



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Breaking down Barriers and Building up Collaboration

Knowledge Transfer Development in Wales



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Background

1997 - EU Regional Technology Plan

Wales selected as one of the economic regions
to examine the level of activity of Business /Academia
collaboration and support of the KT infrastructure



Outcome

Patchy activity with patchy support

Businesses called for dedicated KT brokerage service including a central point of access to academic recourses available for commercial exploitation



Action taken

WAG decided to create a dedicated KT support service and allocate £ 350K pa

The Know-How Wales service (KHW) launched in 1999

A team of 7 dedicated KT specialists

Regionally based all-Wales service



Principal aims of the KHW service

Act as impartial service and catalyst of change

Develop strong brand for KT support

Provide coherence amongst the various services focusing on business needs

Facilitate easy access to commercially available academic resources

Manage and disseminate information about KT provision in Wales



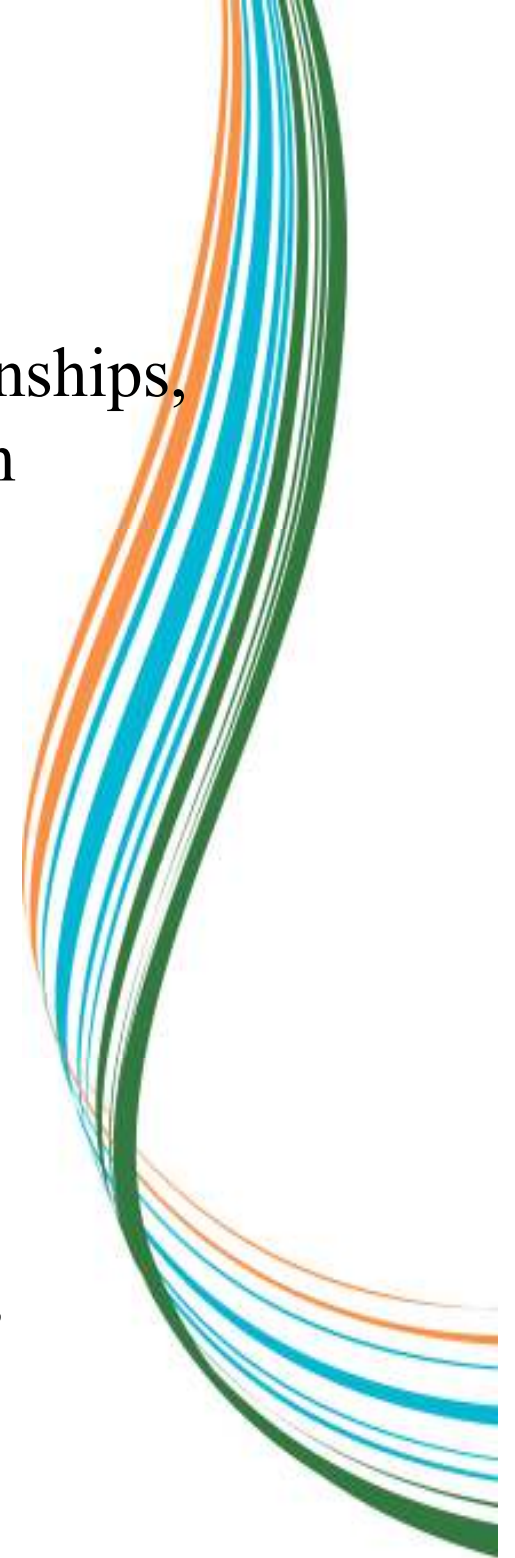
Main activities of the KHW service

Facilitation of collaborative projects, strategic relationships, access to resources in academia and collaboration with the existing networks and fora

Initiation of business breakfast meetings, problem solving surgeries, bridging sessions

Development of a knowledge portal facilitating central point of access to commercial recourses within academia in Wales

Development of dialogue with the FE sector in Wales



KHW laid foundations for the development of more comprehensive KT support in Wales

WAG and EU funded programmes

Knowledge Exploitation Fund (KEF) phase 1
launched in 2001 - £ 22.5m until 2004

Knowledge Exploitation Fund (KEF) phase 2
launched in 2004 - £ 31.2m until 2007



Principal aims of the KEF

Provide the financial assistance to allow Wales' HE and FE Institutions to develop the skills of staff and students, create a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation within their institutions and take their knowledge to industry.

Build upon the collaborative R&D undertaken between Welsh academia and businesses and to enhance the knowledge exchange between the two.



Main strands of the KEF

Culture change and capacity building

Strategy for innovation and entrepreneurship

funding for senior management in institutions to develop and implement strategies for innovation and entrepreneurship

Enterprise clubs – access to role models, networking activities, specialist support for business start-ups, facilitation of business links with local SMEs

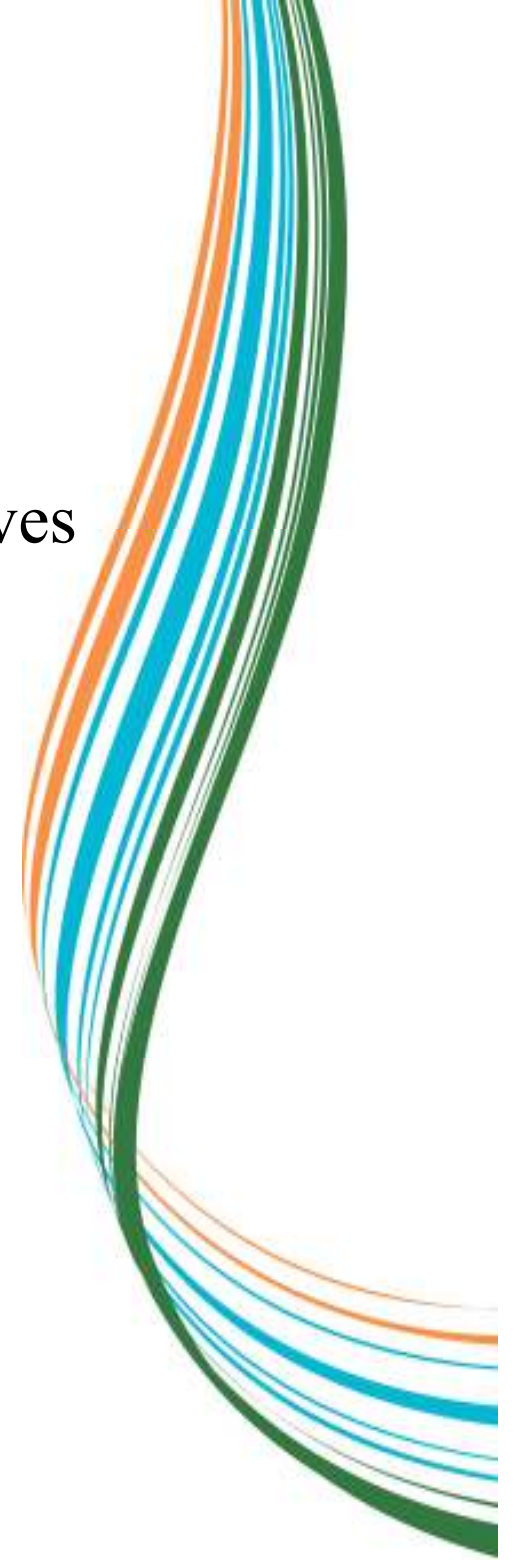
Entrepreneurial Champions – located within academic institutions aiming to improve the awareness and appreciation of entrepreneurship and innovation



Skills development and training

Ensuring that staff and students receive the level of training necessary to deliver the objectives laid out in institutions' strategies for innovation and entrepreneurship

Supporting institutions to develop new training programmes and high level consortia for industrial training linking knowledge and technical innovation



Commercialisation and Knowledge Transfer

Entrepreneurial scholarship scheme – offering budding entrepreneurs an allowance to support them in their new business start-up

Centres of expertise and knowledge transfer - providing incubation centres support for fledgling knowledge-based enterprises within institutions and developing centres of expertise and knowledge transfer

Collaborative projects between businesses and academia – helping to increase the capacity of Research and Development within Wales



Patent and Proof of Concept fund

Aiming to assist institutions in developing their ability to manage IPR exploitation in-house

Assist to exploit Welsh academic research to maximum effect through specialist support

KEF and KHW programmes closed in 2007

Total investment £ 57m



Academic Expertise for Business (A4B)

Review of KHW and KEF programmes indicated that although good progress has been made additional funding is required to embed and extend already well-developed KE processes

A new EU supported programme A4B was launched in 2007

£ 70m until 2014



Principal aims of A4B programme

Strand 1 – Knowledge exploitation capacity development

To provide support for academic institutions to strengthen their capability to exploit their knowledge in partnership with companies, and in so doing foster R&D, innovation and technology and its commercial exploitation in the convergence area.



Strand 2 - Knowledge Transfer and Collaborative Industrial Research

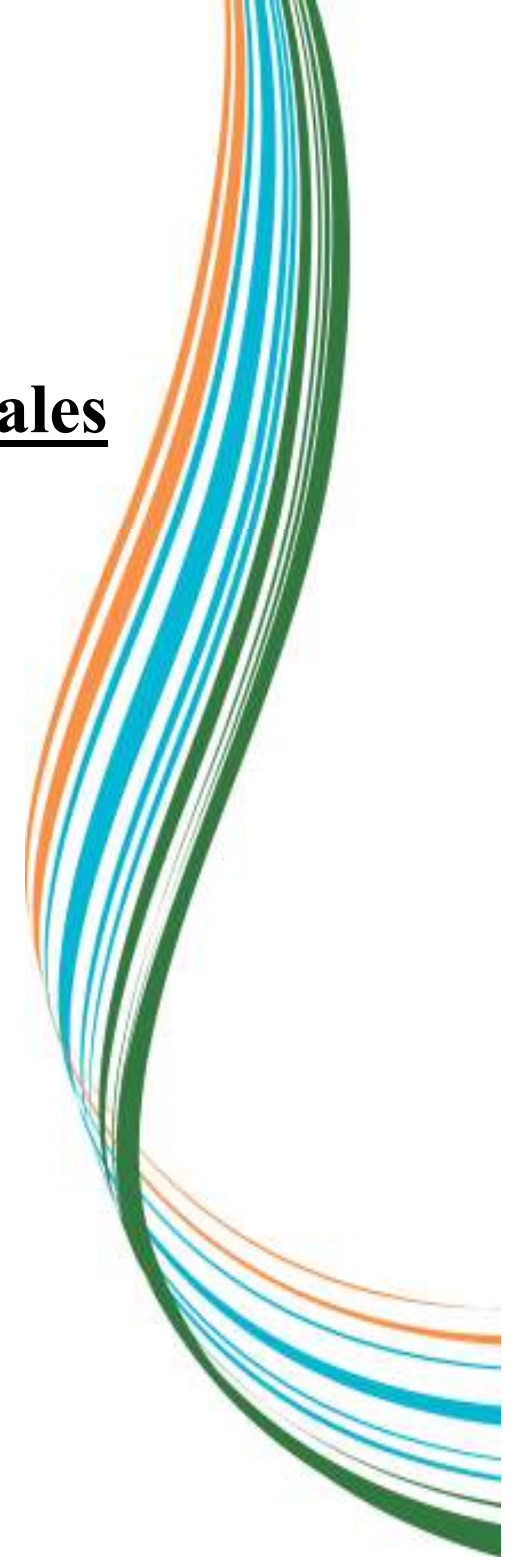
To enhance and accelerate the transfer of knowledge and the development of innovative key technologies from higher and, where appropriate, further education institutions to sector businesses in the convergence area



Case studies

1 KTP mentoring project for the FE sector in Wales

- Engage the FE sector in Wales in KTP
- Develop pan-Wales KTP infrastructure that would encourage greater uptake of KTP projects by companies of all sizes
- Encourage the spirit of collaboration between HEIs and FEIs



- Reduce the perceived barriers of FEIs to engaging with KTP and knowledge exchange in general
- Develop FEIs staff confidence in running KTP projects

Methodology

WAG provided overall project management and guidance

Leading HEI obtained funding to deliver the project

Selection of 4 HEIs acting as mentors and
5 FEIs being mentees



KEF funding allocated for mentoring time of HE partners and learning time of FE partners

KTP Advisers and KHW specialists teams were available for specific support e.g. application procedures and engagement with companies

WAG working with the KTP central office on Development and delivery of a specific training for FE staff

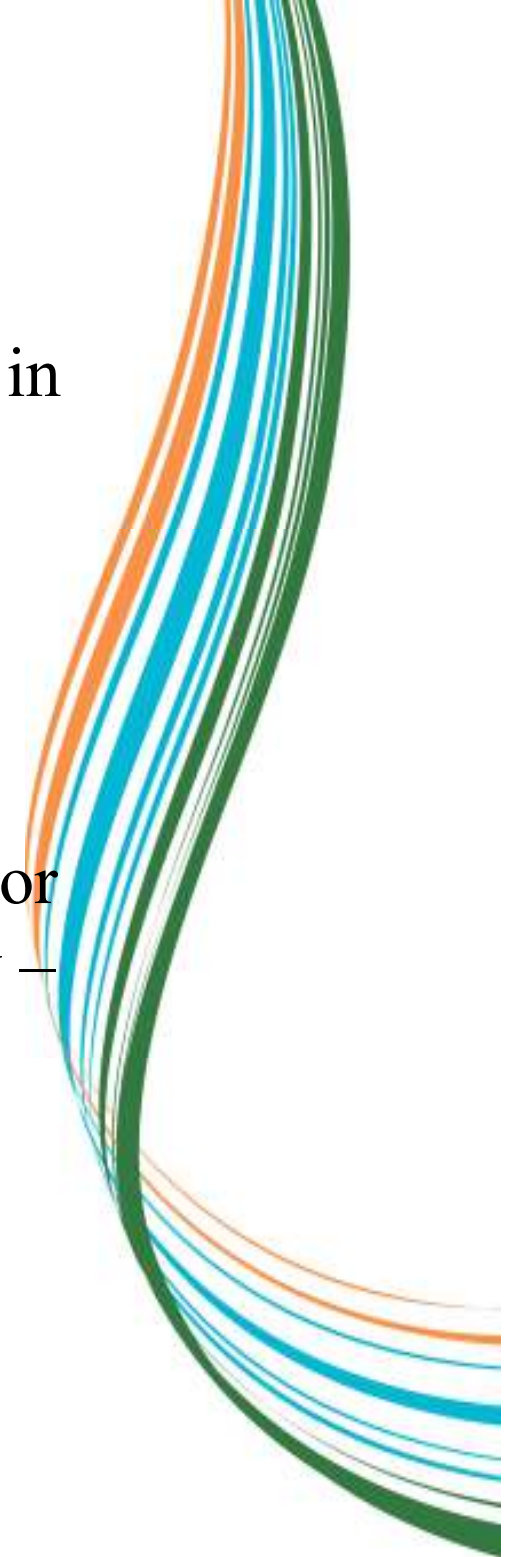


Results

7 FE institutions out of 16 are actively involved in the KTP programme

Several more FE institutions are including KTP delivery within their strategic plans.

Wales is leading in KTP delivery by the FE sector with Gower College Swansea leading nationally – Currently out of 47 KTP delivered by the UK FE colleges 31 projects are delivered by Welsh FE institutions



2 Shorter Knowledge Transfer Partnership pilot

Wales was one of the 4 UK regions to take active part in the sKTP pilot

WAG was significantly involved in the project by providing funding from A4B, leadership and project management and KT specialists to develop delivery and assessment methodology

Methodology

sKTP steering group comprising of selected HEIs and FEIs agreed on delivery methodology



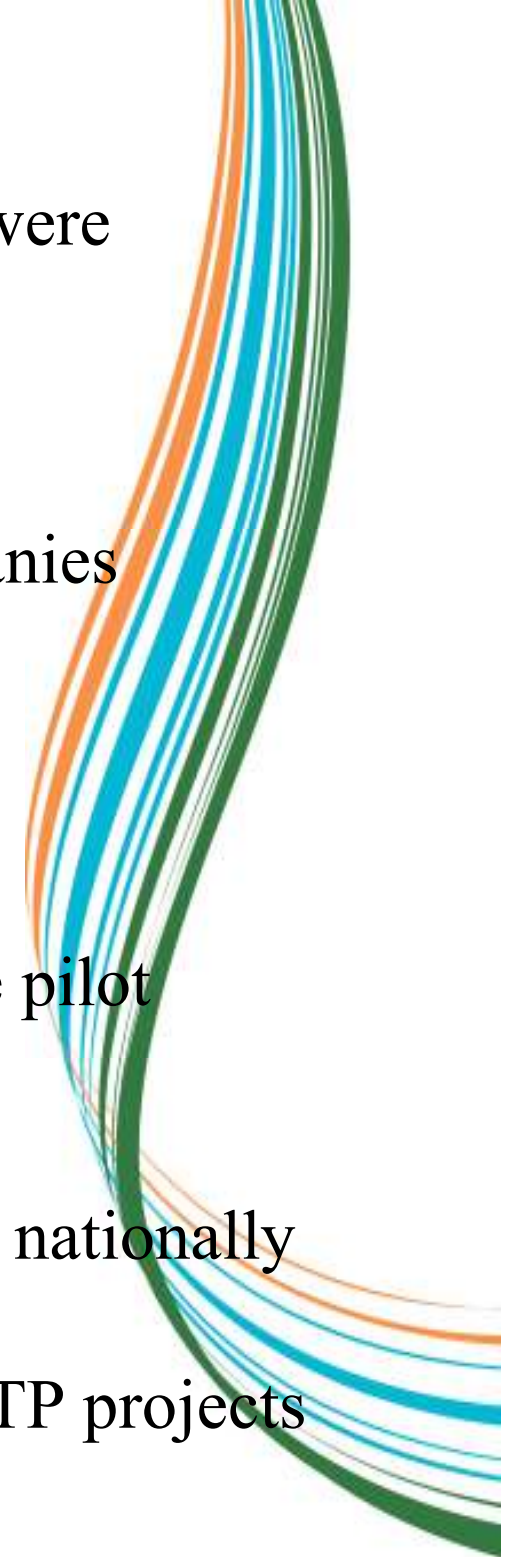
Only partnerships with an associate already identified were considered in the pilot

Partnerships were required to provide regular feedback on delivery methodology and general attitude of companies to the sKTP concept.

WAG was collating and analyzing responses from the field and provided regular feedback to the TSB / KTP central office on general progress of the pilot

Results

- Wales delivered 29 sKTP pilot projects compared to 4 nationally
- Currently Wales is delivering 26% of the total UK sKTP projects



3 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for KT practitioners

WAG fully recognized that the ability to develop a sustainable knowledge economy in Wales depends on capacity of KT practitioners to understand and effectively manage collaborative activities with businesses.

A4B funding was used to provide grant support to academic institutions for KT practitioners to undertake professional development training which will increase their skills and knowledge of innovation technology management



Methodology

Based on the AURIL CPD framework and working with IKT, WAG provided initial funding to Cardiff University to develop a specific foundation course for KT practitioners.

The course was personalized and enabled each attendee to develop their individual CPD plan that builds on their professional strengths and future professional aspirations.

The course has been accredited by the IKT and is now available nationally to anybody who wishes to develop or progress career in KT.

KT practitioners were encouraged to select any KT relevant course that underpinned their future development



Results

45 KT practitioners from HE and FE sectors completed the course and gained IKT membership

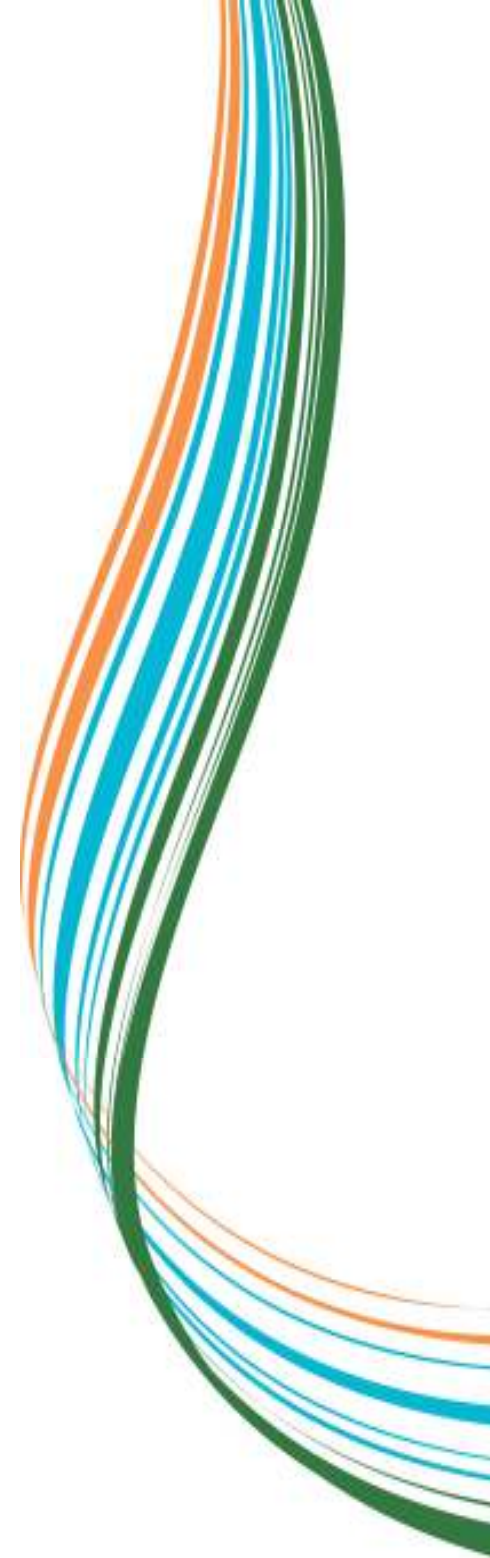
Feedback from the course indicated that the reconfiguration of KT relevant elements into a more productive combination of actions increased awareness and understanding that a knowledge-based society operates to a different set of dynamics than an industrial society focused on production of tangible goods.



Conclusion

WAG is fully committed to supporting development of knowledge economy and encouraging academic institutions to play a greater role in economic and social development of Wales.

Economic Renewal Plan launched recently confirms WAG's commitment to aggregate resources, reduce duplication of initiatives and encourage creative expansion of innovation in Welsh businesses and academia.



Thank you

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