understanding to this day; that democratic rights are hard fought but never inevitable.

The political and technological prowess of the city attracted ambitious minds building a city that was intellectually and culturally rich right from the start. Manchester became a home for international thinkers such as Marx and Engels describing the condition of the English Working Class. Artists sought to understand and describe the conditions and reality of the city, as well as writers such as Elizabeth Gaskell who sought to portray the rapidly urbanising and industrialising landscape. Manchester's cultural influence radiated internationally; attracting and shaping great minds then as it does now.

The City's success has depended on a certain kind of Manchester ingenuity that still endures today: "hardy and boisterous" with "shrewdness and perseverance of mind".

Manchester's extraordinary success in the new world of industry and commerce was enabled by many factors. Its character as a crucible of innovation ensured that it was the first entrant into the industrialisation race but also that it maintained its lead over a long and sustained period from the 1750s well into the middle of the twentieth century. In his seminal work on Cities and Civilisation, the urban historian Peter Hall, in seeking to identify exactly the



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Top: Altrincham Market & Market House

Above: Bramhall Hall

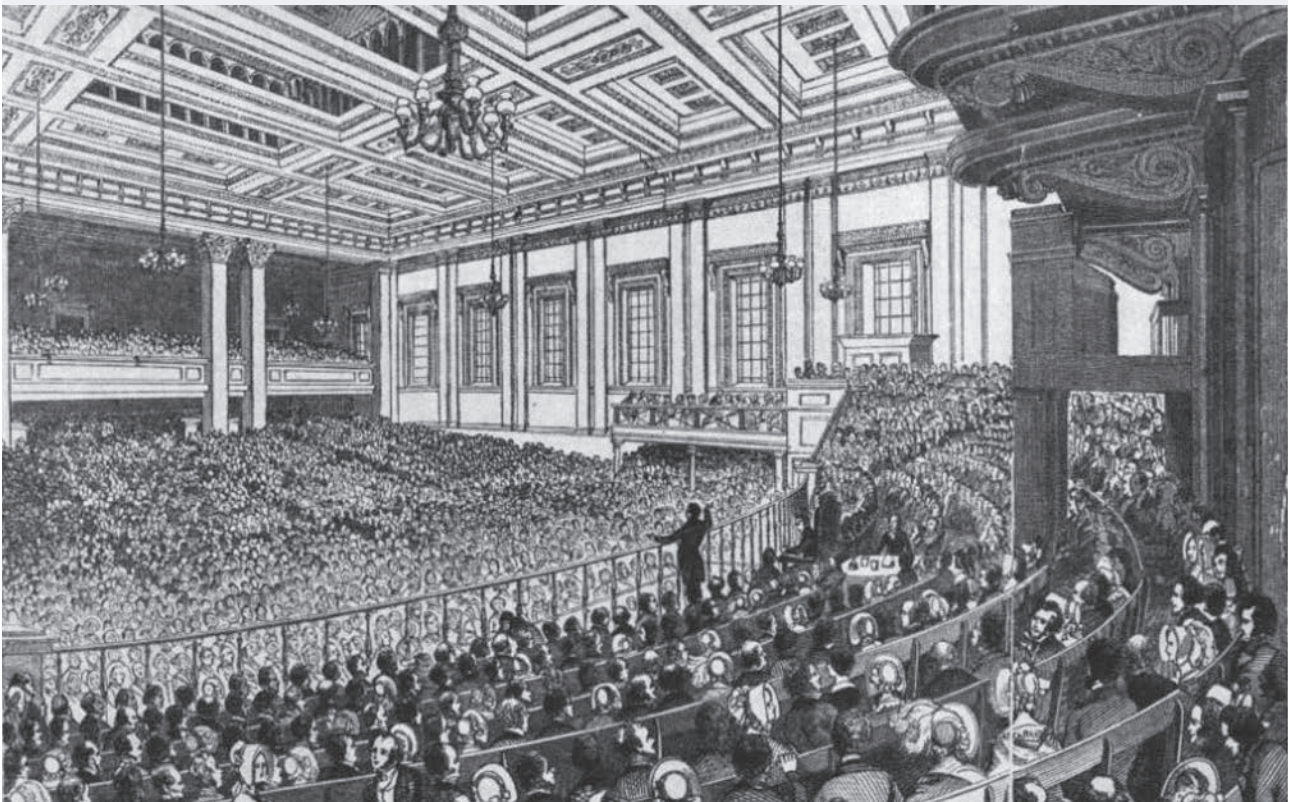
characteristics of Manchester's success, noted that "it was a psychological freedom and energy, associated with the rise of a new class whose intelligence and capacity for hard work were focussed on a single end". Hall identifies a trait of the people — a character trait which is consistently referred to by historians and commentators throughout Manchester's economic development — as a temperament which is at times 'hardy and boisterous', and with a certain 'shrewdness and perseverance of mind'. These are characteristics which are still associated with a Manchester outlook today. Hall concludes that the many ingredients which went into building Manchester's innovative urban system ultimately created a spirit of enterprise and innovation which irreversibly transformed the world. BFPG

Case Study: Richard Cobden — The Original Soft Power Entrepreneur

Richard Cobden was not just a believer in trade as a bringer of prosperity, he also advocated for greater trade as a means of ensuring peaceful relations between nations. His legacy led to the founding of the Cobden Club whose motto was to promote 'Peace, Free Trade and Goodwill Among Nations' a 19th Century version of what today might be described as an institution of soft power. Cobden did not believe that commercial attachment necessarily led to political affiliation "The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is – in extending our commercial relations — to have with them as little political connection as possible." He was an advocate of taking a disinterested approach on the basis that it would lead to better relations and mutual understanding, but in the first instance commerce should be paramount. Cobden had started life in business, an entrepreneur in the print industry before entering the political fray and mobilising the Anti-Corn Law League. In later life, he was regularly feted by politicians being offered titles and positions of power — including President of the Board of Trade — however,

he often preferred to operate in his own capacity. For instance in 1859 he personally visited Napoleon the Third on a mission to promote good relations between England and France through commerce. He only later received official sanction but his efforts led to an Anglo-French treaty, the Cobden-Chevalier Treaty in 1860. At various points he had travelled in the Ottoman Empire leading him to seek to reduce tensions with Russia before the Crimean War and he had engaged passionately on the matter of the Opium wars, strongly condemning the behaviour of British traders in Canton. For Cobden British aggression in China was antithetical to his principles of free trade, liberal internationalism and peaceful relations through interdependence. His legacy and that of the Manchester School is one which has ultimately shaped our modern understanding of the power of trade for the better, but more than that he outlined a cosmopolitan principle of the soft power of cities which we might aspire towards "Peace will come to earth when the people have more to do with each other and governments less."

Meeting of the Anti-Corn Law League in Exeter Hall in 1846



EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

2.

Manchester's Resurgence: outward-looking and international

Manchester's resurgence has been outward-looking and international from the start.

□ As a prime-mover it is inevitable that Manchester's fortunes would be bound closely with new and emerging trends in technology and economy. As technological and economic trends disrupted manufacturing industries in the mid to late 20th century, Manchester suffered a series of economic shocks with inevitable painful social consequences. The UK economy was not well prepared for industrial decline or transition. The concentration of power in Westminster also actively hindered Manchester's resilience in the face of the 1980s recession. As a result the speed and scale of the city's descent into unemployment and economic stagnation was dramatic — between 1966 and 1972 alone, it is estimated that one in three manufacturing jobs were lost and a quarter of all factories shut down². Manchester docks, at one time the third busiest port in the UK, closed in 1982 and significant areas of the city had become emptied, characterised by crime, social unrest and poor housing.

In 1972 on his travels across Britain, the architecture and urban planning critic Ian Nairn declared upon entrance to Manchester that "the town planners had been able to achieve in Manchester what Hitler had not". Slum clearances had left the inner suburbs of the city totally desolate. The entrepreneur and



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music impresario Tony Wilson remembers a city that had reached its nadir. "I can remember very precisely what Manchester was like in the mid 70s, it felt like a piece of history that had been spat out. It was really grimy and dirty. Dirty old town." The once strong civic ethos which had shaped the experience of communities through democratic participation, political party and union membership, churches, clubs and community centres, was challenged, being replaced by social fragmentation, isolation and environmental degradation. In the face of overwhelming economic challenge the city was stoic but its leaders recognised that a bold and transformational response was required.

At every stage of its rejuvenation, Manchester weaved an international outlook into its objectives.

Sir Richard Leese was elected to Manchester council as a Labour councillor in the early 80s. Like many of his civic predecessors Leese saw that if the city was to move forward it would need to now set and drive the agenda itself. Bold, ambitious and transformative approaches would be required and significantly Manchester would need to take the initiative. Manchester's now recognised

² <https://personalpages.manchester.ac.uk/staff/m.dodge/Making-Post-War-Manchester-Catalogue-introductory-text.pdf>

³ Centre for Cities, City Horizons Event with Richard Leese, July 2018.

<http://www.centreforcities.org/multimedia/event-catch-city-horizons-sir-richard-leese-manchester-now/>

regeneration success is well documented but the importance that the city's leadership placed upon the international character of this ambition, woven into all its approaches to renewal is perhaps less well known.

The demolition of the Hulme crescents in 1991 is an early fundamental in the regeneration of Manchester. Transforming the brutalist monolith estate — known as the worst social housing in Europe — was symbolically significant to begin the rebirth of the city. Using Inner City Challenge funding Manchester Council sought ambitiously to redevelop the entire area with a new masterplan using leading international principles of best practice. A world-class master planner was engaged, Joe Berridge from Canada, and adherence to internationally recognised principles such as the importance of density were followed by doubling the number of residences per hectare. The development was going to be an example to the world.

Manchester pursued this international ambition further throughout the 90s in its strategy to create a world class cultural infrastructure, building on the momentum of a world-class music scene which alongside the success of Manchester United FC was propelling the

city's reputation globally, as culturally iconic. Investment was made in the Manchester Arena and in the regeneration of the Bridgewater Concert Hall, and refurbishment of the Manchester Art Gallery were the cornerstone of today's internationally recognised cultural offer. The aim to create a world class cultural life was accompanied by the revitalisation of the city centre, creating a vibrant night life through reform of outdated licensing laws. Leese has stated that these interventions were all part of a way of thinking which was always ambitious, developed by taking a 'cross boundary' approach i.e. one which sought to establish the city identity beyond immediate municipal boundary confines, widening it to include Trafford, Salford and the Quays. This strategy led to bidding for and receiving national 'City Pride' funds in the early 90s, from which MIDAS, Manchester's inward investment agency, and Marketing Manchester were created which would go on to tell the story of the wider city-region internationally.³

When faced with setbacks Manchester was prepared to respond. The attack by the IRA in 1996 on Manchester City Centre was the largest bombing in the UK since the Second World War. It was a devastating event but, →

Opposite: Sir Richard Leese, Leader of Manchester City Council
Below: Salford Quays



rather than retreating, the city acted decisively and used the opportunity to continue with visionary regeneration plans. A process of regeneration which would ultimately lead to the celebrated success of the Northern Quarter and Ancoats. In this moment of dread and horror the city had to reach deep in order to respond with resilience. The devastation wrought on the city had a huge impact on the attitude of its citizens and leadership. Following years of decline, it may initially have felt to many like the psychological nadir, but many now agree that this was a pivotal moment in which Manchester would stand up, fight back and rebuild with even greater energy.

A new chapter in the economic life of the city was beginning. Catalysed by its independent music scene, street fashion and night time

Below: Inside The Printworks

Bottom: John Rylands Library

economy, a new generation of entrepreneurs flocked to the city centre. They were soon accompanied by designers, software houses, advertising agencies, production companies, bespoke retailers and a range of other creative businesses. Recognising their needs, city planners and urban developers started to restore and re-purpose long-neglected Victorian warehouses and watersides into studios, creative workspace, bars and clubs.

This bold and continuously seeking attitude is exemplified in the city's bidding for and successful hosting of the 2002 Commonwealth Games. This was an experience which not only confirmed Manchester's international standing but proved the capacity and 'brand' of the UK as a host for such global events. This is an example of a pioneering action by Manchester, one which ultimately enabled the hosting of the London 2012 Olympic Games. The Commonwealth Games was also pivotal in creating the Manchester International Festival — an internationally recognised cultural celebration and a direct legacy of the games. The Festival continues to set out ambitious plans for growth and has become fundamental in defining the 'open' attitude of the city as it is not simply a festival for the arts and culture of Manchester, but a deliberately international event.

The success of Manchester's regeneration allowed it to lead the national conversation on devolution.

The hosting of the Manchester Commonwealth games declared Manchester's prowess on the world stage and confirmed its role as a soft power leader for the UK. Domestically the power of the Manchester brand stood for reliability on questions of delivery, meaning that it was well placed to make the case for greater devolution in the UK's highly centralised political structure and to then be one of the first cities to maximise devolved powers and become a combined authority in 2014. Leese is clear that these were ideas that were nurtured as much in Manchester as they were in Westminster. Cities need to be prepared and dynamic in the pursuit of greater control and autonomy. This distinctive self-knowing character is on display every step of the way; while Scotland argued over 'DevoMax' Manchester sought 'DevoManc'.



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Case Study: A Global Creative and Commercial Capital

Arguably nothing better symbolises this transformation than the launch of Manchester International Festival in 2007. Running in July every two years, it has rapidly grown into one of the Europe's most successful and acclaimed arts festivals, producing new and highly innovative work from across the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture. It has collaborated with some of the world's most revered directors, artists, composers and writers, and attracted large audiences and significant sponsors — in 2017, there were some 380 performances over 18 days, with a record visitor count of over 300,000. And Manchester's ambition to further establish the importance of culture through the festival continues. In 2021, a new cultural space will open in the centre of the city. Located at the site of the former home of Granada TV studios in the St John's Neighbourhood, The Factory will become both the home for MIF, and be at the heart of the city's creative enterprise district. Along with the £800m re-development of the airport and investment in transport and housing, it represents a crucial element of the infrastructure that will sustain the city's economic and social future.

Firmly embedded within The Factory is a spirit of openness and internationalism. From the very outset, and made explicit in its name, the MIF has championed artists from across the world and created works inspired by a diverse range of cultures and artistic traditions. In its first year, MIF produced Damon Alban's opera *Monkey: Journey to the West*, based on Chinese folk tales, and ten years later it provided the premiere for "Returning to Reims" by Thomas Ostermeier. Such works have not simply been imported,

they are commissioned for MIF, exemplifying Manchester's opening up and radical creative reinvention. No wonder then, that having been made in Manchester, they have in turn travelled the globe — with over a thousand performances of MIF shows in more than 30 countries, from Argentina to New Zealand and Abu Dhabi to the USA — and featured at prestigious festivals and venues such as Art Basel, Hong Kong's New Vision Arts Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music and Sydney's Carriageworks. In the ten years since MIF was founded, the UK's creative industries have continued to thrive, and in recent years have grown at twice the rate of the economy as a whole. Growth in Manchester has been especially fast, with the number of creative companies over the last two years alone increasing by more than a fifth. There are now 50,000 employed in the region's creative industries, and it is culture, technology, entertainment and design that will be providing the jobs and businesses of tomorrow — either in creative sectors themselves or else more broadly, applying design and innovation to healthcare, advanced manufacturing and other industrial sectors.

These are the kinds of productive, high-value jobs that are resistant to the forces of globalisation and automation, and The Factory itself is projected to generate 1500 of them over a decade. More broadly, it will be play a crucial role in boosting inward investment, positioning Manchester as a centre for creative enterprise and leading on skills and employment programmes. Through its close relationship with Manchester's universities, the Festival will continue to develop the workforce and jobs of the 21st century.

Above: The Factory, opening in 2021



3.

Globally fluent, leading again

Manchester is now a globally fluent city. As at the moment of its industrial Origin, it faces challenges but has an opportunity to lead again.

Every city in the world faces a challenge of confronting and defining its identity. Who are we? What makes us different, and how do we tell our story to the world? Manchester is no different but defining a sense of identity has never been a challenge for the city. The question of which is the UK's second city can be a perplexing one for most people in the UK. However, as the old adage goes — ask anyone in Manchester and they'll likely reply that "it's probably London or Birmingham". There is a confidence in Manchester's attitude. For other parts of the country this self-assuredness might appear over-confident. However, for Manchester, it is a confidence which is often borne out by the data. Time and again Manchester simply punches above its weight.

The 2014 City Growth Commission identified Greater Manchester as the only UK City region outside London ready for the top rank of international competitiveness.

In 2014 the City Growth Commission recognised that a new form of economic power was growing: the concentration of innovation and creativity in cities. The Commission was pivotal in championing the case for greater devolution for cities, leading to the outcome we have today in Metro Mayors. The Commission was at the forefront of recognising the importance of agglomeration and the global

growth of city-regions; areas of greater economic size and clout. The commission's insight — chaired by Mancunian Jim O'Neill who would later become government Minister for Infrastructure - would ultimately also influence the government ideas such as the Northern Powerhouse.

The Commission also highlighted that these internationally competitive regions were "unlikely to respect political, even national, boundaries." Citing US National Intelligence Council estimates of at least 40 large bi-national and tri-national metro areas by 2030, they made the case for Manchester as being the only city-region in the UK outside London with the immediate potential to achieve that position. They concluded that the future of the UK's competitiveness depended upon autonomy for these city-regions. "It is not just countries that compete on the global stage, city-regions are rising in economic and political importance, and those countries that allow their metros to flourish within a framework of strong, accountable governance are doing better." The case was clear that Manchester would play a pivotal role in the UK economic success, but only as the Greater Manchester that we know today. The evolution of Manchester's focus from city-centre to city-wide regeneration, well equipped the city to achieve and surpass these expectations — first in the area of identity, promotion and international footprint, and second through its economic profile, Manchester is globally fluent. →

The City has carefully managed its international reputation. In GaWc rankings, tourism, trade, football, music, Manchester achieves far more than a city of 2.8 million people would expect.

In the Globalisation and World Cities (GaWC) assessment, Manchester is classified as a Beta minus city and has been for over a decade. It shares this classification with tourism magnets such as Rio de Janeiro and global trading ports such as Rotterdam. For a city with a population of less than 3 million this is a significant achievement. The index measures across multiple indicators of international connectivity from international visitor numbers and attraction of investment through to level of interconnectedness between cities. Manchester global reach is significant and growing.

Manchester is culturally rich, poised to capture the benefits of the global growth in tourism, with a leisure and business visitor economy which grew from £4.6bn in 2005 to £7.5bn in 2014. Manchester is England's most visited destination by overseas visitors after London. Its tourism offer is boosted by the largest museum sector and the highest concentration of producing theatres outside London, with a growing international reputation for sporting events and live music.⁴ Greater Manchester's tourism offer clearly has momentum. In 2017 it welcomed over 1.5 million inbound visitors, up 12% on the previous year. These visitors spent £779 million in 2017, up 40% on 2016. The average spend per inbound visit for Greater Manchester has also increased by 25% to £503 in 2017. Visit Britain has recognised Manchester as the tourism gateway to the north, encouraging US visitors to choose Manchester, Northern England and Northern Wales as destinations.

Significantly for the growth of the global fluency of the region, Manchester Airport has developed a vision to increase the number of inbound international tourist passengers using Manchester Airport from 2.91m to 3.43m by 2020, with a similar ambition to increase the number of inbound international business passengers using Manchester Airport from 1.02m to 1.31m by 2020. The value of FDI to

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Greater Manchester is estimated at £2.7bn and international trade in goods worth £5.36bn to Greater Manchester's economy. In fact Greater Manchester is consistently the second largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment in the UK. The vision for increased international connectivity is of significant importance in enabling the growth of the city and regional economy and will play an important part in building the city's strong conference and business events sector, which is currently worth £823m.

These successes are only possible having been founded upon a strong international promotion infrastructure. The functions of inward investment, tourism promotion, trade development, and talent attraction come together through strong and strategically integrated agencies. Marketing Manchester, MIDAS, The Manchester China Forum and others all coordinate through the Growth Company to set a vision and strategy to promote the city internationally.

⁴ <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/media/1763/09-hospitality-deep-dive-report-final.pdf>

Case Study in Innovation: China & India Business links

The Manchester China Forum was established in 2013, under the guidance and direction of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne, and the city of Manchester took a pioneering approach in establishing direct economic links with China. Governed by a business board of both UK and Chinese businesses the forum brings together shared interests for investment and trade. Significantly the Forum takes a holistic approach to engaging with China. It recognised the significance of cultural considerations of doing business in the East: the importance of establishing long-term relationships; the need to build deep networks and not expect immediate results; and that business is not a singular pursuit but that the whole cultural story is relevant, therefore the forum promotes exchange on matters of business, tourism and education. The results from this strategic approach are considerable with inward investment into Manchester from China growing enormously, totalling over £3bn. Notable projects include an £800m investment

from Beijing Construction and Engineering Group and the £1bn Far East Consortium investment into the Northern Gateway regeneration project. Importantly the initiative links back to MIDAS, Manchester's Inward Investment Agency and Marketing Manchester, ensuring a joined-up and comprehensive approach to market engagement. In February 2018 a further international engagement vehicle was launched, the 'Manchester India Partnership' (MIP) a public-private partnership tasked with delivering Manchester's India strategy and focussing city wide activity in this fast growing market. The MIP has full-time teams in Bangalore, Delhi and Manchester and like the MCF is tasked with promoting inward investment, trade and research collaboration. The success of the partnership was demonstrated in 2018 as it was named trade and investment promotion organisation of the year at the UK-India Awards and also played a key role in securing the recently launched Jet Airways, Manchester-Mumbai direct air link.

In comparison with other UK cities, this is a strong and integrated structure. Significantly the city's promotional agencies are able to work seamlessly and fluidly with multiple other actors with an international interest. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the universities and the airport are able to come together to pursue a shared agenda.

Manchester's international reach is not measured in data on investment and tourism alone. Less tangible is the international reach of its reputation as achieved through sport, culture, brands and ideas. As home to two Premier League football teams the name Manchester is associated with sporting excellence in villages and towns from Lusaka to Jakarta. Manchester United estimates over 200 million fans in Asia alone, and is consistently at or near the top of Forbes listing of the biggest global sports teams. The reputational reach of the city which has been secured by Manchester United's sustained Premier League success over decades means that Manchester as a city is immediately known and associated with excellence the world over, but this also translates into hard economic

*Top: Chinese Arch
Right: Oasis are perhaps just the most commercially successful of dozens of globally influential bands to emerge from Manchester in recent decades*



indicators. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority estimates that football contributes £330m per annum to GM's economy and supports 5,000 full time equivalent jobs, citing the importance of hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2002 enabling the city to continue to strengthen its identity through sport, including hosting Olympic football matches in 2012.

The city's musical output is of worldwide renown having contributed to the British Pop Sound for well over 50 years. Artists such as The Hollies, The Smiths, New Order, The Stone Roses, Take That, Oasis and Elbow are just a →



WWW.GRAPHENE.MANCHESTER.AC.UK

Case Study: Manchester & Graphene

The discovery of graphene and its subsequent development as a material and technology associated with Manchester is a good example of how local and national government have worked together with academia and business to promote the city and regions' international reach.

Graphene was first discovered, almost by accident, at Manchester University in 2004 by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov. After polishing a large block of graphite with sticky tape they discovered the tape was picking up exceptionally thin layers, which they were able to thin further to, eventually, a single atom. Yet despite being only 'two dimensional', this material is many times stronger than steel, as well as adaptive and flexible in many different ways.

Thanks to these qualities graphene quickly became an iconic material, but as South Korea and the US quickly began to develop well-funded research streams and patents, the fear was that the UK, and Manchester, would once again fail to benefit from the discoveries of its world class scientists. In response, Manchester University worked together with the City Council, UK Government and European Regional Development Fund to build a £61 million

National Graphene Institute to lead global research and development of applications for Graphene. This in turn has attracted valuable international attention to Manchester as a whole, culminating in the visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to the Institute in 2016, and subsequent bilateral partnerships to promote joint research and development. Now graphene research and the technologies and skills that surround it are widely and firmly associated with Manchester, the city is moving to further deepen and widen the benefits of this association through the construction of several more facilities, amounting to a 'Graphene City' to catalyse and lead research, not only on graphene itself but on other nanotechnologies and innovative materials. This facility, attracting diverse sources of inward investment and research collaborations, including one with Abu Dhabi's Masdar, will not only regenerate and bring jobs, but also build further links nationally and around the world. By developing a focussed strategy to capture and consolidate the benefits of this core scientific discovery, Manchester has found one answer to the UK's frustrating historical inability to translate its world class science into economic benefits.

few of the innovators contributing the UK's internationally influential creative industries. In other areas of culture Manchester remains profoundly influential.

With over 200 languages spoken, the cosmopolitan character of the city is in no doubt. The reach of its diaspora into fast growing Asian and African markets ensures Manchester is well poised to build effective international relations through established relationships.

Manchester has a strong track record in the four key areas of future industrial competitiveness

The government's Industrial Strategy white paper recognises that this a period of significant change in the world economy and that new technological developments threaten to disrupt and transform industry. The strategy identifies four 'Grand Challenges' that the UK economy and its industries must confront to ensure economic success. They are artificial intelligence and the data revolution; the global shift to clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society. Manchester is building an infrastructure to address these grand challenges. For instance,

The Christie: Europe's largest single-site cancer centre



⁵ <https://www.investinmanchester.com/sectors/life-science-and-healthcare>

it is building a reputation as a home of life sciences. With over 30 NHS organisations, the city is developing focus on precision medicine, a Centre for Genomics Medicine Research and Europe's largest single-site cancer centre, The Christie.⁵ Manchester also has significant sector strengths in advanced manufacturing and advanced materials. It is known as the home of graphene — a synthetic lightweight super conductive material with the transformative potential to once again place Manchester right at the heart of the next industrial revolution. Significantly, the Grand Challenges that the Industrial strategy has identified are global challenges and as such Manchester's vision and investment in cutting-edge technologies will foster its potential to make global impact.

Long-term consistent leadership and unique levels of devolution have put Manchester in a winning position. It needs to lock-in its successful approach under the new City Region Mayor and secure investment in infrastructure.

The UK finds itself at a moment of extraordinary upheaval, politically, economically and technologically. Manchester too finds itself at an important moment in defining its own political economy, although most of the hard graft of preparation is done. Just as the world economy is restructuring and as we stand before the next great wave of technological progress, Manchester is in a position of opportunity and great potential. The entrepreneurial tradition of the city combined with that 'certain kind of attitude' which Peter Hall defined as a kind of 'psychological freedom and energy' are exactly the kind of qualities of leadership required to move through an uncertain period. The hard fought governance structures which Manchester has achieved are designed to support a city-region which is scaling up politically and economically and are exactly the characteristics required for competitiveness in the world economy. Manchester has the entrepreneurial spirit and the international experience to build better economic relations for itself and the UK.

There is much for other UK cities to learn from Manchester's sense of ambition and purpose. The city's soft power entrepreneurialism has been integral to its approach to economic development. Sir Richard Leese emphasises →



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the importance of the city adopting a long-term approach to growth. Creating policy for a city of 2.8 million in the Greater Manchester area and building a reputation for delivery with government, is an approach that has been built over a thirty year period. The importance of continuity of leadership in the city is a crucial factor in its success and specifically in attracting overseas investment. Sir Howard Bernstein credits this approach with winning international investment from Abu Dhabi into Manchester City and from China as investor in the Airport, as Bernstein notes “both groups like our long-term plans”.⁶

Sir Howard Bernstein was the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council from 1998 to 2017. Manchester’s successful regeneration and subsequent reputational success are in large part down to the strength of the partnership between Sir Howard and Sir Richard and their own entrepreneurial approach to establishing

Above: Manchester City Football Club

Opposite: St Ann’s Square floral tribute


the reputation of the city as a place for investment domestically and internationally. The success of a city can never be attributed to one single individual but strong city leadership can make a lot of difference, and Sir Howard’s own reputation for taking calculated risks and spotting opportunities over the years has become synonymous with the entrepreneurial reputation of the city. In seeking building investment ties from Abu Dhabi and China for Manchester City FC and Manchester Airport; in leading delegations every year to MIPIM and developing an established presence at this global real estate event, and championing the case for hosting global sporting events such as the Olympics and the Commonwealth Games, Sir Howard has always been at the forefront of establishing Manchester’s international ambition.

In the next stage of its evolution it will be crucial for Manchester to maintain continuity

⁶ FT, July 2015, Manchester, UK’s New Order? <https://www.ft.com/content/a0513f2a-b7bb-11e4-981d-00144feab7de#slide0>

of leadership and to continue to set this long-term vision in attracting overseas investment. Such an approach will ensure that it can continue to build a 21st century city-region economy to redress imbalance in the national economy and complement London and the South East. The next stage in Manchester's growth is to truly realise the benefits of scale and agglomeration to ensure its competitiveness with growing number of mega-regions such as in the Randstadt and further away in likes of Guangzhou and Lagos. There are further investments required to connect the city-region by rail and Transport for the North are setting out the vision and plan to achieve such an outcome.

Through a process of scaling up its governance structures to match its economic potential, Manchester is preparing for global competitiveness. The city has built an international relations infrastructure to complement that ambition and achieve its vision. The challenge now is to ensure that its vision and governance can unlock its economic potential for all its citizens. To achieve this the City Council and the Mayor recognise that to lead for the UK and the world, and to renew the Manchester spirit of liberal internationalism, they must continue by demonstrating the benefits of international engagement to the people. This is crucial because history shows that character and spirit of the people of Manchester has been pivotal to achieve its ambitious goals. It is the pioneering character of the city as a soft power entrepreneur that will continue to drive it forward into new opportunity.

Even in moments of deep sadness and collective despair Manchester has been able to find its voice and to project it loudly to the world. After the tragedy of the Manchester Arena terror attacks on the 22 May 2018 the people of Manchester came together in a vigil in Albert Square. In so doing the strong sense of identity which drives Manchester forward was expressed forcefully by the poet Tony Walsh in his poem *"This is the Place"*. He expressed a voice of the people of Manchester powerfully to the world and to the gathered crowd in how the "Manchester way is to make it yourself" and of our songs that "set the whole planet shaking" 

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(...) Because this is a place that has been through some hard times: oppressions, recessions, depressions, and dark times.

But we keep fighting back with Greater Manchester spirit. Northern Grit, Northern with in Greater Manchester's lyrics" ⁷

Tony Walsh, *'This is the Place'*



⁷ <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/tony-walsh-poem-manchester-vigil-13082050>

4.

Making a Global City-Region

The Northern Powerhouse can use Manchester's global reputation to mutual advantage.

□ Manchester is not a solitary force defining the northern economy. The city's entrepreneurialism has historically been enabled by its connectedness to the rest of the region. Its openness to talent — a place to test and develop ideas and a platform to innovate and export that innovation - remains one of its key strengths and contributes to the smooth functioning and success of the wider northern economy.

Manchester will benefit from tighter agglomeration with the huge economic resources it provides.

The growing global importance of the economic region of the Northern Powerhouse is dependent on a the great city-regions of the North: Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull and Newcastle, of which Manchester is the most economically prominent. Together these cities make a powerful global city-region with more than 23 universities, six of which rank in the top 20 for research excellence nationally, and each city rich in knowledge intensive jobs.⁸ Seven international airports are located in the Northern Powerhouse, flying to 254 direct destinations. Additionally, 12 major foreign trading ports are located in the region.

This is the future shape of the UK's strengths as an international economy, linking the economy together and creating greater agglomeration

⁸ <https://www.centreforcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/15-06-01-Northern-Powerhouse-Factsheet.pdf>



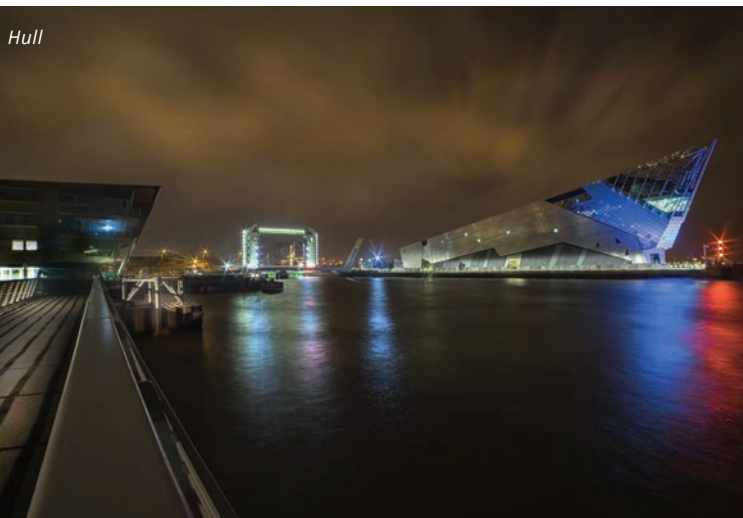
Sheffield



Leeds



Hull



“

The strength of the Northern Powerhouse story will gain traction and recognition as it continues to define the role and function of each city-region and their part in the wider global-city region brand.


and therefore a more powerful global city-region. Strong connectivity is a defining characteristic of a successful regional economy and with over £13bn projected investment in the region over the current parliamentary term this will significantly bolster the image and attractiveness of the region as a place for investment.

The wider Northern Powerhouse can use Manchester's existing global presence to forge stronger international links.

The strength of the Northern Powerhouse story will gain traction and recognition as it continues to define the role and function of each city-region and their part in the wider global-city region brand. Manchester's relevance in this context as a place with a global image will enhance the soft power of the whole region. Similarly the confidence of Liverpool to market itself with Manchester together at property investment shows such as MIPIM →

reflects a forward-facing outlook, only made possible by a confidence of strong but distinct regional identities. As host of City of Culture in 2017 Hull has projected an international voice; as part of the Northern Powerhouse the region is not in competition with itself, instead it creates a collaborative approach founded upon distinct economic and cultural identities, a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts.

In this context Manchester's role is paramount. Manchester will succeed best

and attract most investment, visitors and talent when it is able to deploy its deft sense of collaboration and cooperation. The same confidence which has served the city so well in building its own identity and economic successes to date will serve the wider region as they build profile internationally. Just as in the 18th and 19th century Manchester grew to define a national economy and an international industry, its sense of identity and ambition may again help to shape a more cooperative and collaborative age between global city regions of the world. 

Case Study in Innovation: Manchester Consular Association

Manchester's international relations are realised in a number of formal and informal channels. A growing and innovative approach has been that of the Consular Association. Through this network Manchester builds direct links with other countries through a system of mutual promotion and exchange. Consuls are paid or, in the case of honorary consuls, unpaid representatives of foreign states who may be based in cities or regions of their host country beyond the main embassy of their own state. They may act on behalf of their state and citizens in relation to many things, but often facilitate commercial, cultural and other links between their own state and the region or city in which they are based. Manchester has the oldest consular network in the UK, and one of the oldest in the world, founded in 1882, but with its roots going back to the 1820s when the first consuls were appointed to Manchester by the United States and Gran Colombia (a short lived combination of Latin American states). At that time Manchester was a global manufacturing and trading hub, and many more countries sought to build links by sending appoint consuls there. Currently, the Manchester Consular Association consists of 32 countries' representatives, and as Manchester's resurgent international engagement has grown, the network has engaged more actively with the growing mix of local and regional government, inward investment, cultural, educational, and scientific bodies in the city. It is now the second largest in the UK, only second to Edinburgh & Leith Consular Corp's 62 members, on a par with Cardiff's 30 listed and ahead of Birmingham and the Midlands 25.



Both consular representatives and business organisations in Manchester agree that the association delivers unique benefits to Manchester as a whole, enabling it to engage internationally relatively cheaply and efficiently in a strategic manner. Many members of the association are honorary consuls, that is they are not paid by the countries they represent, but do so because they wish to maintain links to a country they originate from or have strong ties with. In fact of the 32 countries in the network, 21 are honorary, underlining the personal nature of many of the links Manchester enjoys internationally, but also a reminder that Manchester manages to use scarce resources highly effectively in support of its international ambitions.

A major priority for the city post-Brexit is to maintain its relationships with Europe, and it is no coincidence that three of the most significant professional consulates represent Portugal, Poland and Romania, though the Netherlands, Denmark, Hungary, and outside the EU, Norway, all maintain paid representatives. Beyond Europe, the Pakistan Consulate General is probably most active, reflecting the strong British Asian community in the city; and both Iraq and Libya have also opened offices to build links in recent years. Overall, Manchester's consular network demonstrates the strength of Manchester's international links and profile — something other UK cities might consider as they position themselves for greater global presence in years to come.

5. Defining the UK's International character

Manchester is a global city defining the UK's international character: its story is a lesson to emerging global cities across the world.

□ Soft power is most effective when we share the stories of those things which make us most proud, or when we share our ideas in an open and collaborative manner, but it is especially effective when we know ourselves well enough to make an invitation to the world to participate. This is perhaps Manchester's greatest lesson for other UK cities; to take control, to present a global story and establish a grand vision as widely as possible.

Manchester's international success has been built on a consistent vision of the city's development over 20 years. It will be crucial to maintain the global outlook through the transition to the new City region governance arrangements.

One of the most important factors in Manchester's economic success can be found in its political continuity. Continuous political leadership from Council Leader Sir Richard Leese and CEO Sir Howard Bernstein together for over 20 years have secured a vision and a mission oriented approach to economic development which is without parallel in other UK cities. However, the challenge for Manchester must be to ensure that as it transitions to Greater Manchester governance structures that its political vision and impetus is not solely reliant upon individual leaders but is instead embedded in new structures and institutions.

Manchester has secured a significant amount of powers and political leverage. Its leadership role in defining the Northern Powerhouse is important not just in relation to building a transport network which will fuel the economic growth of the region, but significantly in shaping a global city-region. The narrative of Manchester as global city — a force to be reckoned with — is crucial to Manchester's economic success in a globally competitive economy. To be truly successful such a narrative must be owned by the Mayor and the CEO of the combined authority. Leaders of Greater Manchester will →

Manchester day parade



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Stepping up to National Leadership: Manchester in the wider UK Soft Power Story

Soft Power, or the ability to influence others through the power of attraction, is increasingly recognised globally as a key differentiator for those countries whose culture, media, arts, sports, education, language and perceived values command the most global attention and positive engagement. It is a central part of a growing recognition that national governments need to increasingly draw on wider relationships to achieve key international objectives. The UK in particular tends to score at or near the top of global rankings of soft power based on the richness and diversity of its culture and the positive familiarity which global audiences feel for many aspects of the UK.

The UK government has increasingly recognised the importance of soft power, and last year announced the development of a UK soft power strategy, due to be launched this year, accompanied by a more proactive national engagement on international issues on the part of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and other externally facing departments. A key

challenge, which is recognised in government, is that soft power is normally most effective when separated from central government engagement. Manchester is a clear example of this, having developed considerable aspects of its renewed international profile and resonance largely independently of any national government policy. One challenge for the city and the region then is to ensure new national soft power initiatives work with, rather than undermine, Manchester's success.

The other challenge is that many cities, regions and devolved nations in the UK are increasingly focussed and ambitious with regards to their own international profile and attractiveness. In the north of England this will demand an ever more pragmatic and flexible regional focus on coordinating a set of messages and offers out to the world. Cities that have been used to a certain rivalry such as Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull and Newcastle, will need to share burdens and successes more effectively, without undermining what makes them distinctive. More widely, Manchester and the Northern Powerhouse, to get to the next level, may need to find ways of demonstrating national leadership, proactively sharing experience and expertise with other parts of the UK on building international profile and reach.

Both of these challenges — securing positive influence in central government, and building positive influence around the UK, imply building an even more strategic engagement with national foreign policy discussions — not to undermine or distract from current constitutional arrangements, but to make them more effective, contributing Manchester and the region's experience and perspectives. In an age when foreign and domestic policies are ever more clearly linked, and popular engagement with key international issues is growing, the perspectives of Manchester, the North of England, as well as other cities, regions and nations across the UK, will become ever more important to developing a UK foreign policy which is integrated, supported and sustainable for the benefit of everyone across the UK and beyond.






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be pivotal in bringing together interest groups as varied as Transport for the North, Northern Powerhouse, and indeed other northern cities. Setting a globally fluent and globally facing narrative will bring a greater chance of the success of all partners concerned with the long-term future success of the city-region. To this end the success of the wider city-region and partnerships such as Northern Powerhouse will need to build upon the reputational and soft power successes of Manchester, or perhaps more accurately the Northern Powerhouse project needs Manchester to succeed internationally to further the success of its own growing global identity.

Over the last 20 years, Manchester has taken control of the story of its own development and how it is presented internationally. That story provides a lesson for city regions and the UK and more widely in how to make their mark on the world stage.

A certain kind of attitude and confident stance is required to present oneself on the world stage, and the UK might look to the achievements and approach of Manchester.

It took control of its own narrative, set a bold vision and put in place a mission-orientated approach to building international relations. Soft power is most effective when we share the stories of those things which make us most proud, or when we share our ideas in an open and collaborative manner, but it is especially effective when we know ourselves well enough to make an invitation to the world to participate. This is perhaps Manchester's greatest lesson for other UK cities; to take control of the story, to present a global story and establish a grand vision as widely as possible, because in the end that is simply what Manchester has done.

In a world in which questions of personal, regional and national identity are increasingly in flux it will not be easy for anyone to make their mark on the world stage, but it is often at the most local level that the transition is hardest. It might not be easy for the strong and rich identities of northern towns and cities to risk their own identity being overlooked by joining with a Greater Manchester story. But the more ambitious and progressive will recognise the opportunity to link arms with a nearby soft power entrepreneur which has a globally established cultural, sporting, and economic reputation and work together to shape a shared narrative for the future of the UK. 

The British Foreign Policy Group is a non-partisan not-for-profit organisation committed to supporting an inclusive, evidence led national discussion about the UK's global position and choices. Over coming months and years we will be hosting events around the UK and publishing short reports to enable policy makers and others to better understand and engage with the international ambitions of the UK's cities, regions and devolved administrations. The BFPG takes no institutional position and all views are those of the author. If you would like to know more about our work please contact **Edward.Elliott@bfpg.co.uk**

The logo consists of the letters 'BFPG' in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue square.

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