

Wales secures an extra €4.3m with Welsh Universities leading the way on collaborative projects with EU partners

The projects are being supported through the EU Territorial Co-operation (ETC) programmes – a range of funding initiatives which bring together expertise from European regions to address common challenges and take forward innovative projects.

Welsh universities are leading on four of the projects through the North West Europe and Atlantic Area programmes.

The ALG-AD project, led by Swansea University, will receive more than €1.1m from the North West Europe programme and €700,000 from the Welsh Government. The project uses algae to develop new technology to clean up waste and cultivate animal feed and other products.

Swansea University is also leading on the MONITOR project, which investigates the reliability of tidal energy converters. The project is backed by €393,000 of EU funding from the Atlantic Area programme.

The USER-FACTOR project, funded by €376,000 from the EU, is led by PDR, a design consultancy which is part of Cardiff Metropolitan University. It will work with other design innovation agencies to develop new products and services, such as consumer goods and medical devices.

The NASPA project, which is led by Bangor University and involves Swansea-based Emerald Crop Sciences and Aberystwyth University, will develop products to improve soil biodiversity. It will benefit from €903,000 of EU funding.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

“This package of funding will create new opportunities for our universities, businesses and specialist organisations to collaborate across Europe in a range of exciting areas, including tidal energy, medical devices, food and tourism to promote growth and jobs.

“As an outward-facing nation, we want to maintain and build on our international networks after the UK leaves the EU, especially through continued participation in co-operation programmes. I am delighted to see Welsh universities taking the lead on so many projects in innovative fields.”

The remainder of the 10 projects are:

- Atlantic Food Export, which aims to improve competitiveness and exports in the food sector. BIC Innovation, Bridgend-based business consultants is the Welsh partner on this project and will receive €189,000 of EU funding.
- BLUEHUMAN will develop blue biotechnology along the Atlantic coast. JELLAGEN in Pembrokeshire will benefit from €150,000 of EU funds
- The COCKLES project, which has Welsh involvement from Bangor University, NERC Bangor and Natural Resources Wales, will help develop aquaculture and recovery of natural stocks of cockles. It will receive €475,000 of EU funds.
- Swansea University is the Welsh partner in the biosciences project Enhance Micro Algae working on the industrial use of algae and are backed by €244,280 EU funds.
- Promoting geotourism, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the GeoMon park in Anglesey are the Welsh partners in the Atlantic-Geoparks project, which will receive €226,000.
- The community energy scheme ECCO, will see Green Valleys, a community interest company in the Brecon Beacons receive €273,000 from the North West Europe programme.

A [funding call for the North West Europe programme](http://www.nweurope.eu/news-events/latest-news/new-targeted-call-on-renewable-energy/) is open until 26 April. In addition, €50m is available for renewable energy proposals. The deadline is 31 July. Welsh organisations interested in participating should visit: <http://www.nweurope.eu/news-events/latest-news/new-targeted-call-on-renewable-energy/>

The Atlantic Area programme is also seeking partnership projects proposals. The call runs until 1 June. For more information please visit: <http://www.atlanticarea.eu/news/60>