



Welsh Government launches programme to help prepare businesses for the fourth industrial revolution

Welsh Government launches phase two of its successful innovation programme, SMART Productivity, which has been part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

SMART Productivity, which was initially launched in 2015, is a scheme fully funded by the Welsh Government designed to help businesses increase productivity, improve product design and ensure they are protected against the future.

Provided by Welsh Government's Innovation team, the original support funds a three-day consultancy from an external innovation expert. At the end of this period, businesses receive a report identifying potential improvements to productivity such as new machinery, technology or software.

The new support provides an additional five days of consultancy, assisting businesses with implementing the recommendations in the report.

SMART Productivity has already supported over 200 businesses in Wales, to ensure they are prepared for the future.

Gethin Roberts from ITERATE Design + Innovation said:

“There was a great level of interest in the initial phase of SMART Productivity, and Welsh Government wants to encourage people to continue to apply for it, but felt that they could offer even greater support to Welsh businesses.

“They were concerned that being presented with a report could be overwhelming, and often business leaders or managers of small businesses don't have the time to implement changes, so we were appointed along with other consultants to offer additional support to ensure recommendations were put into practice.

“If businesses don't embrace technology and move with the times they risk getting left behind, but we know how hard it can be to get an objective view of processes and that's what we're here to help with.”

Red Dragon Manufacturing, a social enterprise based in Swansea, received the first phase of support earlier this year. Jo Ashburner Farr, CEO of Red Dragon, said:

“As a small business it can be intimidating to have the public sector scrutinise your processes, but it's important to get an outsiders view. Bill, our SMART Productivity consultant, put me instantly at ease. He was able to take my vision and provide a report with actionable advice that would allow us to get there.

“The report reassured me that we were on the right track, has allowed us to implement internal processes that mean something rather than just being there for the sake of it and, importantly, has allowed me to communicate plans with our team and ensure they know exactly where we are heading.”



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Businesses interested in applying for this support can find out more by visiting businesswales.gov.wales or 03000 6 03000