

Enterprise and Learning Committee

EL(3) 12-08 (p4) : 30 April 2008

ConstructionSkills work with HEI's in Wales

ConstructionSkills Higher Education Strategy

ConstructionSkills and HEIs have worked together in developing a HE strategy for Wales.

Strategic Insight Programme (SIP) - Steering Group Meeting

ConstructionSkills are a steering group member on the SIP three-year collaborative project between the University of Glamorgan (the managing partner), University of Wales, Newport, the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC) and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama that aims to build strategic relationships with the business community.

Higher Education - Skills for Business Network (Wales) Communications Group

Wyn Prichard, ConstructionSkills Wales Director, is a member of this group, the mission of which is to support the establishment of a strategic structured engagement between Wales's HEIs and Sector Skills Councils, in pursuit of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies and strategies.

Strategic Development of Higher Level Learning

Wyn Prichard also sits on the HEFCW Strategic Development of Higher level learning Project Advisory Board. This is a feasibility study leading to the establishment of an All-Wales Centre for Workforce Development.

Skills Observatory

The Construction Skills Network engages key stakeholders around a central Forecasting Model aimed at the entire industry and its customers. It analyses capacity, productivity and skills. HEIs are encouraged to attend, through HEFCW, the Skills Observatory that take place bi-annually to present the Labour Market Intelligence and to gather feedback.

ConstructionSkills and HEFCW Sector Skills Agreement

ConstructionSkills as part of their Sector Skills Agreement have drafted an action plan of priorities for ConstructionSkills and HEFCW. The actions include continuation of ConstructionSkills support of HE groups such as the Communications group, to raise awareness and gain support from HEIs of the ConstructionSkills Inspire scholarship.

Knowledge Exploitation Fund

ConstructionSkills form part of the steering group for two KEF funded projects namely Construction Knowledge Wales and Sustainable Construction. Further details of these two projects are attached.

CIT: Sustainable Construction - Building a Better Future

In Wales the landscape and construction industry is dominated by small and medium sized enterprises, many of which have difficulty in finding the resources to invest in training and develop new skills. For this reason a special approach is required to communicate the latest innovations and ensure training is easily accessible. This is why a Consortium for Industrial Training (CIT) in Sustainable Construction was established with the support of the Knowledge Exploitation Fund.

The Consortium brings industry leaders and educational partners together to develop a strategy for introducing sustainable innovations into businesses and producing teaching resources for training. The CIT steering group for education in sustainable construction is supported by a range of experts.

Objectives

To encourage the uptake of education and CPD on innovation use and management in businesses through the provision of such education, increasing awareness of sustainable construction and landscape technology and highlighting the incentive of profit improvements against benchmarks for the industry

To increase the opportunities to enhance innovation skills

To increase the use of sustainable construction materials and techniques across Wales

To increase awareness, amongst clients, that Welsh companies are desirable because of their knowledge of sustainable construction

To enhance rural development and rural employment through business improvement and opportunities and enhance urban

regeneration through business opportunities and expertise in sustainable construction.

Outputs

Establishment of an expert steering group for education in sustainable construction

Research report on the needs for HE education in sustainable construction and innovation

Development of educational resource material for industry sectors at each of the partner academic institutions for use in HE level full time, part time or short courses on innovation use and on management in sustainable construction

59 companies assisted in this pilot scheme (coming from the materials production sector and from the landscape and construction design and contractor sectors)

TTN - Construction Knowledge Wales

Aims and objectives

The construction industry in Wales has the opportunity to create a world class system for developing and managing construction knowledge in academia and industry towards delivering sustainable development. "Starting to Construct Differently" was produced in 2004 by Constructing Excellence in Wales in partnership with others and provided the framework for action. In February 2005, Constructing Excellence in Wales in partnership with the WDA Future technologies programme organised a one day conference on "Sustainable Construction" to provide leading practitioners and researchers with an initial opportunity to map the way forward. The conference concluded that an All-Wales Network should be built, consisting of industry practitioners and research groups focused on creating and maintaining a leading European knowledge base on sustainable construction and the built environment.

The KEF funded Network for Sustainable Construction and the Built Environment was set up in October 2005 and brings together expertise within 6 research centres from Higher Education Institutions across Wales along with Constructing Excellence Wales and Mandix.

The Knowledge Exploitation Funded (KEF) Sustainable Construction and the Built Environment Technology Transfer Network (TTN) has been formed by key research centres within Wales in collaboration with Constructing Excellence Wales and other key industry players. The aims of the Network are to:

Identify expertise in sustainable construction within the research community in Wales, to bridge the known gap between industry and research

Raise awareness of the Network within the construction industry at a practitioner level using known identified means

Identify mutual research priorities for both academia and industry, with a view to identifying future opportunities for the industry

Encourage linkage of demonstration projects with research expertise, with a view to making research more accessible and focussed on industry needs, and industry more willing to take research on board to foster sustainable practices.

By identifying research expertise, disseminating its existence and creating further links between research and industry, the Network hopes to facilitate the entire construction industry to contribute towards sustainable development in Wales.

The Network aims to consult widely with the construction industry in order to meet the above stated aims, and indeed to identify whether the Network's mission is practical in the long term.