

## Kirsty Williams announces £3.5m for promoting Welsh universities in a post-Brexit world

The new funding is for Global Wales, a partnership between Universities Wales, British Council Wales, the Welsh Government and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. The support is via the Welsh Government's £50m EU Transition Fund to help business, public services and others prepare for the impacts of Brexit.

Established in 2015, Global Wales promotes Wales' universities in priority overseas markets: Vietnam and the United States. This funding will see a significant increase in the scope and scale of the programme to deliver the Study in Wales brand globally, develop existing activity in the US and Vietnam, and to expand to other markets. The aim is to drive education exports and boost Wales' profile as an outward-facing knowledge-economy.

Both Vietnam and the US have been identified as two increasingly important markets for a post-Brexit Wales. The funding will reflect this by supporting a Wales-Vietnam scholarship programme, identifying areas for joint-research and promoting Wales as a distinct study destination for Vietnam, the United States and other key markets, including Europe.

The Education Secretary's announcement coincides with the visit to Wales by His Excellency Tran Ngoc An, Vietnamese Ambassador to the UK, which will see discussions on strengthening educational links between the two countries.

Kirsty Williams said:

"I am very pleased to announce this funding for Global Wales so that they can strengthen the developing relationships we have with both Vietnam and the US.

"In a post-Brexit world we need to make sure that our HE sector continues to reach out to new and emerging markets.

"Our universities have so much to offer so we need to make sure that we look further afield to capitalise on the growing demand for higher education globally.

"I'm proud to welcome His Excellency Tran Ngoc An to Wales and hope that this announcement will be the beginning of a very productive partnership between our two countries."

Ambassador Tran Ngoc An said:

“As Ambassador of Vietnam to the UK, I highly appreciate the announcement of the Welsh Government to establish a fund for promotion of education co-operation between Wales and Vietnam. I am confident that with strong political will and join effort, our education co-operation will certainly be further developed.

“Our Minister of Education and Training is looking forward to welcoming HE Mrs Kirsty Williams, Cabinet Secretary of Education to Vietnam to lay a foundation for our education co-operation.”

Prof. Iwan Davies, Chair of the Global Wales Board, said:

“I am delighted that the Welsh Government is making this significant new investment in Global Wales. The announcement today represents an important vote of confidence in our world class universities and the role that they, along with the Global Wales partners, play in helping to underpin the economy of Wales.

“Overseas students, international research collaboration and global institutional partnerships all help build trust and goodwill for Wales around the world, which in turn, has the potential to have a transformational impact on the Welsh economy. In the uncertain context of Brexit, this new investment in Global Wales will strengthen the major contribution that higher education plays to Wales’ international engagement and reputation for years to come.”