



## 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.

## Preparing Wales - EU funds



In the event of the UK leaving the European Union without a deal or transition period, advice for beneficiaries of current EU-funded projects is available [here](#)

## Have your say on Skills....

Skills and training are key areas affecting a range of business leaders across the region and 2019 will be a year when we will see significant change in the political and economic landscape. There has never been a more important time to ensure that we have the right skills in the region to deal with the changes on the horizon.

The RLSP aim to deliver an Employment and Skills plan for our Region that is fit for purpose that will meet the employer needs as well as encouraging people to take advantage of the opportunities that will become available in the region through the City and Growth Deals.

Please take some time to complete the short on-line questionnaire focusing on your business and the skills needs now and will need in the future. The information is confidential and is only used to inform the Skills Plan.

**Be part of changing the skills landscape in the South West and Mid Wales region - have your say by completing the survey online via [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RLSP2019](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RLSP2019)**

## OECD to lead new project to support regional economic development in Wales

As world leaders in their field, advice from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will help ensure that Wales' new plans for regional investment after Brexit embeds international best practice. Read more [here](#)

## €1.9m EU funds to link cross border communities in Ireland and Wales through the stories of the Celtic Saints



The 'Ancient Connections' project aims to rediscover the fascinating heritage of early medieval Celtic saints as a way of attracting new visitors to coastal communities in Ireland and Wales.

The €2.3m project is led by Pembrokeshire County Council, in partnership with Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, Wexford County Council and Visit Wexford. Read more about the project [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 <sup>1</sup>	1,680
Enterprises Created <sup>2</sup>	414
Jobs Created <sup>3</sup>	3,195
Participants Assisted	46,494
Participants Supported into Employment	3,577
Participants Gaining Qualifications	17,517
Participants in education / training	2,004

Source: WEFO, 28/02/2019

<sup>1</sup> Aggregate of the Enterprises receiving non-financial support indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

<sup>2</sup> Aggregate of the New enterprises supported indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

<sup>3</sup> Aggregate of the Employment increase in supported enterprises indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes



Regional Learning and Skills Partnership  
South West & Mid Wales

## Nominations Sought for a New Chair for RLSP

An exciting opportunity has arisen for the position of chair of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP), a partnership that is driving change in the skills arena across South West and Mid Wales. An enthusiastic private sector candidate is being sought, to represent employers from across region at RLSP meetings, work with the chair of the other two Regional Skills Partnership in Wales and with Welsh Government Ministers and Civil Servants.

The RLSP is also leading on the Skills and Talent Intervention, one of the 11 projects that make up the City Deal and will work with the Mid Wales Growth Deal moving forward.

The Role of the Learning and Skills Partnership Board is to:

- improve the collection and sharing of regional employment and skills data, and intelligence.
- identify the needs of businesses and the current and future workforce in the region.
- produce an Employment and Skills Plan.
- ensure that the learning and skills infrastructure meets the economic and social needs of the region.

What we are looking for in a chair:

- Knowledge and experience in any of the related industry sectors (Advanced Materials, Manufacturing, Energy, Construction, Health and Social Care, Leisure and Tourism, Food and Farming, Financial and Professional Services or Creative Industries).
- Strong private sector experience
- Strong leadership and partnership ethos
- Demonstrate an understanding of the wider strategic environment and take account of this when making recommendations.
- The ability to convey complex messages to a variety of audiences including Welsh Government.
- Experience of chairing a diverse partnership and high level meeting involving a range of external partners.

The post is a voluntary position with an approximate commitment of 12 days a year.

### Selection Process

Closing date for applications: 24th April 2019

Panel meeting and decision made: Early May 2019

First meeting: 16th May 2019

### For more information or to apply

Please either contact Jane Lewis on 01554 742431 or submit a CV to [jelewis@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:jelewis@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

## Newly opened Computational Foundry Set to Power Digital Economy



Swansea University officially opened the doors to its Computational Foundry at the Bay Campus on Monday 4 February.

The new facility promises to be a beacon for computational and mathematical thinking that will draw in talented researchers, collaborations with industry and research users, to generate significant research income and help underpin job creation and economic opportunity in the region.

The University's vision is to nurture and grow a dedicated community of computational and mathematical scientists who pursue transformative research and believe that better computational science is vital in building a progressive world: socially, economically, culturally, philosophically and intellectually.

The Foundry, backed by £17m from the European Regional Development Fund, will drive forward computational and mathematical science research, to help make Wales a global destination for computational scientists.

The Foundry will also seek to connect researchers with collaborative partners to develop and pilot ideas, to form large scale research proposals funded both by private and public funders. As results emerge from such projects, the research will be translated into impact for society and the economy. Read more [here](#).

## £35 Million Engineering Research Institute Nears Completion

The last bricks have been laid for a new engineering Research Institute on the Swansea University Bay Campus this week. A special ceremony marked a final step in the near completion of the £35 million state-of-the-art facility specialising in novel materials, processing and numerical technologies.

The Institute for Innovative Materials, Processing and Numerical Technologies (IMPACT) facilitates the University's College of Engineering further expansion. It will support the local and the global engineering industry with collaborative, fundamental research.

This Centre of Excellence is part-funded by Swansea University, with £17.4 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Welsh Government. Read more [here](#).



## Advanced Engineering and Materials Research Institute (AEMRI)



Jane (second right)

*The Tipper Group was launched by a group of engineers at TWI Ltd, The Welding Institute and the National Structural Integrity Centre (NSIRC) in autumn 2016. It is named after Constance Tipper who was a Cambridge fracture female engineer, who investigated the liberty ship failures during World War II. The Tipper Group holds events and networking opportunities to support and diversity in welding, joining and associated technologies in order to offer inspiration, support and professional development.*

The **Advanced Engineering Materials Research Institute (AEMRI)** - a state-of-the-art engineering inspection and validation facility based at TWI Wales in Port Talbot. A specialist division of the **TWI** group, the initiative is being part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government.

AEMRI employee, Jane Allwright, recently completed a 2-day welding appreciation course at the TWI Cambridge premises, in January 2019. This event was organised through the TWI Tipper Group, purposely to encourage diversity in engineering.

Jane has previously studied mathematics for four years at Cambridge University. She moved to Wales in 2016 and is very much enjoying the Welsh culture – so much so that she is learning the Welsh language. Her current activities at TWI under the AEMRI programme include finite element analysis (FEA) for a range of projects and industries – particularly the modelling of ultrasonic guided waves in pipes and other structures, the modelling of ultrasonic testing more generally, and the application of mathematics to non-destructive testing (NDT) research and development.

Jane said of her experience, “Normally I deal with technology on the theoretical side, but going on this welding appreciation workshop has given me a much better understanding of how welding is actually carried out. Over the two days we learned about and produced three different types of welds: manual metal arc (MMA), metal active gas (MAG) and tungsten inert gas (TIG). The instructors were great, and I learned so much about the techniques and the differences between them that I wouldn’t have got by just studying theory. This has helped me to understand the sorts of defects that can occur during the weld processes, which will come in useful in my work on NDT and also my simulations.

This workshop was a brilliant opportunity for me, and I hope that events like this one will encourage more people – both men and women – mathematicians, scientists and engineers – to have a go at something that they might never have thought of doing.”

This training demonstrated how TWI is willing to support and encourage greater diversity in engineering, while also offering a genuine hands-on insight into the skills required by welders. This activity has been part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government.

## Working Wales

**Ken Skates AM, Minister for Economy and Transport released a written statement on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2019 announcing the launch of the new Working Wales advice service on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

“As outlined in the Progress report on the Employability Plan in September 2018, a new employment advice service is in development. At this uncertain time for the Welsh economy, it will be a key mechanism for ensuring more streamlined employability support to individuals across Wales.

As Minister I will be launching the new Working Wales service on 1st May 2019.

Working Wales (known previously as the Employment Advice Gateway) will be delivered by Careers Wales and will provide an all-Wales entry point to employability support”

Read the full statement [here](#).

## EU Funding Boost for Cynnydd

**Counsel General and Brexit Minister Jeremy Miles has welcomed substantial new EU funding to extend a scheme boosting the prospects of thousands of young people across south west Wales.**

The Cynnydd project, which is led by Pembrokeshire County Council, and also operates across Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, has been awarded an additional £11.5 million from the European Social Fund.

The project works with Careers Wales, FE colleges and private and third sector companies, to help young people into work via training and work experience opportunities, while providing one-to-one mentoring, coaching and counselling to improve life skills and self-esteem.

Jeremy Miles today announced that Cynnydd, which was launched in September 2016, will now run until December 2022 thanks to the extra EU funding. This means a further 3,200 young people will benefit from support and opportunities created by the project over the next three years, and 7,500 in total.



The UK Government has published an updated [Technical Notice](#) providing guidance to organisations and individuals on the UK's anticipated participation in the current Erasmus+ (2014-2020) and European Solidarity Corps (2018-2020) programmes should the UK leave the EU with no agreement in place.

Current beneficiaries and prospective applicants for funding are encouraged to read the Technical Notice carefully, for an overview of the possible implications of a no deal Brexit on their projects or applications and any actions they may need to take.

Read more [here](#)

### 2019 Call for Proposals

The Government recommends that applications are submitted as normal for the [upcoming deadlines](#) for funding in respect of the 2019 Call for Proposals, for both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. This will ensure that organisations and individuals can take part in the programmes if a withdrawal agreement is in place.

At the same time, organisations should take note of the scenarios outlined in the Technical Notice as part of their business planning.



The ninth call for transnational co-operation initiatives will run until **14 June 2019**.

The current call for proposals is **only open to priority 1 and priority 3** of the NWE Programme. Each of these priorities has one specific objective. Transnational partnerships are therefore invited to submit their project application under one of these two priorities.

Further details available [here](#)

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## 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:

### Sustainable Production Grant 2

#### Expression of Interest window opened 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019

The Sustainable Production Grant (SPG) scheme is a capital grant support package aimed at farmers in Wales of between £12,000 to £50,000.

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](#)

### Farm Business Grant

#### Expression of Interest Window opened 4 March 2019

The grant provides farmers with a financial contribution towards capital investments in equipment and machinery.

More information can be found [here](#)



## Timber Business Investment Scheme

The Timber Business Investment scheme provides funding for capital investments that add value to forests by enabling woodland management activities, timber harvesting and/or timber processing.

More information can be found [here](#)

### Contact Us

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