

Plans to grow Welsh research published in Reid review

Julie James emphasised the Welsh Government's commitment to implement the proposals with funds secured alongside the UK Government as part of the post-Brexit settlement.

Last year, we asked Professor Graeme Reid of University College London to lead the review to look at the strengths, gaps and future potential to sustain and grow strong research and innovation activity in Wales.

The aim of the review was to look at the Welsh Government's overall investment into research and innovation and consider how it is making a difference and what we can do to improve things for the future.

The review builds upon and is informed by two previous reviews (Diamond and Hazelkorn) and provides clear analysis of current and future challenges and opportunities in Wales and across the UK. The report makes three recommendations including the establishment of;

- a new Welsh Research and Innovation Office in London to increase the visibility and influence of Welsh research;
- an additional fund of £30m a year, to incentivise researchers to win greater funding from business and from outside Wales; and
- a single overarching brand for its research and innovation funding to increase the visibility, coherence and impact of Welsh Government-funded research and innovation in Wales.

The Leader of the House said Welsh Government would accept the report's recommendations in principle and will consider how they can be implemented alongside responses to the current technical consultation on the new proposed Tertiary Education and Research Commission for Wales, as well as the post-Brexit funding settlement for the nations and regions of the UK, and the UK Government's plans to rebalance science spending across the country in pursuit of accelerating regional growth and productivity.

Julie James said,

"I would like to thank Professor Reid for his hard work in producing this extensive piece of work and would pay tribute too to the distinguished panel of advisers who assisted him.

"I was pleased to read that Professor Reid found research and innovation in Wales to be strong, with many examples of national and international impact and success. It is essential that we build on this success and grow the sector, as we respond to the changing UK research landscape and the potential consequences of Brexit.

"We do acknowledge however that, working across sectors, we can do

more to increase the visibility and influence of Welsh research. We will therefore take forward the recommendation on a dedicated London presence to promote Welsh Research and Innovation immediately.”

Professor Reid said,

“Given continuing pressures on public finance, significant reforms to higher and further education, and fast-approaching changes in UK and EU funding, this was an opportune moment to review Government-funded research and innovation in Wales, and I was delighted to have the opportunity to lead that work.

“The growing UKRI budget now presents major opportunities for Welsh businesses and universities to win sizeable amounts of additional funding, which can help ensure Wales increases its competitiveness in the research and innovation sector.”