

Welsh Government Entrepreneurship & Delivery

Background Paper for the Valleys Task Force

The Entrepreneurship Division of the Welsh Government is part of the Economy, Skills and Natural Resource Department.

Entrepreneurship Offer

The Entrepreneurship division engages in entrepreneurship and business support (SME) activity across Wales, including:

- Creating an entrepreneurship eco-system in Wales to support and develop Wales into the best place to start and grow a business.
- Promoting entrepreneurship at all ages and creating a focus on home grown SMEs.
- Supporting individuals through the Business Wales service to start a business and supporting SMEs to grow and create employment by delivering quality business support, advice, and information across all channels, digital, face-to-face and phone.

Business Wales

- In January 2012 the Micro-Business Task and Finish Group under the Chairmanship of Robert Lloyd Griffiths identified five key priorities with recommendations relating to- awareness and access of business support services; access to finance; mentoring and coaching; public sector procurement and regulatory burden.
- In January 2013 the Welsh Government's bilingual Business Wales Service was established in response to the Micro-business Report and feed back from customers and the business community to simplify and make it easier to access business support in Wales. The service was refreshed in January 2016 and makes it easier for aspiring entrepreneurs and Welsh businesses, including social enterprises to access the information, advice and support they require to start and grow their businesses.
- Business Wales is supported by funding from European Structural Funds. As the economy has continued its recovery the emphasis for the 2014-20 round of EU funding has been refocused to prioritise greater support for businesses with growth potential. Therefore the Business Wales service focuses greater support on growth businesses but also continues to offer a service to all individuals and businesses appropriate to their needs utilising digital services in addition to traditional methods.
- Business Wales offers a single point of contact for businesses and entrepreneurs to advice and support from public, private and voluntary sectors, and can be

accessed online via businesswales.gov.wales and its social media presence; the 03000 6 03000 helpline; and through a network of offices located across Wales.

- Business Wales provides general business and start-up advice, information and signposting, as well as 6 specialist strands including equality & diversity; resource efficiency; international trade; skills; procurement; and mentoring.

Key Business Wales activities include:

- The Business Wales Helpline provides a bilingual service for individuals and businesses seeking access to advice, information and signposting to help them start and grow their businesses.
- Business Wales website and associated social media channels <http://businesswales.gov.wales/> that includes the Business Online Support Service (BOSS) makes the current Welsh Government face-to-face business courses available online and provides on-demand access to information to help individuals start and grow a business.
- General, equality, environmental, and procurement advice and international trade support, as well as an information and signposting service.
- Practical tendering support, including Meet the Buyer events and How to Tender workshops.
- The Business Wales Mentoring Service facilitates access to mentoring support from a wide, diverse mix of experienced business people.
- Business Wales provides access to finance, including the Wales Micro Business Loan Fund and Start Up Loans.
- The Business Wales Accelerated Growth Programme provides specialist tailored high growth support for pre and post start businesses with the ambition to significantly grow.
- Social Business Wales provides advice and support for those considering starting up or operating a social business.
- Sell2Wales is an information source and procurement portal set up by the Welsh Government to help businesses win contracts with the public sector across Wales.
- The Directory of Welsh Businesses provides businesses in Wales with an opportunity to promote their goods, services and credentials to other businesses and to consumers.

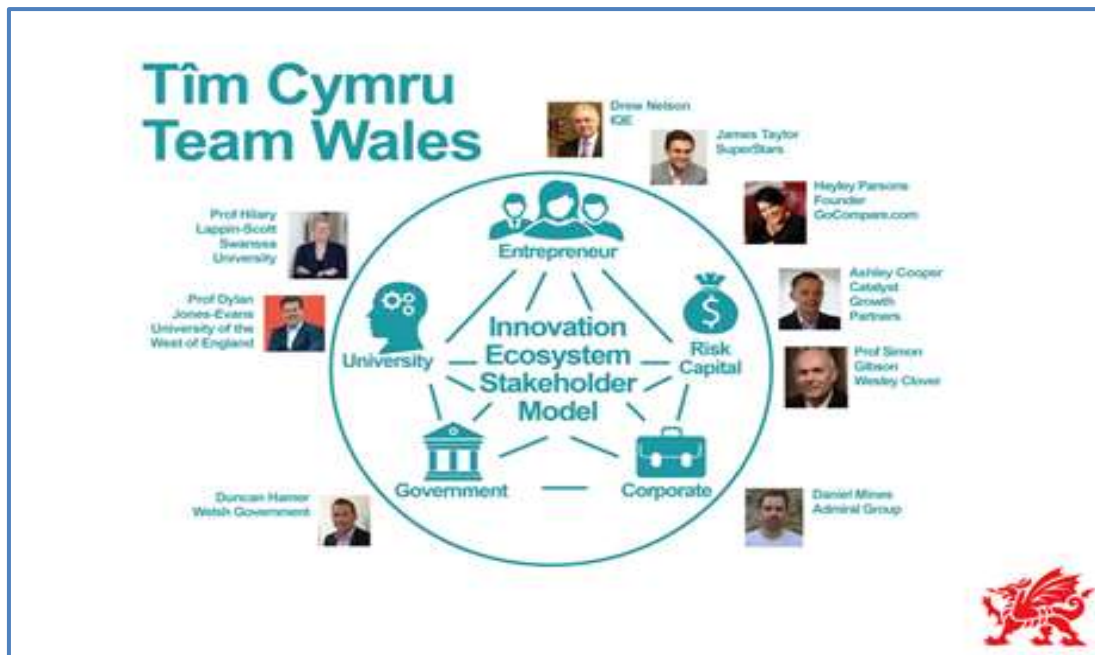
Business Wales Youth Entrepreneurship Service:

Also delivered under the Business Wales model is the Youth Entrepreneurship Service which supports the next generation of young entrepreneurs in Wales and encourages young people to be entrepreneurial and help those interested in starting a business take their ideas forward. The service aims to encourage young people to raise their aspirations and realise their own potential for creating exciting opportunities for themselves and others. Activity includes:

- Big Ideas Wales supports the next generation of young entrepreneurs in Wales and encourages young people to be entrepreneurial and to help those interested in starting a business take their idea forward.
- A network of 365 Role Models deliver inspirational workshops and coach future entrepreneurs.
- The Enterprise Troopers primary school competition nurtures the spirit of entrepreneurship and encourages business to support young people.
- The Big Ideas Wales Challenge aims to identify the next generation of entrepreneurs and nurture the talents and ambitions of young entrepreneurs aged 16-24 and support them to launch a business.
- Regional FE/HE Entrepreneurship Hubs raise awareness and promote practical entrepreneurial experiences to help students build confidence in their ideas and business.

Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme (REAP)

- Wales successfully applied to join the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) REAP which commenced October 2015.
- MIT REAP is a global initiative designed to help regions accelerate economic growth and job creation through innovation-driven entrepreneurship (IDE).
- MIT selected 8 global partner regions to participate as cohort 3. Wales has joined partner regions from Bangkok, Thailand; Tokyo, Japan; Beijing, China; South West Norway; Santiago, Chile; Ashdod, Israel and Al Madinah, Saudi Arabia.
- Under the Chairmanship of Simon Gibson, Wesley Clover Corporation, the team is:



- The Welsh REAP Champions returned from the first workshop in October 2015 and agreed the positioning of REAP as:

“To embed a national imperative for entrepreneurship and innovation across Wales by all stakeholders to create more home grown profitable companies creating wealth”

- Aligning with the “This is Wales” brand under “#Be the Spark”, the focus of the work will be to create a movement based on a digital and communal interface putting simplicity, visibility and connectivity at its core.
- Fundamental to REAP is the engagement with five major stakeholder groups: government, corporate, academia, risk capital, and the entrepreneurial community under the principles of simplicity, connectivity and visibility.
- Following the extensive mapping exercise of key stakeholders, the Panel will be undertaking a broader engagement to stimulate the movement which is planned for spring 2017.
- Using MIT frameworks, an analysis of Wales’ entrepreneurial ecosystem identified a positive policy environment for innovation and entrepreneurship but challenges associated with funding for the commercialisation of research and the development of an entrepreneurial culture.
- To support the stakeholder engagement, a communication strategy is under development. Aligning with the “This is Wales” brand under “#Be the Spark”, the focus will be to create a movement, putting simplicity, visibility and connectivity at its core.

Anchor Companies

- There are 52 Anchor Companies in Wales. The Welsh Government provides Anchor Companies with a dedicated Account Director and Account Manager, both of whom work closely to ensure that the aims of Welsh Government help is to support the business in Wales.

<http://gov.wales/topics/businessandconomy/sectors/anchor/?lang=en>

- There are 58 Regionally Important Companies with significant importance to the region of Wales in which they are located. This is because of the number of employees, commitment to skilled workforce development of the supply chain and investment in the Welsh site.

Enterprise Zones

- There are 8 Enterprise Zones across Wales which are designated geographical areas that support new and expanding businesses by providing a first class business infrastructure and support. Each of the Enterprise Zones has a focus on one or more key business sectors. They are:
 - Anglesey Enterprise Zone –energy & environment sector.
 - Cardiff Airport and St Athan Enterprise Zone –advanced manufacturing & materials sector, in particular its aerospace sub-sector.
 - Central Cardiff Enterprise Zone –financial & professional services sector.
 - Deeside Enterprise Zone –advanced manufacturing & materials sector.
 - Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone –advanced manufacturing & materials sector.
 - Haven Waterway Enterprise Zone –energy & environment sector.
 - Snowdonia EZ – energy & environment, aerospace/Spaceport.
 - Port Talbot Waterfront – advanced manufacturing, energy & environment and construction sectors.
- 2015/16 Enterprise Zone Key Performance Indicators show headline figures are 1,960 jobs supported against 1,860 in 2014/15 and £70m investment against £36.9m in 2014/15.

Local Growth Zones

- Two zones exist in Powys and the Teifi Valley. The aim is to promote options to support jobs and encourage economic growth providing an opportunity to trial various pilot projects which are sensitive to local economic circumstances and growth challenges.
- Many of the actions are being taken forward as part of wider programmes In addition a number of specific projects are being taken forward with discrete funding, including:
 - A variety of projects under Powys Local Growth Zone, including support for the business led approach to local regeneration being piloted in Llandrindod Wells, including funding for a town champion.
 - The Severn Valley Effect project, based on the Sirroli model of local economic facilitation.
 - A pilot project in the Teifi Valley on Welsh language business.