

Wales secures €100m of competitive EU research and innovation funding

Horizon 2020 is the EU's largest ever research and innovation programme, supporting cutting-edge science and technology and international collaboration to deliver solutions to key challenges facing society.

Since the launch of the highly-competitive programme, Welsh businesses and universities have been involved in more than 2,800 international collaborations. These have delivered significant economic benefits for Wales and have helped to put Welsh universities at the forefront of research.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

"Today we are celebrating Welsh success in Horizon 2020. The programme provides a real opportunity for Welsh businesses and universities to be at the forefront of world-class research and innovation while also helping to grow our economy.

"This success highlights just how important it is that we continue to have full access to Horizon 2020 and its successor programme in the future after the UK leaves the EU.

"We will continue to press the UK Government to ensure this is part of any new relationship between UK and the EU after Brexit."

Swansea University is one of the many successful organisations in Wales to win Horizon 2020 funding. With support of nearly €1.5m, its QNets project is researching how the computational power of quantum physics can be harnessed for information processing in areas such as smartphones, machine learning and big data analysis.

Dr Markus Muller, from Swansea University said:

"The Horizon 2020 funding will help us to take a leading role in establishing a new paradigm for quantum information processing.

"It has the potential to significantly strengthen the university's contribution to the fast-growing European research in the field of quantum technologies, providing a new cornerstone of our emerging modern information-based society."

Denbighshire-based anchor company Qioptiq Ltd and Cardiff University secured €635,000 of Horizon 2020 funding to work alongside a consortium of 20 international partners on the MANUELA project.

The project will develop additive manufacturing production processes in a wide range of areas, including automotive, aerospace, energy and medical.

Lee Eccles, principal engineer from Qioptiq Ltd, said:

“Qioptiq is excited to be a part of the Horizon 2020-funded MANUELA project. Our active involvement in the development of such leading-edge technology will help to ensure that Qioptiq maintains its position as a market-leading innovator, generating growth for the company, the local economy and Wales.”

Dr Samuel Bigot from Cardiff University School of Engineering said:

“Participation in the MANUELA project offers Cardiff University an exciting opportunity to work with leading industrial and academic partners across the EU and be at the forefront of research developments in two major emerging technologies – artificial intelligence and metal additive manufacturing or 3D printing.”