



How can the Regional Engagement Team help you?

The Swansea Bay Regional Engagement Team (SBRET) is one of four teams set up in Wales to help ensure EU funding proposals meet existing and future opportunities and investments at regional levels.

The SBRET work across the counties of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea, and across all sectors in the region to ensure the effective participation and success of EU funded investments. SBRET supports the region in the delivery of its **economic regeneration strategy** to improve the prospects of our communities, businesses and economy.

If you are considering applying for EU funding, contact us for guidance on how your project can support regional priorities, to make links to other projects and benefit from case studies and examples of best practice.

If you are already delivering an EU funded project, we would be keen to hear about how your projects is progressing. We could also look to feature some of your good news stories in the next newsletter.

Business Wales Brexit Portal launched

A new portal has been developed to help Welsh businesses prepare for Brexit and navigate the changes and challenges ahead.

It's been designed to provide companies with up-to-date information and advice on a range of crucial issues including international trading and workforce planning.

It also includes a diagnostic tool that helps businesses to identify how prepared they are for Brexit, recommends actions they should take to increase their resilience and signposts them to additional sources of support.

For further information please visit the [Brexit Portal](#)

EU Funding to Up-skill Advanced Manufacturing Sector

To help Wales' advanced manufacturing workforce keep pace with global advances in innovation and technology, EU funds will support more than 800 people through the Up-skilling for Industry 4.0 and International Innovation Masters scheme led by the University of Wales Trinity St David.

The £3.7m Up-skilling for Industry 4.0 project, which is supported by £2.3m of EU funding, will provide accredited qualifications to around 430 employees in Welsh industry, particularly within the advanced manufacturing sector.

The £4.3m International Innovation Masters scheme, which is backed by £3m of EU funding, will provide post-graduate training to around 390 employees from across Wales's manufacturing sector. The training will help professionals understand the importance of innovation in a dynamic international context.

£4m EU funds for Wales International Coastal Centre



The Wales International Coastal Centre in Saundersfoot will comprise of four linked developments: Marine Centre of Excellence and Coastal Storm Centre, National Events Deck, Ocean Square Heritage and Arts Centre and the Coastal Schooner - a historic tall ship recreation.

The project is the last of 11 destinations to get the green light for funding as part of the Tourism Attractor Destination programme, which will see £62m investment in the tourism sector over the next three years, including £27.7m of EU funding. Read more about the Centre [here](#).

Regional Performance Data

The table below gives headline figures of the performance of ESI funded operations across the Swansea Bay Region.

You can find out more information on how Wales is benefiting from EU funds [here](#).

Performance Indicator	Figures for the South West Region
Enterprises Assisted ¹	1,543
Enterprises Created ²	298
Jobs Created ³	2,722
Participants Assisted	45,706
Participants Supported into Employment	3,440
Participants Gaining Qualifications	17,411
Participants in education / training	1,971

Source: WEFO, 30/11/2018

¹ Aggregate of the Enterprises receiving non-financial support indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

² Aggregate of the New enterprises supported indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

³ Aggregate of the Employment increase in supported enterprises indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

Launch of the 2018/2019 Employment and Skills Plan



The Minister for Life Long Learning and Welsh Language, Eluned Morgan congratulated the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership South West and Mid Wales on the development of their Employment and Skills Plan 2018/19.

The Skills Plan; aimed at ensuring that our next generation have the skills needed to drive the industries of tomorrow was officially launched in late November at the Liberty stadium.

Over 500 employers in the region have worked closely with the RLSP team to identify skills issues that need to be tackled with the RLSP successfully facilitating partnership working between a range of stakeholders to ensure the development of a plan that is representative and meets the needs of those working, living and learning in the region.

The plan sets out to:

- Inform and support the Welsh Government's strategic approach to the delivery of employment and skills provision.
- Support the delivery of a post-16 learning environment which is fit for purpose.
- Support the Swansea Bay City Deal and Growing Mid Wales Partnership
- Set out priorities and objectives for the forth coming year

Over 150 delegates attended the launch event, 'Our Skills, Our Future: Driving Change' and had the opportunity to listen to a number of inspirational speakers and attend a workshop on key issues affecting businesses across the region. Speakers included; RLSP board representatives, the Big Learning Company, MiFuture, Innovate UK, Swansea University, River Simple, and Be the Spark.

Four topical workshops were on offer at the event; Careers Wales held a workshop on how to support employers to support education. The HMPPS shared information on employment opportunities for Ex-offenders. The Welsh Government, HEFCW and NTfW joined together to run a very informative workshop on Apprenticeships. The final workshop on offer was run by Welsh Government looking at supporting people with disabilities into employment.

To view the Skills Plan 2018 **click [here](#)**

Four New Enterprise Hubs To Spark Welsh Business



Economy Secretary Ken Skates has announced Gaerwen, Newtown, Caerphilly and Carmarthen as the locations for four new regional Enterprise hubs to encourage and support entrepreneurship in Wales.

The Welsh Government, partly funded by the European Regional Development Fund, has invested over £4m in the new Enterprise Hubs, which will provide individuals and companies with the space to network, innovate, establish their enterprises and access a range of support services, such as advice on pitching, workshops and business surgeries. Entrepreneurs at the hubs will have access to the breadth of support available from Business Wales as well as from partners including Colleges, Universities, Local authorities and the Development Bank of Wales, providing a well-connected, simple and visible support system for entrepreneurs, as championed by Be The Spark.

The Carmarthen Hub will be based in the brand new Canolfan S4C Yr Egin building on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Carmarthen campus and will link in with Bridge Innovation Centre in Pembroke, The Beacon in Llanelli and Coleg Sir Gar. Working with Tramshed Tech, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), Wales Cooperative Centre and both Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire County Councils, Business in Focus will provide individuals and companies with room to start and grow their businesses in a stimulating, welcoming community. Click [here](#) for further information.

Canolfan S4C Yr Egin, College Rd, Carmarthen. SA31 3EG

£9.5 Million EU Investment will help Wales move towards a Low Carbon Economy

2 renewable energy projects will benefit from £9.5 million of EU funding, Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford announced at the WEFO Annual Event to celebrate the impact of EU funds in Wales.

The £14.4 million GSCS (generation storage consumption supply) scheme, will receive £9 million of EU funding.

GSCS will provide revenue-saving opportunities at sites in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire. The £0.9 million community solar energy storage scheme in Swansea – Swansea Community Solar Storage with Direct Local Supply – will receive £600,000 of EU funds to supply electricity to up to 300 local consumers.

Based at Wales' first community-owned solar farm, the innovative scheme aims to create a larger local community energy model to support many more communities across Wales. Read more about the investments [here](#).

Social Business Growth Fund

An additional £2.7m boost of EU funds will see social businesses growth in Wales

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates has welcomed the extra investment into the Social Business Growth fund that will also help create sustainable jobs in communities across Wales.

The funding which builds on a previous EU investment of £1m, also includes an additional £1m that will be allocated to a new Community Asset Development Fund.

Read more about how the Social Business Growth Fund helps business [here](#)

Community Asset Development Fund

The Community Asset Development Fund (CADF) supports social businesses that are aiming to bring an asset into community ownership - either by;

- purchasing the asset
- purchasing and renovating the asset
- renovating an existing asset that is not in full use
- equipping an asset

The type of asset can vary from social/sports clubs, community halls, community hubs, community pubs etc.

Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how the funded activity will create a positive shift in social impact as well as a positive shift in income generation.

Read more about the CADF fund and application process [here](#)

The Social Business Growth Fund and the Community Asset Development Fund are led by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

European Structural and Investment Fund 2014 – 2020 Annual Information Event



The European Structural and Investment Fund 2014 – 2020 Annual Information Event took place in Cardiff on December 5th. WEFO's Chief Executive Peter Ryland welcomed the attendees to the event and gave an update on the progress and developments of the 2014-2020 programmes.

The key note speech was delivered by Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance. Following his speech, the Finance Secretary announced winners of the EU Funds Awards 2018.

EU Funds Awards 2018

The EU Awards showcase the achievements EU projects in Wales. The standard of all entries this year was extremely high for each award.

ESF Projects: Best Mentor: Celebrating the success stories of mentors who have seized opportunities presented by the European Social Fund, going above and beyond to help people develop new skills, secure a job or find a new career path.

Best Mentor Finalists South West Wales Region:

- Gemma Elizabeth Shore, Employment and Training Worker for Inspire2Work
- Suzanne Butterworth, Mentor for Communities for Work - Swansea team.
- Anthony Phillips. Mentor for Workways Plus - Neath Port Talbot team.

Winner: Suzanne Butterworth

ERDF Projects: Best cultural heritage project

Celebrating high quality, innovative projects, which have significantly improved Wales' physical infrastructure or environment through cultural heritage.

Winner: Lido Ponty - National Lido of Wales

Creative Europe

The Creative Europe programme aims to support the European audiovisual, cultural and creative sector.

The different funding schemes encourage the audiovisual, cultural and creative players to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills needed in the digital age.

For more information and open calls click [here](#)

Wales reaches €100m Horizon 2020 EU funding milestone

Wales has secured more than €100m to support major research and development projects from a flagship EU fund.

Horizon 2020 is the EU's largest ever research and innovation programme, supporting cutting-edge science and technology and international collaboration to deliver solutions to key challenges facing society.

Since the launch of the highly-competitive programme, Welsh businesses and universities have been involved in more than 2,800 international collaborations. Click [here](#) for more information



The European Commission has released the 2019 application deadlines for Erasmus+. €187m will be available to UK organisations through the programme.

Application deadlines and information on the types of activities you can apply for are available [here](#)

Interreg North West Europe

The next call for project proposals will be open until the 14 June 2019. The team are looking for transnational cooperation initiatives that can deliver concrete results for the North-West Europe area.

Read more [here](#)

Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP)

This programme is funded by the European Union's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and by the Welsh Government.

The following RDP scheme windows for funding are now open:

Rural Business Investment Scheme – Food application dates

Next Expression of Interest window opening 15th January 2019

The Rural Business Investment Scheme - FOOD (RBISF) is a capital investments scheme to support projects that offer clear and quantifiable benefits to the food and drink industry in Wales. The scheme is open to existing and start up micro & small food and drink processor's and manufacturers throughout Wales.

This is a capital investment scheme for food and drink processing or manufacturing activities currently not eligible under the Food Business Investment Scheme.

More information can be found [here](#)

Micro Small Business Fund (MSBF)

The Micro Small Business Fund (MSBF) is an investment fund for projects in the tourism sector in Wales. It can be used either to upgrade existing or create new high quality product.

More information can be found [here](#)

Farming Connect Management Exchange programme 2019

The application window is now open for the Farming Connect Management Exchange Programme 2019.

More information can be found [here](#)

Contact Us

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