

The latest in Skills & Talent across Southeast Wales

Last week brought welcome news of a £6 million funding extension for **Digital Communities Wales (DCW)**: a Welsh Government programme that's focused on improving digital skills and overcoming digital exclusion in Wales.

Launched in July 2019 and delivered by the Wales Co-operative Centre in partnership with the Good Things Foundation and Swansea University, DCW has already supported over 1,600 organisations, empowering more than 76,000 people to gain and retain employment as well as improve their general wellbeing.

This three-year extension of the programme until 2025 underlines its key role in helping deliver the vision, aims and objectives of Welsh Government's Digital Strategy for Wales - with 4,215 staff trained to improve their digital skills while helping others to build their own, 2,119 volunteers recruited and placed across Wales; and 15,518 people already benefiting from digital kit loans.

Venture's Free Graduate Recruitment Service for Southeast Wales

Venture, the Skills & Talent Hub of Cardiff Capital Region, was also in the news with the launch of its first Graduate Recruitment cohort for 2022. This completely free-of-charge service is available to any business in Southeast Wales, regardless of size or sector - providing an expert hiring solution for any enterprise that can offer a rewarding career opportunity to high calibre graduate talent.

This unique recruitment service has already placed over 100 graduates in organisations throughout the Cardiff Capital Region - with 85% of the graduates still working in those companies today: a testimony to the rigorous talent attraction and candidate assessment techniques employed by the vastly experienced Venture Graduate Recruitment team.

The scheme (www.venturewales.org) is encouraging employers to submit vacancies by 21st February, with the roles being advertised between 25th of February and the 20th of March, allowing Venture's dedicated Graduate Recruitment Team to assess the graduate applications over a four-week process, matching the job vacancy and company culture with the 'right' graduates - and delivering a high-quality shortlist of candidates for every specific role, all managed at zero-cost to any organisation in Southeast Wales.

Chambers Wales skilling businesses to overcome supply chain issues

Taking a more global focus, Chambers Wales Southeast, Southwest and Mid have launched a series of international trade training courses to develop the skillsets that will help Welsh businesses overcome supply chain issues. The Chamber is known for curating end-to-end supply chain connectivity across global markets - and has now designed courses that will provide businesses with the skills and confidence to deal with fundamental trade processes and documentation, helping companies in every sector export and import successfully in light of the new Customs controls and regulations introduced this month.

Nine courses are accredited by the British Chambers of Commerce and each successful participant is provided with a certificate to show their industry recognised qualification. By completing six courses, participants can gain a Foundation Award in International Trade, with additional specialist courses also including guides to trading with Northern Ireland and the EU post Brexit.

The courses are also HMRC aligned, providing businesses with the skills and understanding to ensure their business is compliant and prepared for audits. As non-compliance with the new customs regulations could potentially lead to considerable financial penalties and fines, the courses can assist businesses to mitigate their risk - and businesses may be eligible for funding from the Welsh Government's Flexible Skills Programme for Export Training.

Business in Focus and Tramshed Tech bring skilling to the community

Last week also reported on the UK Community Renewal Fund contract award to **Business in Focus (BiF)**. The Fund supports people and communities most in need, trialling new approaches to develop entrepreneurial skills and build the confidence to consider self-employment. BiF already helps thousands of people across Wales to enter self-employment or start their own business - and now enjoy this fresh remit to bring the BiF expertise and approach to communities across 13 local authorities.

Another Welsh community-based entity - **Tramshed Tech** - continues to build its remarkable skilling and co-working ecosystem, with last week's announcement of a formal tie-up with the Goodsheds in Barry. This prestigious collaborative space joins the landmark 'TT' locations in Cardiff, Newport and Swansea as a centre where entrepreneurs and start-ups can skill, grow and maximise their potential: yet another impressive step in the five-year journey of Tramshed Tech - and the Southeast Wales talentscape as a whole - with much more certain to come.

For more Skills & Talent updates, visit the Venture hub at www.venturewales.org