



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Innovation

WELSH INNOVATION AWARDS

Young Welsh inventors given legal patent support for innovative new products



Innovative young Welsh students who design and create exciting new products are being offered the chance to have their inventions officially patented for free.

The Innovation Awards are a joint initiative between the Welsh Government and awarding organisation the WJEC to encourage young people at GCSE, A level and further education colleges to put their skills to use and create new innovative products where there are gaps in the consumer market.

In the Intellectual Property category, a number of candidates are short-listed to be in with a chance to have their invention under-go the patent process and work with Abel + Imray, a firm of specialist trade mark and patent attorneys. The company

specialises in all aspects of patents, trademark and design law in the UK, Europe and worldwide, and has an office in Cardiff with a bilingual patent attorney.

A patent is a registered Intellectual Property right granted by a Government for an invention. It allows the patent holder to stop someone else making, selling, offering for sale, using, importing and/or keeping the invention in the territory in which they hold the patent.

The patent process, from filing a patent application through to getting a granted patent, can take many years, with legal service fees starting from around £5,000 and could cost up to tens of thousands of pounds to get the patent granted.

A recent winner of the Intellectual Property award was a student from Ysgol Preseli in Pembrokeshire, with a product design creating a soft close mechanism for outdoor gates. The student's design adapted a mechanism usually used for domestic kitchens and applied it for use in large outdoor gates in rural areas to stop gates slamming behind livestock and farming vehicles.

Abel + Imray assigned an attorney to the student's case and was able to get the patent published within five months. Without expert and specialist legal help and support, patent applications often struggle to get granted and can take many years.

Speaking about her recent work with the Innovation Awards, Peri Jones, European Patent Attorney at Abel + Imray LLP said: "Encouraging STEM careers and innovation is part of our culture at Abel + Imray, and our firm has been involved with the Innovation Awards for a number of years. It was a great experience to work with the student to understand their invention and help write and file a patent application for it, as at the time I was a trainee patent attorney. An added bonus was that both the student and I are fluent Welsh speakers and many of our conversations were conducted in Welsh."

"The soft-close outdoor gate invention is a really good example of where a student has looked at a real-life problem and found a solution. This is a great indicator for getting patent protection, as an invention needs to be at least novel and inventive, among other requirements."

"Generally, patent applications can take years to progress to a 'granted patent'. However, in the case of these awards, we try to fast track the application process where possible, so that the student hopefully gets to see some paperwork from the UK Intellectual Property Office (UK IPO) before they move on to university or an apprenticeship. We met with the student and filed the patent application, and I am happy to report that the application was granted a patent."

The Innovation Awards help foster a culture of Innovation in Wales which is vitally important for jobs and growth to the Welsh economy, as well as contributing towards the Well-being of Future Generations Act. People, businesses, academic institutions, hospitals, schools, the public sector and the Welsh Government itself, all need to be more innovative to thrive in a competitive world and the Innovation Awards are part of that push.

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To find out more about funding and support from the Welsh Government:

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