



CYMDEITHAS DDYSGEDIG CYMRU
THE LEARNED SOCIETY OF WALES



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy

Celtic Academies Alliance launched to pool expertise

Critical time as the higher education and research sectors deal with challenges of Covid-19 and Brexit

Embargo until Thursday 25 March 2021, 9.30am

The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), the Learned Society of Wales (LSW) and the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) have today (25th March) launched the Celtic Academies Alliance.

The Alliance will enable the RSE, LSW and RIA to pool the wide-ranging expertise and practitioner experience that exists within their memberships to inform public policy developments at both the UK level and within the devolved nations.

The aims of the Alliance are:

- To make available independent expert advice on higher education and research matters and on other shared key issues;
- Support the evolution of more effective intra-UK and UK–Ireland governance, especially in the post-Brexit context; and
- Work to ensure that the UK Government and its bodies take proper account of the needs and differing situations of the devolved nations, supporting communication and collaboration between the different levels of government.

The establishment of the Alliance comes at a critical time as the higher education and research sectors deal with the major twin challenges of Covid-19 and Brexit. It also presents significant opportunity with the UK Government developing a new R&D strategy for the UK, including commitments to 'levelling up' investment across the whole of the UK and with plans emerging for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Professor Dame Anne Glover, RSE President said: *"The establishment of the Celtic Academies Alliance is a significant development. Our national academies are uniquely placed to draw upon our extensive and multidisciplinary expertise, experience and networks to help inform and shape policy developments at all levels of government. It is vital that policy making at the UK level takes account of the distinctive priorities and needs of the devolved nations and the Alliance can play its part in supporting this process."*

Dr Mary Canning, RIA President commented: *"A great strength of the three academies is that they span the full range of academic disciplines within their respective fellowships. This together with their independence and convening power makes them invaluable in analysing the many complex issues which underpin and permeate scientific, economic, social and cultural development. The Celtic Academies Alliance will act as a catalyst for enhanced and synergistic academic and research collaborations between the nations for the mutual benefit of all."*



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Professor Hywel Thomas, LSW President remarked: *“The Celtic Academies Alliance is an opportunity to further develop and amplify the voices of the research and innovation communities of Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales. We will work together to understand what is needed to build research capacity, productivity, and impact in the devolved nations, recognising regional variation within the nations themselves. We hope to contribute constructively to the discussions around levelling up research, development and innovation funding.”*

ENDS

Issued on behalf of the Celtic Academies Alliance. For further information, please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

The Celtic Academies Alliance brings together the national academies of Ireland (the Royal Irish Academy), Scotland (the Royal Society of Edinburgh) and Wales (the Learned Society of Wales) to provide a forum for researchers, policy makers, industry, and the arts and cultural sectors on the island of Ireland and in Scotland and Wales to connect, communicate and collaborate, while working to strengthen understanding at UK level of issues facing the devolved nations.

The Celtic Academies Alliance aims to:

- Provide independent expert advice on higher education and research and other shared issues;
- Support the evolution of more effective intra-UK and UK–Ireland governance, especially in the post-Brexit context; and
- Ensure that the UK Government and its bodies take proper account of the needs and differing situations of the devolved nations.

To meet these aims, the Alliance will:

- Organise meetings and events that bring together policy makers, institutions and other stakeholders;
- Work to strengthen links between our academies and relevant UK bodies, including government departments and research bodies;
- Produce briefing papers and other documents that set out the Alliance’s shared positions; and
- Share learning and information between our member academies.



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About the academies

The national academies recognise and champion world-class researchers; support excellent scholarship and research; facilitate international collaboration and harness their multidisciplinary expertise and practitioner experience for public benefit.

About the Royal Irish Academy	About the Royal Society of Edinburgh	About the Learned Society of Wales
580 Members	1,600 Fellows; and 135 Young Academy Members	550 Fellows
Sciences, humanities and social sciences	Science and technology, arts, humanities, social science, business and public service	Sciences, humanities and social sciences
75 staff	50 staff	7 staff

Celtic Academies Alliance activities 2020–2021

- Submissions and responses to government initiatives and consultations, e.g. letter to the UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the implementation of the *UK Research and Development Roadmap*;
- Roundtables on research and development in the devolved nations;
- Explainer notes, e.g. *The European Structural and Investment Funds: contribution to UK research and innovation* (with the British Academy).

For more information contact:

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Royal Society of Edinburgh: publicpolicy@therse.org.uk

Learned Society of Wales: policy@lsw.wales.ac.uk