

Welsh Government accepts all Talented Women for a Successful Wales report recommendations and marks the occasion with planned Royal visit

To mark the announcement the Minister has also confirmed she will be hosting a special WISE (Women in Science, Technology and Engineering) event in the Senedd, Cardiff, on 13 March, which is being attended by WISE's patron, HRH The Princess Royal.

The event will celebrate and promote the value of women in STEM in Wales and build momentum around the report's recommendations.

Talented Women for a Successful Wales is an independent report which the Welsh Government commissioned and published last year.

Led by Wales' Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Julie Williams, the report aims to tackle the critical shortage of women in STEM roles in Wales, and across the rest of the UK. It identifies the need for a sea change of attitude across society to break down existing barriers and create the skilled workforce needed to support the future economic growth of Wales.

It includes 33 recommendations on dealing with the underrepresentation and poor retention of women in STEM in Wales through four major themes of education, recruitment, retention and promotion – all of which have been accepted by the Welsh Government.

While the majority of the recommendations are for schools, universities and STEM businesses in Wales to action with the Welsh Government advising, encouraging and facilitating where appropriate, there are two actions which are specifically for the Welsh Government to take forward:

1. The Welsh Government should make improved gender balance in STEM a theme in educational policies and programmes for teacher training, curriculum reform, careers advice, apprenticeships and further & higher education funding.
2. The Welsh Government should review its support for childcare and consider how it can further support a wider range of parents with the costs of childcare – with the long-term aim of developing an offer of high-quality early childhood care and education.

It is estimated that increasing the number of women in science across the UK could be worth £2bn to the national economy.

Skills and Science Minister, Julie James, is keen to point out that work is already underway to meet these recommendations and over recent year's the Welsh Government has increased its investment into this important area,

saying:

“Science underpins innovation and technology developments and is essential for economic growth and creating high quality jobs. That is why we have already invested more than £100m in recent years to increase Wales’ research capacity and why we are supporting all of the recommendations in this report to encourage more women and girls to pursue STEM skill opportunities.

“Our ‘STEM in Education and Training: A Delivery Plan for Wales’ (2016) already outlines our commitment to improving the participation of girls in STEM and our Education Directorate has made prioritising girls’ progression in maths, physics and computing, and made gender balance in STEM education a condition of grant funding.”

The Minister added:

“While these are all positive developments we recognise more can be done to understand the issues affecting girls’ progression in STEM and how practice in schools can have a positive impact and our programme of education reform aims to address this.”

Plans are also being progressed by the Welsh Government to provide 30 hours of free early education and childcare to working parents of three and four year-olds across Wales for 48 weeks of the year. This is the most generous childcare offer in the UK, giving parents – in particular, women – more choice and a greater ability to have both a family and a career.

The Talented Women for a Successful Wales report can be found [here](#).