

Research Wales Innovation Fund Strategy 2020/21 – 2022/23

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Section A: Overview

1. Strategic ambitions

Please provide an overview of your institution's 3 year [and beyond if longer term plans are available] approach to research and innovation activity which will be supported by RWIF. You may wish to highlight broad areas which you are targeting, and describe how RWIF funding will align with your institutional mission and internal strategies. [max 300 words]

The University has identified three key strategic areas, regeneration & recovery, high-level skills & lifelong learning, and culture & community, where RWIF funding will be used to drive ambitious change.

Firstly, the University is working together with our partners in the Swansea Bay City Region on a number of regeneration projects. UWTSD will invest RWIF funding to target those knowledge exchange activities within four core pillars of applied research where the University has strengths:

- Computing & Informatics
- Construction
- Health and Wellbeing
- Manufacturing

Secondly, the University is acutely aware of the need to develop new approaches to producing a digitally empowered workforce. Rapid changes in employment trends along with new and emerging employment roles demand individuals to be lifelong learners, adept at up-skilling and continually re-skilling. The University is therefore moving to develop new programmes for those seeking specific higher-level technical skills development in order to enter alternative sector employment.

Digital transformation is also impacting our rural communities. Food and farming are recognised as foundational to the Welsh economy and essential to the preservation and development of communities in West Wales. Over the next five-years the University will expand its research and knowledge exchange activity to

deliver impact and transformation to this key foundational sector of the Welsh economy.

Thirdly, the University will target investment to support greater understanding of Wales' culture, its place in the world and its economic value to the country. The first pillar of this has been in the integration of our art, design and performance portfolio into a single cluster. This will support a significant broadening of our existing research and knowledge exchange activities in this area. The second pillar will see the integration of the internationally recognised work of CAWCS, based in Aberystwyth, with that of the Lampeter based humanities portfolio to create a research cluster of world standing.

2. Capacity Grant

Provide some narrative on how your institution plans to make use of the capacity grant included within RWIF, and the one-off Innovation Capacity Development Fund (see paragraph 14 in Circular W20/09HE for further guidance on the Capacity Grant). How will this be used to support and enhance capacity and incentivise and improve performance in knowledge exchange? [max 300 words]

Applied Research and Knowledge Exchange are fundamental to UWTSD's strategic mission. The University is currently embarking on a bold and ambitious strategic reconfiguration and expansion of its research and knowledge exchange centres. ICDF funds have been used to help deliver the primary objective of integrating research, knowledge exchange and high-level skills development to enhance the University's support for industry, business and public service. Building on the foundations which have been laid over the past seven-years, the University is moving to rapidly transform its effectiveness in developing resilience in the Welsh economy.

The UWTSD Group occupies a unique position in Wales due to the geographical spread of its campuses. The University's new vision addresses the specific challenges and opportunities in each location as part of its Wales-wide strategic engagement. In 2020 UWTSD announced a strategic alliance with the University of South Wales¹. This has led to coordinated action and interventions to support the development of a vibrant Wales with a strong emphasis on applied research and industry focused knowledge exchange.

UWTSD is building capacity and institutional resilience to deliver on its ambitions to be a University for Wales and facilitate regeneration in the economy of Wales.

The University is investing capacity grant to:

¹ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/news/press-releases/press-2020/university-alliance-to-deliver-economic-and-social-benefits-to-wales.html>

- Deliver an ambitious commercialisation strategy supported by an integrated innovation cluster within the Wales Institute of Science & Art which brings together research, knowledge exchange and high-level skills training. This builds upon HEFCW capital funding for:
 - Smart Manufacturing,
 - Low Emission Vehicles,
 - Net Zero/Retrofit,
 - Timber Technology;
- Expand its new Institute for Sustainable Practice, Innovation, Research and Enterprise to focus research and knowledge exchange activities to deliver increased research and commercial income through engagement with industry and the public sector;
- Drive forward focused plans for each campus, developed in partnership with local authorities and other key stakeholders, to ensure the University’s civic engagement is aligned with clearly identified local challenges and opportunities.

Section B: Specific content

3. Commercialisation / income generating activity

RWIF has been designed to incentivise and reward performance, particularly in terms of external income capture. Outline the direction of travel for the next three years which will support delivery of the KPIs outlined in 3.1. Provide details on key areas of investment and growth. Outline where RWIF will be used to add value to existing activities, or how it will support new developments. Further guidance on this section is available in Circular W20/09HE. Your response should be framed in terms of social and economic prosperity for Wales. [1000 words max]

UWTSD is committed to providing a high-quality environment to enable research and knowledge exchange to thrive and to investing in areas of research strength to further develop its international profile. It has also pledged to nurture new research disciplines in targeted areas helping them build up critical mass, thereby expanding the University’s delivery of research-led teaching and knowledge exchange. Focused research therefore forms a foundation for the University’s innovation, enterprise and commercialisation activities.

UWTSD’s Strategic Plan priority two states that the University will, “**Maximise opportunities for all staff and learners to engage in scholarship, professional practice, applied research and commercialisation activities**”. Under its sub-strategy for Enterprise and Commercialisation the activities provided by the University Group may be broadly categorised into five areas:

1. Knowledge Exchange activity
2. Applied Research activity
3. Intellectual Property exploitation

4. Teaching & Training (Non-core)
5. Commercial & Technical Services

Given the uncertainty arising from Brexit and Covid-19 setting specific numerical targets for growth would be something of a lottery. The University will work with partners in HEFCW, Local and Welsh Government to evolve its detailed targets as the current pandemic unfolds. However, the University has ambition and a clear vision for the direction of travel with identified short and medium-term goals.

Shorter term (achievable within the first two years)

- Implement a clear focus on sustainable and green approaches to digital technology, science, creative industries, engineering and the arts in line with the Wellbeing Goals and Ways of Working;
- Facilitate greater collaboration/co-production between enterprises (MNEs, SMEs, start-ups/ spin outs), the University, civic institutions and community groups;
- Build closer links with key major industries and the local SME sector built upon recognised areas of strength such as the Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing Skills Academy, CBM and MADE;
- Expand the University's unique partnership with the world leading Non-Destructive Testing cluster which exists in the Swansea region;
- Introduce a new curriculum linked to the University's Enterprise Pathway to increase spinouts and commercialisation of IP;
- Roll out a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to improve integration and focus of the University's industry engagement.

Medium term (achievable within approximately three to five years)

- Complete the development of a new 'Innovation Matrix' building in SA1 Swansea Waterfront as part UWTSD's commitment to the transformation of Swansea as a 'Digital City' part funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal;
- More sustainable graduate start-ups/spinouts;
- More businesses accessing financial support (SMART, KTPs);
- Design thinking and application through ideas/technology becomes more embedded across industry sectors;
- Increased specialisation in key sectors.

Currently the University has significant pockets of strength across its campuses and Academic Institutes. These have delivered positive outcomes as evidenced in HE-BCI returns, league table positions and REF submissions.

RWIF funding is being targeted to build the necessary critical mass to deliver transformational change to the region and nationally to Wales as a whole. The ambition of the University is to bring about a fundamental shift in this position. Aligning with Regional Economic Development Framework, the Swansea Bay City Deal, Research, and Innovation: The Vision for Wales and the Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 (updated 7th December

2021). Taking HEFCW's four thematic pillars of: excellence, place, innovation and collaboration as foundations upon which to build, UWTSd has clustered its current research and commercialisation centres and is committed to working with the **Wales Innovation Network** to further strengthen the University's ability to secure additional income through research and commercial activity.

- Artificial Intelligence & Data (including *Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Digitalisation, Innovation and Skills*) e.g.
 - **Advanced Manufacturing and Skills Academy**
 - Centre for Batch Manufacturing (CBM)²
 - Advanced Design & Engineering (MADE)³
 - Smart Manufacturing
 - Wales Institute for Digital Information (WIDI)

- Ageing Society, Health and Wellbeing e.g.
 - **Assistive Technologies Innovation Centre (ATiC)**⁴
 - Cerebra Innovation Centre (CIC)⁵
 - Wales Academy for Health and Physical Literacy (WAHPL)⁶
 - Psychological Evaluation and Research Consultancy Hub (PERCH)⁷

- Clean Growth (including *Decarbonisation and Climate Change*) e.g.
 - **INSPIRE**
 - Construction Wales Innovation Centre (CWIC)⁸
 - Timber Technology
 - Net Zero/Retrofit

- Future of Mobility e.g.
 - **Automotive Engineering**
 - Automotive and Transport Design
 - Low Emission Vehicles

² <https://www.cbmwales.co.uk/about/>

³ <https://www.madecymru.co.uk>

⁴ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/atic/>

⁵ <https://cerebra.org.uk/get-advice-support/cerebra-innovation-centre/>

⁶ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/education-communities/wales-institute-for-physical-literacy/>

⁷ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/perch/>

⁸ <https://cwic.wales>

These will be supported by strengthening the core **INSPIRE** team at the University. The development will be underpinned by the work of the **International Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship Development (IICED)**.⁹ Support will also be given to clustering initiatives to create critical mass to address identified needs in the Foundation Economy as evidenced by the food initiative in Carmarthenshire and the Catalyst¹⁰ Interreg project.

The new vision is of an eco-system for innovation and commercialisation with a clear focus on sustainable, carbon neutral approaches to digital technology, science, creative industries, engineering and the arts that will adopt best international practice including those identified by the EU to:

- support existing enterprises;
- develop new knowledge-driven enterprises;
- further sustainable practice; and
- spark social innovations.

The strategy will support delivery of the KPIs outlined in 3.1 by embedding commercialisation and entrepreneurship in the core curriculum. Incentivisation will be provided to staff and students to engage in enterprise activities by delivering external opportunities to stretch and challenge their research or learning experience.

RWIF Support for Commercialisation

RWIF will be invested to build capacity and add value to the work of existing research and knowledge exchange centres by investing in and supporting their longer-term transition to commercial viability by:

- Strengthening the reporting and recording of business and community engagement;
- Strengthening the **Project Development Team** to provide additional capacity to target new external sources of funding through grants and commercial contracts;
- Strengthen the capacity and connectivity of the **Business Engagement Team** to enhance external industry support through collaborative research, consultancy, knowledge transfer, training and CPD;
- Growing the number of SMART Partnerships;
- Growing the number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships;
- Working with existing EU funded project teams to identify alternative funding sources and to maintain pan-European strategic partnerships.

⁹ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/iiced/>

¹⁰ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/art-and-design-research/creative-industries-research--innovation-centre/catalyst/>

3.1 Provide details of your institution's strategic KPIs for commercialisation and income generating activity:

The University's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan identifies commercialisation and income generation as a key priority. Strategic Priority two states, "Maximise opportunities for all staff and learners to engage in scholarship, professional practice, **applied research and commercialisation activities**". This is enshrined in the University's vision to enhance employability and creativity, by offering educational programmes that develop entrepreneurial and creative skills, enabling learners to have the best opportunities to gain employment and to contribute to the prosperity of their communities. These values are embedded in the core curriculum across all programmes. Through collaboration and strategic relationships, the University works with others to provide educational and commercial opportunities for staff and students. The measures of success are identified as:

- The implementation of new strategies for research, applied research and commercialisation;
- An increase in income from research and commercialisation activities.

The University undertakes annual reviews of the strategy and associated sub-strategies. Progress is assessed against the following key performance indicators:

- KPI 5: Pure and Applied Research
- KPI 8: Teaching and Learning

Underpinning these high level KPIs are a set of focused KPIs for Enterprise and Commercialisation across the UWTSD Group:

1. Establish and maintain a professional, client focussed, commercial infrastructure across the group, ensuring consistency of client engagement.
2. Develop and maintain an ethos of enterprise amongst the staff and students of the Group to recognise and exploit intellectual assets and to deliver innovative solutions to commercial clients.
3. Invest in and develop capital equipment and resources to be commercially accessible to clients, on demand.
4. Continually drive-up income generated by enterprise and commercialisation activity to increase diversification and ensure group sustainability
5. Establish and maintain value adding partnerships across all sectors within the footprint of the group.
6. Maintain rigour in quality assurance, fiscal and governance systems of activity to safeguard the reputation and financial viability of the Group.

The University's has ambitious plans to grow its commercial framework linked to the specific needs of industry in each of our campus locations. These ambitions are tempered by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, targets have been adjusted to reflect current realities. In the short term it continues to present challenges for many businesses in the engineering and manufacturing sector. In the medium to long term, as the economy transitions to the new post-Covid and post-Brexit landscape, it will provide significant growth in the demand for CPD, SMART Partnerships and KTPs. The University will support the increase of SMART partnerships target by establishing placements for graduates as a stepping stone to inclusion in a SMART partnership. Through targeted interventions the University aims to deliver:

- An increase in SMART Partnerships to 6 per year over three years
- An increase in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) to 9 over three years

Working with the University of South Wales UWTSD will develop joint initiatives to grow the number of active KTPs, SMART Partnerships and wider CPD opportunities.

Outcomes are reported against National Measures and in the case of commercialisation returned as part of the annual HE-BCI report.

The University welcomes the development of the Wales Innovation Network which will further strengthen the University's ability to attract additional income through research and commercial activity.

As this stage it is not possible to define specific UWTSD KPIs in relation to WIN. Through conversations with VCs, PVCs and HEFCW, there is agreement that the performance measurement of WIN will include:

- **A material uplift in research and innovation income to the Welsh sector resulting from bids supported by the Wales Innovation Network.** The Network will aim to secure an additional £30m to Welsh institutions over the initial three-year period.
- **To achieve this, as a KPI the Network will aim to support a number of bids over the three-year period which total a minimum of £30m.**
- Finally, we would anticipate that at the two and three year points the initiative will **produce reports for the WIN Board, in partnership with participating institutions, outlining the bids developed with the sector including the number of partners in each bid.** These reports would reflect overall progress including relationship building with UKRI, industry and business. These reports may also outline the performance of the top line KPIs at a regional level to consider how the benefits of WIN have been felt across Wales and institutions.

3.2 How will your strategic approach in this area align with HEFCW's Research and Innovation: the Vision for Wales? Select the pillars supported:

- Excellence
- Place
- Innovation
- Collaboration

3.3 How do your strategic ambitions for commercialisation and income generating activity support the Vision's goals, milestones and ambitions?

[Max 250 words]

Given the impact of Covid-19 the University has had to adapt its short and medium-term objectives. However, it remains committed to its long-term strategic vision. That vision, articulated in the institutional strategic plan and embodied in the **UWTSD Group Enterprise and Commercialisation Strategy**, is aligned with HEFCW's vision for Wales.

Income from enterprise and commercialisation is going to be critical to sustaining the University Group. Income from the core activity of teaching and learning will be under pressure as future learners look to follow alternative paths. Research funding will be similarly challenging with increasing competition and diminishing availability.

UWTSD is building a new commercial offer underpinned by a solid applied research base with areas such as ATiC, NDT and CBM recognised as being internationally excellent, resilient and sustainable. The University has outlined its ambitions for building and strengthening placemaking with a clear focus on partnership and cluster building across south, west and mid Wales. This is evidenced by its strong sense of civic responsibility and active engagement with local communities.

The strategy is to build upon UWTSD's strong record of industry partnerships to support the transformation of Wales' economy. In the short-term EU structural funds will continue to be drawn down during the transition phase but as the UK transitions to third country association status income levels will drop. The University will therefore seek to capitalise on its potential for commercial income generation. With the anticipated post-covid economic downturn, industry, business and employers will require support for R&D, continuous professional development and training of staff.

In recent years the University has built strong bilateral relationships with university partners across Europe as well as Wales. Collaboration across a range of disciplines such as enterprise, tourism and food, life-science and art and design have been established with key partners. Many of these are seen as foundational to the Welsh economy.

Significant collaborations in Wales include Accelerate, Astute 2020 and the Awen Institute. International partnerships include EntreComp, AHEH, Craft Hub and UK-China Care Design Research Partnership.

4. New business growth and skills support

Outline the support you intend to provide for new start-ups, spin-offs, and meeting the targets of schemes such as the WG's Youth Entrepreneurship Programme. Provide information on where RWIF will add value to existing activities, and where it allows you to invest in further growth. Further guidance on this section is available in Circular W20/09HE.

Your response should be framed in terms of social and economic prosperity for Wales.
[1000 words max]

Entrepreneurship is embedded throughout the institutional Strategic Plan and is closely tied to graduate employment, high-level skills and partnership agendas which feature within the four strategic priorities of the University. Under the fourth priority, 'A University for Wales', the University aims to 'contribute to the prosperity, security and resilience of Wales through the promotion of creative skills, entrepreneurship and tech hubs, and through supporting graduates to start their own businesses'.

The plan places a great emphasis on strategic partnerships based on meeting place-based, higher-level skills needed by industry and employers. In the context of UWTSD this means that the University is actively engaged in delivering support for new business development across south, west and mid Wales and working with staff and students in both FE and HE across the UWTSD Group.

Currently the University is delivering a very successful programme of activities funded by the Welsh Government's **Youth Entrepreneurship fund**. The University has set a target of supporting **90** new business starts over the three-year grant funding period. RWIF funding would be targeted to furthering the work to deliver ongoing and sustainable growth in new start-ups in-line with HEFCW National Measures.

The University's enterprise strategy is focused on building the capacity of staff and teams across the University's academic institutes. The strategy is led strategically by the PVC Skills and Lifelong Learning, and operationally by the University's Enterprise Manager (EM). The EM is responsible for driving the Youth Entrepreneurship Agenda, connecting the eco-system and building capacity and empowering others to deliver entrepreneurship.

The EM coordinates the work of the Academic Champions of Enterprise (ACEs) across each of the University's three Academic Institutes. Existing funding supports Associate Champions and interns to assist the ACE network in their role of taking

forward the entrepreneurship agenda within their respective academic schools and centres.

RWIF funding will build upon the success of the ACE network by increasing capacity to deliver workshops and boot-camps to stimulate graduate start-ups. Funding will be provided to buy out ACEs to engage more effectively with the EC and other key officers. Mirroring the successful model developed elsewhere in the University to boost Welsh medium programmes the University plans to recruit a number of recent graduates to act as Graduate Enterprise Mentors. These would support the ACEs and act as a bridge to the student body whilst they develop their own businesses.

The ACE network acts as a catalyst, engaging additional academic staff to act as 'associate' champions who will be able to access CPD for accreditation in the same way that the University encourages membership of the Higher Education Academy. Whilst CPD will be concentrated towards these champions, the existing CPD aimed at embedding entrepreneurial education will continue, via our staff development unit and the learning enhancement unit. These champions, via the core support of the EC, will engage with external stakeholders and seek to leverage private sector support.

In the context of new business growth and skills support RWIF will be used to increase student and staff participation in entrepreneurship workshops to increase start-ups. However, in light of Covid-19 the University will target those sectors identified as part of the Foundational Economy in the Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 (updated 7th December 2021). This will build upon our existing relationships with our alumni in these areas as well as providing support to all our students.

The University is building a strategic confederation of FE and HE partners to deliver a new vision for vocational education & training and translational research across Wales. The confederation will provide commercially relevant programmes which meet the needs of employers delivered through a network of regional hubs. This 'hub and spoke' approach to trans-regional partnership has been successfully adopted by CWIC (Construction Wales Innovation Centre). Drawing on international best practice, the University will consider the opportunities of establishing a similar model to Tknika in the Basque Region of Spain.

RWIF Support for New Business Growth and Skills Support

RWIF will fund increased support for staff and/or student led ventures and IP commercialisation and facilitate the further development of the enterprise ecosystem at UWTSD by building communities of entrepreneurs. Strengthening our connections with alumni who have started successful businesses to inspire others and to support those graduates and alumni looking for support to start or grow their businesses.

In-line with this strategy the University is currently redesigning its curriculum in order to reflect the evolving nature of society within the context of global change. From October 2020 all students will study a structured series of common modules which will be embedded in every course across the University. Modules aimed at developing key life and entrepreneurial skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and team working will combine with discipline specific modules to ensure graduates are better prepared to face the challenges of the new digital world of work. By delivering such a curriculum model, the University will facilitate the development of a body of graduates who will have the skills to ask the right questions of themselves and others. Graduates will be empowered to take their ideas forward and gain the communication and lateral thinking skill sets to start-up and spin-out.

The University's Enterprise Team based in INSPIRE has supported these curriculum changes and will support this new common curriculum by signposting speakers, delivered with collaborative partners within the eco-system, providing access to funding sources and mentoring.

The University is committed to developing a Rural Enterprise Observatory in West Wales in support of the Mid and West Wales Growth Deal. The Observatory will build upon successful initiatives such as the LEADER Engagement Projects, 'Canolfan Tir Glas' in Lampeter and 'Yr Egin Digital and Creative Industries' in Carmarthen to deliver support for rural enterprise.

In Swansea RWIF will support the development of new incubation spaces in the city centre and SA1. The SA1 development will form part of the next phase of our City Deal engagement and involve the private sector. The city centre initiative will involve expanding the Creative Bubble in partnership with Swansea Business Improvement District. Creative Bubble is a flexible space which allows 'test trading' by running pop-up shops, galleries and events which encourage entrepreneurial thinking which leads to more start-ups. RWIF will also be used to fund a pilot Creative Bubble in Carmarthen and Lampeter to evaluate the potential for a more permanent offer.

RWIF funding is crucial in capacity building within the Enterprise Team. The additional capacity will support the delivery of enterprise and in establishing a **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** system to manage and analyse new business opportunities. Support will also be provided to embed and encourage spin-out opportunities, commercialise research, raise awareness of IPR, foster greater integration between FE and HE collaboration across the UWTSD Group.

Ambitious growth targets (subject to annual review) will benchmark the impact of the strategy.

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| Engage: Number of students engaged in awareness raising activities | | | |
| Engage Target | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | 3000 | 3000 | 3000 |
| Empower: Number of students participating in activities to increase entrepreneurial capacity | | | |
| Empower Target | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| Equip: Number of students validating business ideas or test trading | | | |
| Equip Target - validating and testing business ideas | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Equip: Number of students and graduates receiving support to start a business (pre-start support) | | | |
| Equip Target – nurturing to start | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | 80 | 85 | 90 |
| Equip: Number of Businesses started | | | |
| Equip Target – businesses started | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | 30 | 30 | 30 |

4.1 Provide details of your institution's strategic KPIs for new business growth and skills support

The University's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan identifies Employability and creativity, by offering educational programmes that develop entrepreneurial and creative skills, enabling learners to have the best opportunities to gain employment and to contribute to the prosperity of their communities as a key priority. Strategic Priority one states, "Putting Learners First". Strategic Priority three identifies, "Creation of Opportunities through Partnerships". The measures of success are identified as:

- An increase in the number of learners progressing from further education to higher education within the UWTSD Group – Baseline 356, Target 375 (2020-21)*;
- An increase in the number of accredited programmes developed in collaboration with employers or in response to employer demand – No specific

target for the number of programmes has been set but the target of higher and degree apprenticeships linked to industry is set (see below)

- Enhanced work-based learning opportunities to build our learners' skills;
- An increase in the number of apprenticeships, including higher level apprenticeships, offered through the UWTSD Group - Baseline 379, Target 616 (2020-21)*;
- Achievement of specific targets for the recruitment and continuation of under-represented groups, including part-time undergraduate learners;
- Welsh-domiciled learners from identified deprived areas: - Baseline 39.1%, Target 39.1% (2020-21);
- learners in receipt of the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) – Baseline 11.7%, Target 12.2% (2020-21)*;
- Maintenance of the proportion of our learners who achieve a good honours degree in line with sector norms; - Baseline 69%
- Continuing improvement in our performance in The National Student Survey (NSS) and other satisfaction surveys;
- NSS - Baseline 84.4%, Target 86.5% (2020-21)
- CUG – Baseline 102nd (2018-19), Target 85th (2020-21);
- WhatUni – 1st Courses and Lecturers in 2019 and 2020
- An improvement in our performance in the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey and other measures of graduate employment. The University is working hard to strengthen its performance in the new Graduate Outcomes Survey following the change in methodology from the former DLHE survey.
- Continued strong performance of Graduate start-ups still active which have survived at least three years has been achieved by systematically following up every graduate start-up; – Benchmark 413. Target 443 (2020-21)*
- CPD - total number of learner days delivered by UWTSD for continuing professional development and continuing education; - Benchmark 10,135, Target 10,000 (2020-21)* (downgraded due to covid and Brexit uncertainty).

The University undertakes annual reviews of the strategy and associated sub-strategies. Progress is assessed against the following key performance indicators:

- KPI 2: Academic Profile and Market Position
- KPI 7: Student Experience

Outcomes are reported against National Measures and in the case of commercialisation returned as part of the annual HE-BCI report.

*2020-21 Fee and Action Plan (Benchmark against 2017-18)

Please note that finalisation and reporting of the 2020-21 data takes place in November 2021. Consequently, we are unable to update the targets for 2021-22. The University is committed to achieving year-on-year growth and maintaining its UK lead for graduate start-ups as recognised by HESA.

4.2 How will your strategic approach in this area align with HEFCW's Research and Innovation: the Vision for Wales? Select the pillars supported:

- Excellence
- Place
- Innovation
- Collaboration

4.3 How do your strategic ambitions for new business growth and skills support the Vision's goals, milestones and ambitions?

[Max 250 words]

Given the impact of Covid-19 the University has had to adapt its short and medium-term objectives. However, it remains committed to its long-term strategic vision. That vision, articulated in the institutional strategic plan and embodied in the research and knowledge exchange strategy, is aligned with HEFCW's vision for Wales.

UWTSD is building an enterprise and entrepreneurship pathway which builds upon the work of the **International Institute for Creative Entrepreneurial Development** which is recognised for its pioneering work. The University has outlined its ambitions for building and strengthening placemaking with a clear focus on partnership and cluster building across south, west and mid Wales. This is evidenced by its strong sense of civic responsibility and active engagement with local communities and local authorities. The new strategy builds upon UWTSD's strong record of enterprise and start-up to support the transformation of Wales' economy.

Post-Brexit, the University has sought to build stronger bilateral and multilateral relationships with university partners across Europe as well as Wales.

Collaborations such as DeuS and PORTALIS have helped shaped the strategy and ensure it meets the ambitions of HEFCW's vision for Wales. In 2021/22 the University plans to develop a collaborative partnership with Tknika¹¹ in the Basque Region of Spain to develop closer links on vocational education and training as well as research and knowledge exchange projects.

Significant collaborations in Wales include Accelerate, Astute 2020 and Awen Institute. International partnerships include EntreComp, AHEH, Craft Hub and UK-China Care Design Research Partnership.

- UWTSD represented on national committees for research and innovation;
- The University is actively engaged with and supports Wales Higher Education Brussels;
- Increased HE-FE industrial collaborations across the UWTSD Group;
- A strong commitment to lifelong learning.

¹¹ <https://tknika.eus/en/about-tknika/>

5. Civic Mission and Public Engagement

Outline how RWIF will support continued or new activity across your communities. Place-based civic mission is broad, incorporating a vast range of activities including support within the community to meet the skills needs of industry, HE-FE partnerships in skills, innovation and engagement, public engagement through research, and meeting societal challenges. Support for the community within university premises for e.g. events, lectures etc, would also be a means of supporting civic mission. Further guidance on this section is available in Circular W20/09HE.

Your response should be framed in terms of social and economic prosperity for Wales.

[1000 words max]

UWTSD was founded on the principles of local civic engagement. Each of our main campuses in Lampeter, Carmarthen and Swansea were founded on the principle of meeting the educational needs of their local communities. Today those principles are closely aligned to those of the Civic University Foundation. The Foundation's four themes of access & retention, the civic university, employability and global citizenship can be seen mirrored in the University's strategic priorities. UWTSD's goal of 'Putting Learners First' emphasises the vital importance of inclusivity and opportunity, by removing barriers to participation and supporting people from all backgrounds and circumstances to fulfil their potential. The University is acutely aware of the importance of ensuring it fulfils the expectations of society in being a beacon of opportunity and equality.

UWTSD is committed to being a University of Wales and for Wales. Our unique history and geographical distribution means that the University has built strong relationships with local authorities in Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Cardiff. The UWTSD Group brings together the University, Goleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion and close civic engagement with local communities in Llanelli, Ammanford and Aberystwyth as well as at the University's main campus locations. The University works with its Alumni Associations such as the Lampeter Society and other associated bodies such as the Old Dy'vorians in Swansea.

At the heart of the University's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan is a commitment to civic mission, to the public good of Wales, its culture, its heritage, its language, and to the prosperity and long-term health of its citizens. It is long accepted that the key to economic and social transformation lies in the 'quadruple helix' relationship between academia, government, industry and true partnership with civic society. In this context the University is committed to maintaining and expanding its partnerships with the communities it serves. Senior Officers of the University actively engage with public bodies, public services boards, regeneration partnerships and business improvement districts to maintain close connectivity with all levels of our communities.

As a reflection of this commitment, it has placed the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 at the core of its planning and has ensured that its

aspirations are closely aligned with those expressed by the Welsh Government in Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 (updated 7th December 2021) and the Universities Wales Civic Mission Framework. The University is committed to partnership with other HEIs through the Universities Wales led Civic Mission Network and has invested RWIF funding to employ a **Civic Mission Manager** as part of the INSPIRE Team.

RWIF Support for Civic Mission and Public Engagement

RWIF funding will be directed towards an expansion of the University's civic mission by deepening and broadening its engagement with communities, industry, business and civic society in our campus towns and cities. This aligns with the University's ambitions to expand its support for commercialisation and new business growth. Thematically the University's civic mission can be condensed into three strategic areas, regeneration, skills and lifelong learning and culture and community.

Firstly, the University is working together with our partners in the Swansea Bay City Region on a number of regeneration projects. In the next 3-5 years the University will invest RWIF income to develop, in partnership with local authorities, health boards, large employers and Welsh Government, a new and integrated innovation and commercialisation infrastructure. Open dialogue with stakeholders is seen as essential as the University's reshapes its research and innovation capacity to deliver sustainable impact across our region. UWTSD will address the grand challenges identified by the UK and Welsh Governments with a particular focus on:

- Computing & Informatics
- Construction
- Health and Wellbeing
- Manufacturing

Key to the delivery of this strategic objective will be partnership with local authorities and other public and private partners such as health boards, schools in the Swansea Bay City Region.

Secondly, the University is acutely aware of the need to develop new approaches to developing a digitally empowered workforce. Rapid changes in employment trends along with new and emerging employment roles demand individuals to be lifelong learners, adept at up-skilling and continually re-skilling. Adoption of automation and artificial intelligence is anticipated as essential for the survival of organisations in many employment sectors. The Covid-19 pandemic is simply accelerating that process of change in the way we work, and it is certain to displace significant numbers of individuals currently in employment. The University is therefore moving to develop new programmes for those seeking specific higher-level technical skills development in order to enter alternative sector employment.

Engagement with employers, local government and partners in the FE sector is crucial to the University's forward plan provide new opportunities for lifelong learning and skills development.

The University is also aware of the challenges impacting our rural communities. Wales has a higher proportion of land committed to food production than any other country in the UK. Consequently, the commercial opportunities for expanding a sustainable food sector are significant. This is particularly important given the largely rural and agricultural hinterland of the University's campuses. Food and farming are recognised as foundational to the Welsh economy and essential to the preservation and development of communities in West Wales. Currently the UWTSO Group has a number of knowledge exchange and skills development programmes linked to its three main campuses and across its FE campus locations which focus on sustainable food and net-zero carbon farming. Over the next five-years the University will expand its research and knowledge exchange activity to deliver impact and transformation to this key foundational sector of the Welsh economy.

Thirdly, the University is committed to promoting Wales' exceptionally rich cultural life and heritage. The University will therefore target RWIF investment to strengthen the institution's capacity to support greater study and dissemination of Wales' culture, its place in the world and its economic value to the country. UWTSO will engage with local community-based groups as well as national institutions, building upon established links in each of our campus locations and nationally.

In organisational terms the first pillar of this has been in the integration of our art, design and performance portfolio into a single cluster. This will support a significant broadening of our existing research and align knowledge exchange activities to the needs and opportunities across the University's network of community and civic partners. The second pillar will see the integration of the internationally recognised work of CAWCS, based in Aberystwyth, with that of the Lampeter based humanities portfolio to create a research cluster of world standing. This integration of our research capacity in heritage and culture will enable the University to support the distinctiveness of Wales, its people, language and culture.

5.1 Provide details of your institution's strategic KPIs for civic mission and public engagement

The University's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan identifies support for the economic development of the region through strategic engagement with business and civic partners and enhancement of our engagement with alumni and graduates as being at the heart of the University's mission. It identifies the importance of working

closely with the local authorities where we have campuses to maximise benefits through geographical partnerships. Within the University Strategic Plan, priority three identifies, “**Creation of Opportunities through Partnerships**”. The measures of success are identified as:

- Further collaboration with Gower College Swansea on providing skills development pathways and resource sharing in automotive engineering.
- Expanding collaboration with Welsh medium secondary schools in Carmarthenshire in developing collaborative Year 12/13 provision in Advanced Manufacturing and Digital through the medium of Welsh to permit progression to Degree Apprenticeship programmes.
- Continuation of the ‘Pledge’ arrangements with local authority partners;
 - In 2015 the University signed a series of ‘pledges’ with The City and County of Swansea, Carmarthenshire County Council and Ceredigion County Council. This work continues on a number of levels within the University including through the Vice-Chancellor’s Office and the work of the Campus Provosts.
- Active engagement with the Regional Learning & Skills Partnership.
- Continued representation and engagement with Public Services Boards and contribution to Local Well-being Plans.
- Delivery of our obligations under the Swansea Bay City Region City Deal;
 - The University is currently working alongside the City Council and the City Deal Board to develop a new innovation centre in Swansea SA1 as part of the Digital Swansea initiative.
- Achievement of specific targets for the recruitment of global learners;
 - The University continues to consolidate its network of collaborative partners to ensure provision remains of the highest academic standard.
- Establishment of new partnerships with selected former collaborative centres of the University of Wales and achievement of satisfactory quality assurance outcomes in any external reviews of those partnerships.

The University undertakes annual reviews of the strategy and associated sub-strategies. Progress is assessed against the following key performance indicator:

- KPI 4: Establishing an International Profile

The University has made significant progress in building an international profile by entering into international partnerships, by hosting visiting exhibitions and creating opportunities for international exchanges of staff and students. This is increasingly important following the UK’s exit from the European Union. Whilst there are no specific targets under this KPI the target is measured qualitatively by the number, range and depth of international partnerships and exchanges.

Outcomes are reported against National Measures and returned as part of the annual HE-BCI report.

5.2 How will your strategic approach in this area align with HEFCW’s Research and Innovation: the Vision for Wales? Select the pillars supported:

- Excellence
- Place
- Innovation
- Collaboration

5.3 How do your strategic ambitions for civic mission and public engagement support the Vision’s goals, milestones and ambitions?

[Max 250 words]

The University has outlined its ambitions for building and strengthening placemaking and civic mission with a clear focus on partnership and cluster building across south, west and mid Wales. This is particularly evidenced in its strong sense of civic responsibility and active engagement with local communities. The University is focused and committed to place making and civic partnership. By explicitly connecting its strategies for applied research, commercialisation and business development to the needs of the region it builds upon UWTSD’s strong record of enterprise and start-up to support the transformation of Wales’ economy.

The University’s strategic ambitions for research are derived from a strong commitment to ensuring our research is applied to addressing the long-term needs of the communities we serve. These align to HEFCW’s vision for research and innovation in Wales.

The University is determined to reflect the ambitions of our communities and civic partners to deliver opportunities for current and future learners and researchers. Opportunities which are rooted in the needs of our communities, but which have global reach. The goals of the HEFCW Research and Innovation strategy along with the Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 published by Welsh Government form guiding principles for the University’s vision of a University for Wales and its People which responds to the needs of society and delivers transformational change. Through our Civic Mission the University is committed to building a strong sense of place with a clear focus on partnership and clusters.

Section C: Alignment to policy and priorities**6. Wales and UK Policy**

Describe how your RWIF strategy aligns with relevant place based regional, Welsh, and UK policies such as e.g. local city region / regional growth deals; WG's Prosperity for All: economic action plan; UK Industrial Strategy; Public Services Boards; UPP Civic University Foundation; Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy; Science for Wales; Regional Economic Frameworks etc.

[500 words max]

The University's RWIF strategy identifies placemaking as a strategic priority. The University's unique geographical footprint requires it to connect with local authorities, private and third sector partners across South and West Wales.

The University is committed to attaching a high priority to the economic, social, environmental, and cultural life of our local communities in Lampeter, Carmarthen, Swansea and Cardiff.

RWIF funding will support the reconfiguration and expansion of the research and knowledge exchange framework underpinning the University's City Deal initiatives. The University successfully delivered Yr Egin¹², the multi-million pound media centre in Carmarthen as part of the Swansea Bay City Deal. The centre is fully occupied and has become a key part of the Welsh language media landscape in Wales. The additional resources provided by RWIF will accelerate developments in Swansea as part of the new digital city strategy in partnership with the City Council. The plan is entirely complementary to the regional economic framework.

During the development of the most recent iteration of the University's City Deal proposal for Swansea, the University mapped its key research and knowledge exchange portfolios against the four Grand Challenges set out in the UK Industrial Strategy. Each of these portfolios focuses on a specific set of problems, bringing the University and its business partners together to make a real difference to people's lives. In addition to this clustering a number of cross-cutting themes have been identified which connect with the core centres in addressing the grand challenges.

UWTSD's RWIF strategy is in-line with the Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2021 to 2026 (updated 7th December 2021) and the principles of the Civic University Foundation. UWTSD recognises these are essential to the future prosperity of our graduates and the wider Welsh economy. The Foundation's four themes of access & retention, the civic university, employability and global citizenship can be seen mirrored in the University's strategic priorities.

- Priority 1: Putting Learners First - Inclusivity, by removing barriers to participation and supporting people from all backgrounds and circumstances to fulfil their potential. By offering programmes that develop

¹² <https://yregin.cymru/your-centre/>

entrepreneurial and creative skills, learners have the best opportunities to gain employment and to contribute to the prosperity of their communities.

- Priority 2: Excellence in Teaching, Scholarship and Applied Research
- Priority 3: The concept of global citizenship, through the development of multinational activities and opportunities for our learners, staff and partners.
- Priority 4: A University for Wales - Sustainable development, by behaving in a way which ensures that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,

Collaboration with other regional universities and institutions is vital if Wales is to succeed post-Brexit. The impact of collaboration can be seen in the successful Accelerate partnership between UWTSD, Swansea University, Cardiff University and the Life-Science Hub Wales. Accelerate and Astute 2020 provide further evidence of the importance UWTSD attaches to working towards the objectives of the Science for Wales strategy in delivering economic impact through science and partnership.

7. Meeting the requirements of the UK Knowledge Exchange Concordat

Institutions in Wales must demonstrate through their RWIF strategies commitment and alignment to the principles of the UK Knowledge Exchange Concordat. A development stage will take place during 2020-21 to implement a Welsh model.

For this initial stage we are asking institutions to confirm, through their strategies, that they are aware of the KEC principles which were outlined as part of the initial consultation, and that they are committed to alignment through the Welsh model for engagement. Revised RWIF strategies can be submitted annually as part of the monitoring procedure, and this process will be utilised to demonstrate full KEC commitment following the development year.

[500 words]

The University is fully committed to the principles and ambitions expressed in the UK Knowledge Exchange Concordat. Through this and other strategies the University further commits itself to supporting the development of a distinctive Welsh concordat which respects the different context of Wales and its communities.

As evident from the RWIF strategy knowledge exchange is a key component of the institutional Strategic Plan (2017-2022). The University has a clear understanding of the role and the purpose of KE to the institution and society.

Through the work of the University's Corporate Governance team UWTSD has a comprehensive suite of strategies and policies which clearly feed into the principles outlined in the KEC.

Policies are publicly available and accessible to all staff. Annual staff development events backed up by in-year dissemination events ensure all staff are familiar with the policies.

The strategy is in full alignment with the following Institutional Plans:

- 2017-2022 Strategic Plan
- UWTSD Group Enterprise and Commercialisation Strategy
- Staff Intellectual Property Policy
- Student Intellectual Property Policy
- Environment Policy
- Sustainability Strategy
- Welsh Language Scheme

The University has clear access points, engagement mechanisms and policies developed to suit the needs of a wide range of beneficiaries working with institutions as publicly funded bodies.

The University ensures that our partners and beneficiaries understand the ethical and regulatory environments in which the institution operates.

Academic and professional staff as well as research students are trained to understand their responsibilities and to undertake their roles and responsibilities ethically and in the public interest.

Policies are in place to ensure the University recognises the achievements of staff and students who perform high-quality KE activities. This includes publicly acknowledging successful external engagements and initiatives.

Internally the University has established the Nexus Conference to share best practice in every sphere of the University's activities which impact on the University's core mission to educate and transform lives.

We are a community of reflective practitioners. On a personal level this is evidenced in membership and fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

At a corporate level this is evidenced through the production of annual reports, reviews and external audits which feed through to continuous professional improvement.

The self-evaluation conducted as part of the university's commitment to KEC has identified five key priority actions:

1. Develop KE Policy
2. Complete new Research and Innovation Strategy 2021 -2027
3. Strengthen access IP expertise.
 - Appoint Executive Director of Commercialisation and / or other posts

- Procure external legal or consultancy services
- 4. Establish quality management systems to meet and attain ISO 9001 accreditation
- 5. CPD plans and training to be implemented for professional and academic staff

The implementation of these actions will further enhance the University's ability to deliver its ambitious agenda for transformational change.

8. Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

Provide specific information on the RWIF strategy will support the seven goals, and five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015;
[250 words max]

The RWIF strategy will embrace the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act by delivering social, economic, environmental and cultural impact to Wales. The strategy aims to deliver long term impacts, integrated within their host communities through collaborative and progressive national and international partnerships which prevent negative impacts on people, planet or place.

The strategy works in line with the principles of the act to deliver the seven wellbeing goals:

- **A Prosperous Wales** – increasing the number of new start-ups in South West Wales and growing national and international partnerships;
- **A Resilient Wales – Integrating INSPIRE into the core delivery of research and knowledge exchange to ensure development addresses ecological and well as economic sustainability;**
- **A More Equal Wales** – By embedding enterprise and innovation into the core curriculum across all programmes to ensure that all students have the opportunity and training in creative thinking and problem solving;
- **A Healthier Wales** – RWIF will be used to support a number of research projects in partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board and the NHS Wales Informatics Service;
- **A Wales of Cohesive Communities** – The strategy supports the development of research and knowledge exchange projects connecting communities across south west Wales;
- **A Wales of Vibrant Culture** – Support for research through the medium of Welsh will be supported alongside research into Wales vibrant culture;
- **A Globally Responsible Wales** – International partnerships will be supported through selective interventions in response to emerging needs.

An example of the WBFGA in action recognised in the Reid Review is the University's work with Public Services Boards on crime, policing and safe communities and in doing so is addressing the goal of 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities'.

9. Impact on Welsh Language

Outline the positive impact RWIF investment will have on opportunities to use and support the Welsh language. Where appropriate you may wish to refer to the themes in the Cymraeg 2050 action plan.

[250 words max]

In line with 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers action plan 2019–20' the RWIF strategy aims to facilitate mainstreaming of the Welsh language across all research and knowledge exchange activities. Taking the themes identified in Cymraeg 2050 as a guide:

- Theme 1: Increasing the number of Welsh speakers.
- Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh.
- Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context.

The plan will build upon the successful work at undergraduate level in the Wales Institute for Science and Art's Swansea College of Art by identifying mentors to support and encourage the use of Welsh. The strategy identifies the opportunities to broaden the impact of research and knowledge exchange by providing support and opportunity for researchers to work in their first language. The initiative has attracted strong support from **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**.

The University has a very strong community of Welsh speakers in Carmarthen and Lampeter. The strategy provides support for the removal of barriers to the use of Welsh in the context of knowledge exchange projects through the provision of translation equipment and appropriate bilingual materials.

We will work to foster and maintain research partnerships in Wales and further afield, through presentations in conferences and public events where possible.

Additional Welsh speaking staff have been appointed to support graduate start-ups and staff spin-out businesses and a new incubation centre will be established in Carmarthen during 2021-22.

The strategy will feed into the University's returns on National Measures for Welsh language as appropriate.

Section D: financial assurance**10. Use of Research Wales Innovation Funding**

How is your RWIF allocation 2021/22 being used to deliver the strategy set out in Section B, and what are your anticipated priorities for the use of RWIF funds in future years? [250 words max – or append a table outlining broad investment areas]

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic UWTSD remains committed to investing RWIF funding and delivering on the core objectives outlined in the strategy published in September 2020. The University will continue to invest capacity grant in growing the newly formed Institute of Sustainable Practice, Innovation, Research and Enterprise (INSPIRE).

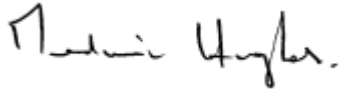
The appointment of a new **Executive Director of Commercialisation** to lead INSPIRE coupled with additional appointments of Industry Liaison Officers and Research Development Officers is a key part of the growth strategy with the aim of increasing investment in the commercialisation of IP.

In 2021/22 the University intends to maintain investment in key centres such as manufacturing, construction and computing to support regeneration of the economy of Wales. This focused investment will include further integration of knowledge exchange centres in the STEM disciplines. The University will invest in supporting research into Wales rich culture heritage and forge new partnerships internationally such as with Tknika in the Basque Region.

In 2021/22 RWIF will continue to be allocated in roughly the following proportions:

1. 30% to increasing support for staff and/or student led ventures and IP commercialisation;
2. 40% to supporting existing research groups, such as those identified in the Reid Review, transition from grant dependency to become income generating research and knowledge exchange centres;
3. 30% to supporting closer engagement with business and civic society in our campus towns and cities.

Investment decisions will be driven by a new research and innovation strategy and a comprehensive 4-year rolling financial plan to provide stability and accountability.

| Section E: Regulatory Requirements <i>NB: HEFCW may request further information / clarification on any of these areas</i> | |
|---|--|
| i) <u>Welsh Language Standards (2018)</u> <i>[Use the drop down menu]</i> | This strategy complies with Welsh Language Standards 2018 |
| ii) <u>Equality Impact Assessment</u> <i>[Use the drop down menu]</i> | This strategy has been Equality Impact Screened |
| iii) <u>Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)</u> <i>[Use the drop down menu]</i> | This strategy will contribute towards the aims of the WFG Act 2015 |
| Signature: Vice Chancellor |  |
| Date | 17/01/2022 |