



WHEB sights set on Europe

The Welsh higher education sector launched itself into the heart of Europe on 28 March 2006 with the opening of the Welsh Higher Education Brussels (WHEB) office. Situated on the doorstep of the major European Union institutions, the presence of the WHEB office signals the Welsh sector's commitment to Europe and engagement with the European higher education debate.

WHEB is a partnership initiative, established with the support of Welsh higher education institutions (HEIs), Higher Education Wales (HEW), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Building on existing engagement and relationships in Europe, Welsh HEIs and stakeholders have come together in Brussels to promote Welsh excellence and to build even stronger relationships with European and regional partners. WHEB has been set up to fulfil three objectives: to promote the interests of the Welsh higher education sector in Europe; to enable the sector to engage more fully with European priorities such as the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process, and; to facilitate stronger relationships between Welsh HEIs, European institutions and regional partners from the EU, and beyond. It aims to build closer links with a wide range of other European stakeholders, with the aim of *"promoting Welsh excellence in pursuit of Europe-wide goals."*



European Commissioner for Science & Research – Janez Potocnik providing the launch address and talking to delegates on the important role of universities in creating a Europe of knowledge

Presentations

The launch featured a presentation from European Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potocnik, on the role of universities in creating a Europe of knowledge, while Welsh MEP and European Parliament Research Committee member, Eluned Morgan, spoke about the regional dimension of higher education. Professor James Lusty, Chair of Higher Education Wales, gave an overview of the WHEB mission and the speeches were concluded by Professor Phil Gummett, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

Professor Lusty summed up the thinking behind the initiative: "Universities sit at the heart of the vision to create a Europe of knowledge and Welsh higher education wishes to play its part."



Professor James Lusty welcoming delegates to the WHEB launch and providing an overview of WHEB's aims and objectives. Eluned Morgan MEP talking to delegates on the regional dimension of research and the vital role of higher education in innovation and economic development.



WHEB Launch Event: Phil Gummett (HEFCW), Stephen Tomlinson (Cardiff Uni), European Commissioner Janez Potocnik, Merfyn Jones (Bangor Uni), Eluned Morgan (MEP), James Lusty (Newport Uni)



Delegates networking at the event, which was held at the new Wales House in Brussels



Commissioner Potocnik meeting Professor James Lusty, Eluned Morgan MEP and newly appointed WHEB Head of Office Paul Harris



Delegates enjoyed entertainment from the Mavron String Quartet – Graduates of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama