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North East
Local Enterprise Partnership



Douglas Jones, Community Engagement Manager, Tech North

Originally from the USA, Douglas Jones first visited Newcastle in 2006. He didn't want to leave and promised himself he'd return once he'd completed his degree.

Seven years later, Douglas returned to the city as a Masters student and he now works at Tech North, the government-backed initiative charged with accelerating the growth of the digital business sector in the North of England.

"I studied International Politics in Virginia and as part of my degree I did a placement in Parliament in London," said Douglas. "On the advice of my colleagues, I came to Newcastle and was overwhelmed at how fascinating, cultural and vibrant it is. The level of generosity I experienced was amazing. I fell in love with the city and didn't want to leave.

"Several years later I came back to study for my Masters degree at Newcastle University and I've never regretted my decision one bit.

"As a city, Newcastle isn't too big and it isn't too small. It offers a really high quality of life, your money goes further and we have great shopping and night life.

Douglas began working at Tech North as a Research Assistant, progressing to Research Manager. He is now

the Community Engagement Manager, a role which involves connecting North East tech companies with business opportunities.

"My job takes me all over the North East," said Douglas. "I've seen how the region has reinvented itself, from its industrial past to today's thriving creative and digital sector.

"As a region, the North East has the fastest growing number of start-ups outside London and some of the highest advertised digital salaries. Also, a national survey recently named Newcastle as the top UK city for raising a family in.

"It's easy to see London as the bright lights but I'd say that if you start out in the North East you can build a really impressive career. In fact, we often see graduates who have moved away returning to the region – what Tech North is calling [the Boomerang effect](#).

"If you're an international student and you want to stay in the region, start looking into the various visa options which are available, like the Tech Nation visa. Plan early, start networking and be pro-active.

"I plan to remain in the North East. It's a region which has a spark and I want to be a part of the story."

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