

## Erasmus+ and International Brief, May 2018

Over the past 10 years, Further Education Institutions (FEIs) in Wales have been involved in the delivery of EU funded projects to a total value of almost £600m, both as project lead or project partner. Colegau Cymru organises and supports opportunities for college staff to undertake overseas study visits focusing on improving quality and innovation, job shadowing with international counterparts, and developing strategic partnerships with international partners. Colegau Cymru also organises a varied programme of short-term work placements in Europe for vocational learners and apprentices.

### Colegau Cymru / Colleges Wales

Colegau Cymru / Colleges Wales is a charity that raises the profile of further education, vocational, work-based learning, and adult continuing education among decision-makers. Our aim is *to promote world-class education, training and skills outcomes for all learners in Wales.*

Based on this ambition we work with all Further Education Institutions in Wales (FEIS), in order to improve educational opportunities, enrich the learner experience and enhance outcomes and employability. It is a national member-led body, representing all 13 further education colleges and institutions across Wales.

### Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the name of the European Commission's education and lifelong learning funding stream. This funding stream runs from 2014 – 2020.

Our work on Erasmus+ comprises the following key areas:

Applications: we lead on pan Wales consortia bids for Erasmus+ funding for vocational learners, apprentices and staff

Awareness: we present information to colleges, training providers and companies using leaflets and a video of good practice

Advice: we advise on the portability and transparency of qualifications across Europe. We are the Welsh National Contact Point for the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and European Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET).

Policy: we contribute to the UK National Agency's (UK NA) Erasmus+ Country Advisory Group (Wales), Sector Consultative Group (UK) and the Learning Networks (UK)

ColegauCymru has established a solid track record in applying for, and project managing, Erasmus+ funds on behalf of the FEIs in Wales. Since the launch of Erasmus+ in 2014, ColegauCymru has secured over €3.2million of Erasmus+ funding through its pan Wales consortium applications for staff and vocational learner/apprentice mobility projects. In 2018, ColegauCymru was successful in securing over €1.3 million of European funding for its learner mobility project:-

### **All Wales Vocational Learner Mobility 2018/20**

#### **TOTALS**

584 participants, 11 FE colleges, 1 employer, 19 subjects and 12 countries

= €1,383,808.00

In addition, ColegauCymru secured funding of just over €40k in 2018 for a pan Wales staff mobility project to Helsinki, Finland to explore how the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) has worked with vocational colleges in the city on the design and implementation of an internationalisation strategy for vocational education and training (VET).

Further education colleges as well as other providers of education and skills can bid for Erasmus+ funding in order to help fund work and study placements abroad for vocational learners and apprentices. As well as submitting its own funding applications, ColegauCymru also supports and advises colleges and other organisations on submitting their own applications.

### **Brexit**

The UK National Agency for Erasmus+ recently confirmed that the UK is able to apply for Erasmus+ funding in 2019. It also confirmed that if the UK leaves the EU without an agreement, the UK government will underwrite grant agreements for Erasmus+ signed while the UK is still an EU Member State, even if payments continue beyond the point of the UK's EU exit date.

### **Key Statistics**

\*StatsWales records show 224,410 learners in Further Education, Community Learning and Work-based Learning for 2015-16.

\*Of these, only 59,905 were involved in work-based learning, which is roughly a quarter (26.7 per cent). This does not take into account the additional 27,899 school pupils aged 16 or over for the same time period.

\*This means that more than three quarters of people aged 16 or over studying at FE, at school, or as part of Community Learning are not part of work-based learning.

\*The majority of part time learners are over 19

\*52% of all learners were female in 2015/16

\*Wales' colleges have a good profile in inspection outcomes by Her Majesty's Inspectorate, Estyn. During Estyn's last FE inspection cycle (2014-17), most provision was judged excellent with one double excellence and good

### FE member colleges and institutions in Wales

