



E-NEWSLETTER Summer 2020



RET update

Welcome to our June '20 newsletter.

As we all continue to adjust our delivery models, I'm pleased to say that the team has successfully migrated online, facilitating remote regional network sessions. These sessions have of course focused on the challenges projects are facing in light of Covid19 but also provided a forum for project leads to explore potential solutions and share good practice.

The team also ran a number of online workshops, enabling expert practitioners from across the region and sectors, to come together to discuss Welsh Government's consultation on the Framework for Future Regional Investment in Wales. Comments have been collated and shared with Welsh Government.

We're now busy planning our next series of events, including an online information day where stakeholders will have the opportunity of registering for all or just some of the speaker sessions. If there's a specific topic/speaker you'd like to see on the agenda, please get in touch with the team SEWalesRET@bridgend.gov.uk

The support to those affected by COVID-19 continues to develop and adapt as we better understand the impact across our region. Information on the suite of business support can be accessed [here](#), WEFO's latest edition of their Conditions for Support and Frequently Asked Questions for ERDF, ESF & Ireland Wales European Territorial Co-operation Programmes [here](#) and you can read about how European funded projects are adapting their delivery to supporting their client groups on pages 4 to 9.

Stay safe all

Lisa, Natalie, Amy and Karyn

In this edition

RET update

Page 1

Future of Regional Funding

Page 2

Horizon 2020

Page 2

CCR update

Page 3

Working Wales

Page 3

Regional performance

Page 3

Advanced Media Production

Page 4

ION Leadership

Page 5

METAL

Page 5

ASTUTE 2020

Page 6

FE employer support

Page 7

AIF COVID-19 Funding

Page 8

LA employability teams

Pages 8-9

Staying Well@Work Case Study

Pages 9

Regional investment in Wales after Brexit

The Welsh Government's consultation on a framework for the future of regional investment in Wales took place between 28 February and 10 June, and was supported by a series of consultation webinars held for north, mid, south west and south east Wales during May. Presentations included those from Welsh Government officials on the background and context to the consultation and the development, in partnership, of the regional economic frameworks being led by Chief Regional Officers. The webinars were also supported by presentations from local government programme directors from the

City and Growth Deal programmes. The webinar recordings and presentations are still available to view [here](#).

Consultation responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders and citizens across Wales. All of the feedback received is currently being collated and analysed by an independent research company. The consultation findings will be considered by Welsh Ministers during the summer months so the future direction of travel and next steps can be agreed to help ensure the Welsh Government remains on track to deliver new investment arrangements from next year when monies from the UK Government are received.

[...back to top](#)

Horizon 2020

There are still opportunities for funding available via the Horizon 2020 programme. UK organisations can continue to participate in the Horizon 2020 programme and receive EU grant funding for the lifetime of projects, including projects finishing after the transition period ends in 2020.



Current calls include the [Eureka call for digital health and healthy ageing](#) which is open for applications until 5 August with a [virtual marketplace](#) created to facilitate introductions.

There are also opportunities available in September for [MSCA Individual Fellowships 2020](#) and [Energy Efficiency](#), and, in October, the [European Innovation Council Accelerator \(EICA\) phase 2](#).

The European Commission has also recently established the [European Research Area \(ERA\) corona platform](#), which is a central source providing comprehensive information about funding opportunities in relation to Coronavirus at European Union and national level. The site includes useful links and information, including FAQs, extensions to calls and lists of relevant projects.



The Horizon 2020 unit has a full list of calls available, if you would like more information, please contact horizon2020@gov.wales.

[...back to top](#)

CCR update

CCR sets out 10 priorities for the region in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.



The 10 priorities, approved by the CCR Regional Cabinet on May 18th, come as an addendum to the CCR'S Industrial and Economic Plan. This plan was always intended to be flexible so that it could be adapted to the changing needs of the regional economy over its 20-year lifespan. The pandemic necessitated an early reassessment to make sure it still met the needs of the region and the resultant priority areas of focus are as found on their website [here](#).

[...back to top](#)

Working Wales

During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Working Wales team have been busy enhancing their existing digital services and developing new approaches to support customers and partners. They have also developed a Working Wales partnership newsletter which aims to keep you up to date with their latest news, events and service updates. The [first edition](#) showcases some of the work the team have undertaken, highlighting ongoing customer and partnership work and opens with a Working

Wales First Anniversary update from Nikki Lawrence, the Careers Wales Chief Executive.



At the moment there is not a link for subscription but please share the current edition with colleagues and partners and we will update you with contact details in due course.

[...back to top](#)

Regional performance

These are the latest available headline figures for the performance of the ESI funded operations within the SE Region. If you would like more detail on the data please email us at sewalesret@bridgend.gov.uk. At the moment it is not available on the [WEFO website](#).

Fund	Indicator	Figures for the SE Region
ERDF	Enterprises assisted	4,064
	Enterprises created	1,347
	Jobs created	7,734
ESF	Participants assisted	104,854
	Participants supported into employment	12,728
	Participants gaining qualifications	42,900
	Participants in education / training	2,795

[...back to top](#)

Advanced Media Production



**Cynhyrchu
Cyfryngau Uwch
Advanced Media
Production**

Improve your digital skills – from the comfort of your own home

A new distance learning course, offering the opportunity for businesses and employees to enhance their digital media skills, is now underway through Aberystwyth University's Advanced Media Production (AMP) programme.

The course, which is delivered in Welsh and English, has been supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Welsh Government and is the result of a unique scheme between the departments of Computer Science, Theatre Film & Television Studies and History & Welsh History at Aberystwyth University.

Much of the focus in the current challenging situation is on working remotely and as individuals and the aim with this course is to offer flexibility, while at the same time equipping employees with the theoretical and real-world skills required to work with advanced digital and media technologies.

Professor Elizabeth Treasure, Vice-Chancellor at Aberystwyth University said: "We can be proud of the success Wales has achieved to date in the creative industries sector, however, it is essential to advance these technical skills and to continue to inspire innovation and upskill the existing workforce due to the ever changing digital media and technologies landscape.

"We've designed the MSc Advanced Media

Production course with businesses and individuals in mind so that it's flexible, easily accessible through online learning and will complement the employee's work and other commitments.

"This high level accredited training and the combined expertise gained from the University's Department of Computer Science, the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies and the Department of History and Welsh History will benefit and enable businesses and individuals to become more productive, sustainable and efficient."

Participants can either study the 14 week course via the Distance Learning programme where training is delivered entirely online, or they can follow the Blended Learning programme which is split into online and practical units.

Each module consists of three blocks which are delivered in a rolling programme with annual start dates in February, June and October, giving course participants the opportunity to cover all module choices.

As the scheme has been supported by ESF through the Welsh Government, a reduced fee of £165.00 per module is offered to businesses or employees. Bursaries are also available to assist with travel and dependent care.

For more information about the programme and eligibility criteria, please get in touch with the Advanced Media Production team on 07939 2033938 or ccu-amp@aber.ac.uk or visit their [website](#).



[...back to top](#)

ION Leadership

ION Leadership introduce virtual learning opportunities

"Led by Swansea University, in partnership with Bangor University, ION Leadership is backed with £5.7m from the European Social Fund to raise skills and drive forward productivity and turnover in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as in larger companies in Wales.

The initiative has supported over 1400 managers, aspiring leaders, and entrepreneurs in nearly 1000 business to develop high-quality skills through targeted leadership programmes that aims to raise productivity in the workplace whilst developing sustainable, profitable enterprises.

Much has been said about the importance of leadership in the current climate. As business leaders, we are used to having to navigate through changing times. At ION we are mainly office-based and our weeks are filled with face-to-face meetings, networking with business communities and delivering our experiential learning masterclasses through group activities and

interaction. We have had to do things differently.



To ensure we continue to meet the needs of our delegates and networks, we have been running a number of virtual learning opportunities, which have been very well attended and have received fantastic feedback.

Upcoming sessions cover innovation, coaching, learning organisations and the #ZoomBookRoom. We also run a weekly virtual networking session which encourages open discussion and has led to some fantastic new business partnerships being formed. Information on future sessions can be found on our [events pages](#).

If you are interested in becoming an extraordinary leader, check out our programmes later this year on our [website](#)."

[...back to top](#)

METAL



For a limited time **all** of training offered by the [METAL project](#) will be **free of charge** for Welsh businesses.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the operation is unable to teach face-to-face at the moment so

they are in the process of moving more of their content onto an online platform.

'Corrosion & Coatings Technology' is live now, and they hope to have more courses available to study online in the coming weeks.

The courses are fully accredited by Swansea University, and on successful completion students receive a certificate and 10 credits.

If this sounds like something you or your business would benefit from, please [register your interest online](#) or sign up to their mailing list to stay updated with which courses are available to study from home.

[...back to top](#)

ASTUTE 2020

Celebrating 10 years of working in collaboration with the manufacturing industry



Over 370 Welsh Enterprises have benefited from working with ASTUTE



Over 270 New and safeguarded jobs in Wales



Over £14.4 million investment generated by Welsh Enterprises

The [ASTUTE](#) partnership is celebrating a huge milestone: May 1st marked 10 years of successful operation, engagement with over 500 companies, and support to more than 370 businesses across Wales to address manufacturing challenges. Thanks to the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government and the support from Wales' Top Higher Education Institutions (HEI), ASTUTE has delivered high impact collaborations over the years, providing greater levels of business innovation.

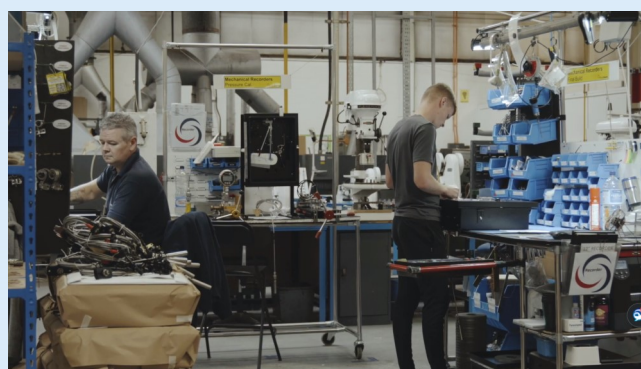
The HEI partnership, led by Swansea University in close collaboration with Aberystwyth University, Cardiff University, University of South Wales and University of Wales Trinity Saint David, has brought together world-class academics, highly qualified technical experts and project managers to deliver industry-led Research, Development and Innovation. As a result, companies have invested over £14.4 million to embed advanced and sustainable technologies and implement improvements into their manufacturing processes and created or safeguarded over 270 jobs.

ASTUTE has established strong collaborative relationships with Welsh companies across a variety of sectors like aerospace, automotive, medical, and food and drink over the years,

including:

- Crossflow Energy Co Ltd. on a novel horizontal axis, off-grid, wind and solar energy solution,
- Affresol Ltd. on the manufacturing and production of Thermo Poly Rock from a high percentage of recycled materials,
- Cintec International Ltd. on their unique anchoring and reinforcement system to be employed in earthquake-susceptible constructions worldwide.

Manufacturer of industrial instrumentation for the oil, gas and other processing industries, British Rototherm Company Ltd., has been working with ASTUTE 2020 to use ASTUTE's acoustic modelling capabilities. As a result of the collaboration, the company has achieved market-leading capability in noise prediction for orifice pressure reducers, employed new staff, invested in new machinery and won additional contracts.



Managing Director Oliver Conger highlights the positive interaction between his company and ASTUTE 2020 in a project spotlight video: "ASTUTE 2020 have a significant amount of technical capability, they have access to programs, and software and resources that a company such as Rototherm doesn't have. They can help to provide confidence to take something on that you wouldn't have gone forward with." The [video can be viewed here](#).

www.astutewales.com

info@astutewales.com

[...back to top](#)

Further Education Sector Responds to COVID Crisis with Fully Subsidised Training for Employers

In response to the crushing impact of COVID-19 on the economic wellbeing of Wales, colleges across the FE sector in Wales have come together with WEFO (Welsh European Funding Office) to



develop a package of support to help and assist businesses during this time.

With the support of ESF funding, Further Education colleges will now be offering local

businesses accredited training and development qualifications for their staff, ranging from Levels 1 -6 that are **100% subsidised** through 3 regional projects:

- Skills for Employers & Employees (SEE) in North Wales;
- Skills for Industry (SfI) in South West and Central Wales;
- Upskilling@Work in South East Wales

We are delighted to announce that with immediate effect, and expected to run until August 2021, this training is now **available** for qualifying companies. These include public, private and third sector organisations of any size with a base in Wales who have not already received more than 200,000 euros in de minimis state aid over the last

three fiscal years.

The training must be an approved and accredited qualification that can be delivered by the further education college and includes a range of competence based, work-related qualifications for all business sectors

If you are interested in finding out more about how we can support you before the funding period closes, please contact:

South East Wales

Amanda Harris

amanda.harris@cymoedd.ac.uk

Danial Ashman

danial.ashman@coleggwent.ac.uk

North Wales

Vicky Barwis

employers@cambria.ac.uk

SW and Central Wales

Nigel Richards

Nigel.richards@gcs.ac.uk

01792 294209



Further information regarding eligibility requirements for this training can be located [here](#).

The full subsidy cannot be awarded to certain employers, and details of those can be found [here](#).

[...back to top](#)

Active Inclusion Fund Covid-19 Round

[Active Inclusion](#) funding (AIF) is still available to help third sector organisations in the struggle against coronavirus – with a simplified and shortened application process.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown measures taken to address it have affected many AIF participants. They have meant that organisations have had to adapt the way that they carry out their day to day activities in order to support both their participants and the wider community.



A short, simplified round of AIF funding will be run for organisations already on the Approved Beneficiaries List (ABL), to support social inclusion and improved employability

prospects. The funding will assist with measures taken to alleviate the crisis (that are not already funded by other sources), and support activities to build recovery after the emergency period ends.

The fund will support six-month projects with a total cost of no more than £25,000, all with grants of 80%. Some projects may focus on activities to help with Covid-19 related services, others may focus on services to directly support their participant groups. Applications will be via [MAP](#), WCVA's multi-application portal, and they aim to have projects up and running within 4-6 weeks of submission.

The previous round of AIF funding that was 'paused' due to the pandemic has now been resumed, and applicants are being contacted to make sure that they are still happy to go ahead with their proposed projects. The next full round of invitations to apply is expected to open in **September 2020**. As always, this will go out to organisations that have already passed the initial stage and are on the ABL. So it's not too late to submit an eligibility questionnaire through [MAP](#) and apply to join that list.

[...back to top](#)

LA Employability teams

With rising unemployment figures, and people on furlough looking to up-skill, it's worth remembering the vast range of training, job seeking and upskilling support available from Local Authorities across the region. Summaries of the projects supported through the ERDF and ESF programmes are available on our [website](#).

Whatever your circumstances, local authorities can signpost people to the advice and help needed to get back into work and get some new qualifications.

The support on offer includes:

- Helping with CV writing, job application forms and covering letters
- Job searching and interview techniques
- Accredited training and informal job skills
- Possible funding for work-related expenses
- Advice on starting your own business
- Volunteering and work placement opportunities

The employability teams in each local authority can be contacted on the number/ email in the table on the [following page](#).

[...back to top](#)

Local Authority employability teams

Local Authority	Email	Phone
Blaenau Gwent	BIW2@aneurinleisure.org.uk	01495 354703
	WSFA2@aneurinleisure.org.uk	01495 355595
Bridgend	employability@bridgend.gov.uk	01656 815317
Caerphilly	bridgesintowork@caerphilly.gov.uk	01495 237921
Cardiff	intoworkadvice@cardiff.gov.uk	02920 871071
Merthyr	nlc.enquiries@merthyr.gov.uk	01685 727099
Monmouthshire	youthenterprise@monmouthshire.gov.uk	
	j2w@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk	01495 745769
	cfw@monmouthshire.gov.uk	07836 262102 07966 207047
Newport	j2wteam@newport.gov.uk	07792 946075 07581 187726
	Inspire2work@newport.gov.uk	
RCT	CfW@rctcbc.gov.uk	01443 425761
Torfaen	employability@torfaen.gov.uk	01633 647743
Vale of Glamorgan	MDDavies@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk	
	annette.harrison@careerswales.com	07725 705735
	helen.pereira@careerswales.com	07725 826308

[...back to top](#)

Staying Well @ Work Case Study – Darryl's Taxis and Minibuses

Building Prosperity, Resilience and Wellbeing (Staying Well @ Work) ESF funded programme led by Rhondda Cynon Taf

County Borough Council offers free support micro, small and medium sized businesses in their approach to staff well-being, assisting people with work-limiting health conditions and supporting people to returning to work after a period of absence.

Staying Well @ Work have recently worked with Darryl's Taxis and Minibuses, a micro



business based in Ynyshir, Porth to help them to improve their equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems and to assist them to meet the requirements of procurement and the e-tender framework and successful securement of contracts allowing the organisation to grow and prosper.

A number of policies were developed and reviewed, from sickness absence to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability. The policies implemented contributed towards a significant increase in scoring during the e-tender process, allowing the founder to prepare his organisation and staff for an anticipated phase of growth for the business going forward.

The RCT Staying Well at Work team can be contacted by [email](#) and telephone on 01443 827317.

[...back to top](#)