

Press release: Breaking down barriers to Welsh global exporting ambitions

- UK Government seeks views of Welsh businesses on how to boost export potential
- Global Welsh exporters Hiut Denim and Aerfin to help inform UK Government's export strategy review

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns will challenge Welsh enterprises to set their sights on a global future when he gathers business leaders around the table to discuss the priorities, opportunities and challenges they face on their exporting journeys around the world.

It is part of a series of engagement opportunities undertaken by the UK Government as part of its Export Strategy review.

The Government is working closely with industry to understand the challenges faced by UK firms, increase awareness of export support and finance that is already available, and explore how this can be improved.

Cardigan based denim manufacturer Hiut – who export 25% of their jeans around the world, and the UK's fastest growing exporter, AerFin in Caerphilly will be among those joining the Secretary of State at the first roundtable meeting in Cardiff today (15 March) with another planned for north Wales later this month.

Exports from Wales rose by 12.3% to £16.4 billion in the latest year on year figures, is home to nearly 4,000 exporters with an average value per exporter of more than £4.2million.

Yet there is huge scope for more businesses to reach new customers by meeting demand for UK goods and services overseas.

As such, the UK Government is calling on Welsh businesses to contribute to the Export Strategy review and share their views on how the UK Government can encourage and support British businesses to take advantage of the enormous potential to grow.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The big increase in Welsh exports shows our home-grown companies are succeeding on the world stage and consumers want the high quality goods and services that we have to offer.

The Export Strategy review will draw on expertise from across government and the private sector, helping us to understand how best to support British companies to take advantage of opportunities in overseas markets.

Throughout this process, I want to see significant input from businesses in Wales, both large and small, to ensure we develop a strategy that meets their needs.

The meeting comes in the week before a host of Welsh companies attend the UK Government's GREAT Festival of Innovation in Hong Kong (21-24 March) – an event which will showcase the power of UK innovation and technology to the world.

The four-day event will bring together some of the UK and Asia's most pioneering companies to share innovations that will drive the future of free trade and for businesses to build lifelong partnerships.

The UK Government will report on the export strategy in spring this year.

Top 5 ways the UK Government supports businesses to export:

1. [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk) – export platform which lists thousands of export opportunities worth millions of pounds. It also puts firms in touch with global buyers at the click of a mouse.
2. [UK Export Finance](#) – the UK's export credit agency provides financial support like capital loans, to ensure no viable export deal fails due to lack of finance and insurance. UKEF has recently partnered with 5 of the UK's biggest banks, to help small businesses easily access government-backed financial support.
3. Face-to-face support for exporters in England – delivered via a network of around 250 international trade advisers (ITAs). ITAs are managed by 9 delivery partners who operate in each of the 9 English regions.
4. Trade shows – DIT supports trade shows across the world to showcase the best of UK companies from sectors including life sciences, automotive and food and drink.
5. Board of Trade – with representatives from the business community to be the 'eyes and ears' of modern businesses. It meets 4 times a year rotated around the UK guaranteeing all parts of the union have a chance to raise the issues most important to them.