

Welsh success in top EU awards

Nant Gwrtheyrn, a Welsh-language and cultural heritage centre, in Gwynedd, won the top award in the Investing in Culture Heritage category and Swansea University's ASTUTE (Advanced Sustainable Manufacturing Technologies) project was shortlisted in the Supporting Smart Industrial Transition category.

Nant Gwrtheyrn beat competitors from across Europe to win the 2018 RegioStars award. The project has helped to transform a former quarry village on the Llyn Peninsula into a thriving education centre and visitor attraction. Around 45,000 visitors a year visit the local area and 600 people attend residential Welsh language courses at the centre, providing a significant boost to the local economy.

ASTUTE and the follow-up ASTUTE2020 programme promotes collaboration between universities and the Welsh manufacturing industry. More than 250 companies and eight universities have engaged with ASTUTE, resulting in more than £200m of economic impact; 383 new products; 174 jobs and the creation of 10 new enterprises.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

"I'm delighted to see these exceptional EU-funded projects in Wales being recognised in Europe.

"Nant Gwtheyrn is an inspirational example of how EU funds have a positive impact on a local area, attracting visitors and creating jobs to drive forward the economy.

"ASTUTE has achieved high levels of innovation through its industry and academia collaboration."

Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning Eluned Morgan added:

"Nant Gwrtheyrn is an icon of Welsh culture and has helped thousands of people to learn Welsh.

"I am delighted its contribution to the local community and to Wales as a whole has been recognised at a European level. Llongyfarchiadau!"