

One week left to vote for an amazing teacher

Nominations for the awards are already flooding in, but with one week still to go until the closing date, The Welsh Government's Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, is urging everyone to nominate their education heroes to ensure that excellent education professionals receive the recognition they deserve.

Categories for awards this year include Teacher and Headteacher of the Year, Best use of Digital Learning, Inspirational use of the Welsh Language and Promoting Wellbeing, Inclusion and Relationships with the Community.

For the new Youth Work in Schools category, judges will be looking for those who have shown real commitment to improving the standards of youth work in schools, excellent leadership skills, and a drive for personal and professional development.

Dylan Lewis, Best Use of Digital winner 2018, Pontarddulais Comprehensive said:

"Coming back to the school was amazing, it was lovely to have pupils and parents congratulating me on my achievements. Since winning the award, I have been invited to take part in discussions on the future direction of digital technologies both in the school and within our cluster schools.

"It is vital that in the teaching profession teachers are acknowledged when they go above and beyond. We are in a profession that has the ability to inspire the next generation of designers, developers and creators."

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams said:

"We've already received so many fantastic nominations from across Wales for this year's awards, however I want to spread the message far and wide so we can celebrate all the very best that education in Wales has to offer.

"I'm also delighted that this year's awards will include the Youth Work in Schools category. Youth work plays a crucial role in supporting so many young people throughout Wales, helping them gain confidence and competence to ensure they fulfil their full potential. The award allows us to recognise the big impact their hard work has on the broader educational system.

"If you know someone that goes above and beyond the call of duty to

support the education of young people across Wales, be it a member of support staff, a teacher or a headteacher that is making big steps for your school, please take the time to nominate them and help us celebrate the greatest of Wales education professionals.”

To nominate a teaching professional doing great work in your area, visit gov.wales/teachingawardscymru. Nominations close 30 November 2018.

Join the conversation with [#TeachingAwardsCymru](https://twitter.com/TeachingAwardsCymru)

The Professional Teaching Awards Cymru 2018 categories:

- NEW Youth Work in Schools
- Supporting Teachers and Learners
- School Business Manager/Bursar
- Promoting Collaboration to Improve Learning Opportunities
- Promoting Wellbeing, Inclusion and Relationships with the Community
- Teacher of the Year
- Headteacher of the Year
- Outstanding New Teacher
- Best use of Digital Learning
- Inspirational use of the Welsh Language

For more information, please contact Cowshed:

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[External Digital Panel established to aid public services](#)

Lee Waters AM is leading the establishment of the external Digital Panel with the aim of helping improve the delivery of public services in Wales through better use of digital technologies.

The panel will help to shape the next steps towards improving the way we use digital as well as providing external advice and challenge for the Welsh public sector.

Julie James said:

“The last two decades have seen huge changes in the way digital technology has touched our lives. From online banking to the provision of news; from the growth of social media to shopping and

healthcare, the way we work and play continues to be transformed.

“As a Welsh Government it is crucial we are using our devolved powers to support our communities, our businesses and our public services to react, to adapt and to take advantage of new opportunities.

“I am pleased to establish this panel which will provide advice and challenge public services.”

Membership of the panel is as follows:

- Lee Waters AM – Assembly Member for Llanelli with a keen interest in the potential of technology across the public sector and Wales more generally.
- Anne Marie Cunningham – GP and associate medical director. Active campaigner for social justice, sustainable healthcare and digital transformation.
- Victoria Ford – director at Perago with expertise in change, communications and engagement.
- Paul Matthews – CEO of Monmouthshire Council and visiting professor at Cardiff University.
- Mark Wardle – consultant neurologist and clinical informatician. Chair of NHS Wales Technical Standards Board.
- Dominic Campbell – interim CDO of Homes England and founder of FutureGov. Digital government specialist.
- Sally Meecham – Digital, Data and Technology expert at UK Research and Innovation. She has experience in digital transformation as CDO at Defra and COO at GDS.

[£9.4m to help people with health problems stay in work](#)

The additional money will be directed to the In Work Support Service which aims to give people with mental or physical health conditions free and rapid access to occupational therapy in order to help them remain in employment. The injection of funding will enable the existing programme – which is delivered by Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMU) in South Wales and RCS in North Wales – to be extended until December 2022.

The In Work Support Service fills a gap in the market that was identified by partner organisations including General Practitioner Committee Wales and the Federation of Small Businesses, and provides rapid therapeutic interventions which help employees on or at risk of long-term sickness absence.

In supporting people with health problems to stay in work and in helping SME employers to manage the business impact of sickness absence, the programme aligns with the Welsh Government's Prosperity for All plan as well as its Economic Action Plan, Employability Plan and its Health strategy – A Healthier Wales.

The Economy Secretary announced the additional funding at a celebration event for Rhyl City Strategy (RCS), a not-for-profit organisation that aims to help people fulfil their potential through work. He said:

“The cost to the Welsh economy of work-related ill health is estimated at £500m per annum and we know that SME employers and their employees are disproportionately affected by sick absence at work. That is one of the reasons why our new Economic Contract encourages businesses to promote good health in the workplace.

“To further support this ambition I am pleased to announce an additional £9.4m for the In Work Support Programme. I hope this will help to prevent people with common health conditions from falling out of work, and will also encourage businesses to build healthier work places.”

The additional funding, which is made of £7.2m of EU funding and £2.2m of Welsh Government funding, will significantly expand the service to support up to 12,000 people and some 2,500 businesses to build a healthy workplace. The service will be widened to encompass more employees in rural areas and will look to increase engagement with small business networks and local health services.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“This project brings together health professionals, skills and business support into a single service that helps people to remain in employment through direct workplace focused interventions.

It demonstrates the powerful potential of effective cross-government working to deliver positive action for vulnerable people in a joined-up and efficient way.”

RCS's Operational Director, Alison Thomas, said:

“The In Work Support Service provides vital support to help keep employees in work in the face of individual health challenges, bringing enormous benefits both for employed and self-employed people and for the North Wales business community as a whole.

We are delighted at the news of the service extension to December 2022, which will allow us to continue our work in supporting

employees and business owners to create healthy, positive and productive workplaces.”

Paul Dunning, Professional Head of Staff Health and Wellbeing at ABMU Health Board said:

“ABMU welcome the continued funding of the service which will enable the team to support the physical and mental health of the working population and support Welsh Government’s aspirations to look after the wellbeing of employees within the workplace.”

[Cabinet Secretary for Finance makes keynote speech at public sector finance conference](#)

The Welsh budget has been reduced by £850 million over the course of the last decade as a result of the UK government’s policy of austerity, the Finance Secretary will tell the audience at St David’s Hotel, in Cardiff Bay.

He will be joined by fellow speakers Debbie Wilcox, leader of the WLGA; Kellie Beirne, programme director of Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and Adrian Crompton, Auditor General for Wales to discuss how public resources can achieve the greatest possible impact for communities.

Professor Drakeford said:

“I’m aware that there is growing pressure on public bodies to deliver more for less during these times of austerity and massive uncertainty about how the UK will be leaving the EU.

“Over the next 2 years, the Welsh Government’s budget will increase by £365 million to fulfil the UK government’s NHS commitment, covering the new pay and pension arrangements. That is the good news. Our consequential for all other devolved public services – for local government, including social care, for schools, colleges and universities, for transport and business support – is just £185 million over 2 years.

“One of the opportunities we have to help address fairness is through our new tax powers. The introduction of the first Welsh taxes of the modern era – land transaction tax and landfill disposals tax – have provided us with an opportunity to replace two

existing UK taxes with alternatives more geared to the circumstances of Wales.

“With reducing budgets these devolved taxes are helping to fund public services within Wales.

“Whilst facing hard choices, the Welsh Government and local authorities will continue to work to protect our vital public services and invest in our economy, while seeking to achieve greater fairness in society.”

CIPFA is the world’s only professional accountancy body that specialises in public services. It has 14,000 members working throughout the public services, in national audit agencies, in major accountancy firms, and in other bodies where public money needs to be effectively and efficiently managed.

The annual CIPFA conference will take place today at St David’s Hotel, Cardiff Bay between 10am and 5pm. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance will make his key note speech at 10:30am.

[Transport Secretary Ken Skates officially opens multi-million pound M4 junction 28 roundabout construction project](#)

The £13.7million project, which started in February 2017, aims to reduce delays on the M4 and encourage more motorists to use the Southern Distributor Road in Newport.

Transport Secretary Ken Skates planted a tree at the roundabout today (Wednesday, 21 November) to mark the official opening of the project.

The tree planting will contribute to the Welsh Government’s Green Corridors initiative, which aims to improve the landscape and environmental quality of the urban and rural transport network in Wales.

The roundabout, together with the adjacent roundabouts of Bassaleg and Pont Ebbw, is used by more than 6,000 vehicles an hour at peak times.

Benefits from the work include reduced delays to movements between the M4, A48, A467 and the Southern Distributor Road, as well as enhanced road safety at junctions. It is hoped that improvements to all three junctions will boost

economic regeneration by providing access to jobs, safe and reliable journeys and improved resilience for the trunk road and local network in south east Wales.

During the opening ceremony Ken Skates also had the opportunity to view a simulated driving unit which Arup, the project designer, are developing. The project involves the use of virtual reality and computer gaming technology to develop a simulator that allows people to look at designs.

In the prototype development Arup have used the design data from the Junction 28 project to prepare a demonstration driving simulator.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Ken Skates said:

“I am delighted to mark the completion of this £13.7million construction project that will not only boost traffic flow but also improve road safety in the area.

“This vital construction work will benefit thousands of motorists every day at a junction that is a principal link between the M4 and the major employment area of west Newport. The junction also provides a link between the eastern South Wales Valleys and west Newport, so this construction project should have a massive impact on transport links for motorists.

“It was fascinating to see the virtual reality simulator that helped contribute to the planning of this project and gain an insight into the cutting edge technology that can be used in future.

“It is important that we have a strong transport network across Wales that can support not only businesses but the wider population too. We need to invest in our infrastructure in projects like this and ensure that every effort is made to support the Welsh economy.”

Tom Kenyon, Project Manager for Costain, the Principal Contractor for the M4 J28 improvements scheme, said:

“We are really pleased to have completed this much needed project and we are very grateful to the travelling public and nearby communities for their tolerance and support during the 20 month construction programme.

“There remains some ongoing work with A467 southbound morning peak time traffic flows, otherwise the new arrangements seem to be operating very effectively.”