

Green light for £35m hub to drive world-leading research in Swansea Bay

EU funding of £17.4m is being invested in IMPACT (Innovative Materials, Processing and Numerical Technologies) to help establish a centre of excellence in Swansea Bay.

The new hub will include laboratory and office space as part of the College of Engineering and will support high-impact collaborative research with industry into ground-breaking science and technology to grow and future-proof business opportunities in the advanced engineering and materials sector.

It will include a metals technology centre, which will undertake research into metallurgy and materials science, supporting partnerships with the metals industry in Wales, the UK and worldwide. The aim is to pioneer new alloys, materials and metal manufacturing processes which can be used in engineering.

Set to open in 2019, the hub will attract 65 new, highly-skilled academic posts and 155 experienced researchers. It will also provide opportunities for local supply chain businesses and jobs during the construction phase.

Professor Drakeford said:

“EU funding is playing a vital role in the establishment of this centre of excellence, which will help drive new, innovative technologies in the engineering sector in Wales.”

IMPACT will focus research into next generation manufacturing processes, including robotics and automation; advanced aerospace and automotive structures.

Research will also involve characterisation and computational-based simulation for understanding and optimisation of manufacturing processes and products, such as wind turbines, aircrafts and engines.

The building will be built to BREEAM Excellent standard and will incorporate a range of measures to promote sustainability and equality, including bird habitats, solar panels, onsite bio-diversity and support for the local supply chain.

Professor Richard B. Davies, vice chancellor of Swansea University, said:

“We welcome the EU funding for this major new resource at the Bay Campus.

“IMPACT will operate as a semi-independent research institute with

objectives determined by a scientific board and advised on by external academic, governmental and industrial stakeholders.

“It is set to deliver a transformative, sustainable and laboratory future-proofed engineering research environment, aligning world-class technology development and delivery with collaboration between academia and industry.”