

Extra £6.6m for research in Welsh universities

The funding will pave the way for a new, longer-term approach to research and innovation in Wales. It is designed to help strengthen the current Welsh research base by enabling Welsh researchers to compete for a greater share of new UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding, as suggested by Professor Graeme Reid's review of research and innovation in Wales.

The funding will be managed by the Higher Education Council for Wales (HEFCW).

Kirsty Williams said:

"Over the past 20 years, Welsh universities have grown the volume, impact and international reach of their research. Wales is now among the most efficient research performers, converting relatively small levels of funding into highly regarded research, and in the process outperforming other parts of the UK and similar sized countries in terms of published research impact.

"In the current uncertain economic climate, it's more important than ever we support our universities in building their research capabilities and responding to both the changing UK research landscape and the potential consequences of Brexit."

Professor Peter Halligan, the Chief Scientific Advisor for Wales, said:

"It's vital we recognise and reinforce research excellence in our universities and this funding is welcome news for those leading research in Wales.

"We must continue to grow Wales's research and innovation capacity and highlight the impactful research work going on here, which contributes to our international profile and boosts our future economic capability."

Dr Alyson Thomas, Director of Policy and Funding at HEFCW, said:

"Strengthening our research base not only brings academic, societal and economic benefits, it also boosts universities' capacity to compete for external grants and encourages investments into Wales. We very much welcome this additional funding from the Welsh Government at this time and look forward to seeing the resulting developments in a valued and sustainable university research

sector.”