

Economy Secretary calls on leaders of the Welsh Economy to be the spark for innovation and entrepreneurship

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates launched BeTheSpark – a Wales-wide movement aimed at unlocking the potential for greater collaboration between entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, risk capital, academia and government to support the creation of more home grown profitable businesses.

In 2015 Wales successfully applied to join the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP).

BeTheSpark is a direct result of Wales' participation in REAP and aims to connect all key partners to support the right conditions for innovation driven entrepreneurship in Wales. [BeTheSpark](#) (external link) provides a designated way to share world class ideas, exchange tips and identify suitable solutions to deliver change.

With simplicity, connectivity and visibility at its centre, the programme is seeking to drive job creation and provide a boost to regional economies through increased innovation and entrepreneurial activity.

Delegates at the event had the chance to engage with the Economy Secretary, Ken Skates as well as with a panel of successful leaders and entrepreneurs including Gocompare founder Hayley Parsons, Alacrity Chairman, Simon Gibson, IQE CEO, Drew Nelson OBE and James Taylor founder of the child development organisation SuperStars.

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, and Skills and Science Minister, Julie James also addressed delegates at the event.

Ken Skates said:

"I was pleased to be joined by 300 leaders in the Welsh economy for this launch of BeThe Spark.

"BeTheSpark provides key figures with an interest in driving forward entrepreneurship and innovation with a genuine opportunity to work together in meaningful partnership through the sharing of ideas and knowledge.

"Entrepreneurship and innovation driven enterprises are crucial to the health and future of our economy. This event and programme is about harnessing our collective power and doing all we can across the economy to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship so that it flourishes across Wales."