

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WALES/CYMRU BOARD MANIFESTO



Levelling Up and Building Back Better in Wales is impossible without investing in professional management and leadership across our nation.

- **World class leadership will be essential to deliver the Welsh Government's growth plans** - on infrastructure and transition to net zero, levelling up and innovation. Wales starts from a position of considerable disadvantage: before Wales can start to 'Build Back Better' it needs to catch up, relative to other parts of the UK.
- **Every organisation (no matter its size or sector type) needs professional managers and leaders to enable performance and growth.** Two areas in particular are holding Wales back: the over representation of micro businesses and the limited availability and accessibility of management training.
- **The vast majority of Welsh businesses are very small (95%) and they struggle to invest in training.** Only 8% of SMEs in Wales offer training to develop management skills and capabilities, a figure which has remained unchanged since 2017.
- **Access to management training and upskilling is restricted:** Wales has the lowest percentage of overall training - and of management and leadership training - across all four UK nations. There are only 16 undergraduate management training providers in Wales offering 360 courses versus 292 providers in England offering over 28,000 courses.
- **Current leadership initiatives**, such as ION Leadership and the 20Twenty Leadership Programme, are underpinned by European Social Funding and **face a funding cliff in 2023**. We need to address the availability and accessibility of management training immediately if we are to avoid a long period of low productivity and slow growth.
- **CMI Cymru has identified three areas of focus** with key recommendations ranging from the easy and practical to the bold and disruptive, and it starts at the very top.

INVEST FOR SUCCESS

We are urging the Welsh Government to prioritise investment in management and leadership skills with ten priority actions summarised in this paper. For further detail read the full Manifesto

For further detail read the full Manifesto www.managers.org.uk/manifestowales

If you have any questions or wish to discuss our proposals further please do not hesitate to contact the policy team at policy@managers.org.uk

For any press inquiries please contact press.office@managers.org.uk

CALL TO ACTION

STRATEGIC AWARENESS – LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP IS FUNDAMENTAL TO GROWTH

- 1** **The Welsh Government to invest in leadership initiatives in line with the principles outlined in the 2021 CMI Comprehensive Spending Review.** Current leadership initiatives are underpinned by EU funding that expires in 2023 and the UK Prosperity Fund is an opportunity to help “bridge the gap”.
- 2** **Every elected MS and senior Senedd Committee member to complete an appropriate level of leadership qualification.** Leaders need to ‘walk the talk’ and role model professional leadership.
- 3** **Clarify ownership of the leadership agenda within the Welsh Government structure.** Consider establishing a new position, such as a Director for Management and Leadership, empowered to work across Government Departments to ensure management and leadership skills are considered when creating new initiatives and policies.

BUSINESS – SCALING UP IN WALES

- 4** **Business Wales (in partnership with CMI) to initiate a study into the specific leadership factors that limit micro and small business from scaling up.** Business Wales to also include leadership and management knowledge and skills in all ‘business growth’ programmes.
- 5** **Create a nationwide leadership portal** that can provide clear navigation to existing leadership development pathways and professional bodies, rather than create ‘new’ initiatives. There is power in scale, collaboration and connecting support programmes (e.g. Business Wales mentoring with professional bodies mentoring programmes).
- 6** **Conduct a nationwide marketing and communications campaign for Welsh development opportunities.** There is very low awareness of key initiatives, e.g. National Learner Week and Help to Grow. These opportunities need to be widely communicated to reach the SME ecosystem across Wales.
- 7** **The Welsh Development Bank and any Government lender to incorporate leadership assessments into lending criteria.** Requiring evidence of a commitment to management development such as a professional management qualification, should be used as a borrowing requirement to ensure organisations can maximise the impact of the funding they receive.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 8** **Review the application of the Apprenticeship Levy in Wales, and open it up to leadership and management qualifications at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (not limited to STEM roles and specific sectors).** All sectors need great leaders and there is currently inequality of access to management degree apprenticeships at both level 6 and 7 in Wales, compared to England. At the next review of the Welsh Apprenticeship Framework the Welsh Government needs to address this imbalance.
- 9** **‘Unlock’ the training provider register to support new, small and specialist entrants.** A competitive range of providers will increase access to a greater range of quality training to the benefit of both businesses and students.
- 10** **Include entrepreneurial thinking as part of the standards for leadership in Wales.** This would support small businesses to innovate and grow. Business Wales should consider including a leadership module in their ‘business start-up’ programme.