



The Welsh Crucible's "game-changing" efforts to develop future research leaders for Wales have been recognised by the judges of this category.

The initiative provides interdisciplinary researchers with a "collision space" where they can interact and make new connections. It is run by that St. David's Day Group – Aberystwyth University, Bangor University, Cardiff University, Swansea University and the University of South Wales – and is supported by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

Over three months, the programme comprise three intensive, two-day residential workshops, or "skills labs". At these events, participants hear guest speakers, engage in seminar skills sessions, take part in informal discussions and receive input from senior government, research policy and media representatives.

Participants can bid for a share of £50,000 seed funding to make their ideas a reality. Since 2011, they have also had a column in the Western Mail to showcase their research. In addition, the programme allocates places to applicants from public, private and third-sector bodies as diverse as the NHS, Tata Steel and Barnardo's Cymru.

Welsh Crucible has also introduced a research-themes study visit to Brussels, which promotes greater awareness of European policy and interdisciplinary funding opportunities.

Mark Pegg, chief executive of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, chief executive of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and a member of the judging panel, said: "Feedback is overwhelmingly positive, with game-changing impacts on attitude and behaviours."