

## Welsh Assembly Government Press Announcement - WO9199 – 2<sup>nd</sup> March

### Wider Role for St. Asaph's Hi-tech Technium

The role of St. Asaph's Technium OpTIC - which has so far directly or indirectly created more than 800 high tech jobs in North Wales - will be expanded and widened following a deal signed by the Welsh Assembly Government and Glyndŵr University. The award-winning Technium will in future be managed by a new company, OpTIC Glyndŵr, formed by Glyndŵr University, which will not only continue to provide incubation, business support and technical facilities to help the birth and growth of high technology enterprises - but will also supplement these with research work, a technology spin-out service and educational courses.

Under the new agreement, the Welsh Assembly Government will continue to own the Technium while its expanded role will be run by OpTIC Glyndŵr, a limited liability company wholly owned by a subsidiary of Glyndŵr Innovations, the enterprise arms of Glyndŵr University.

The facility was established five years ago to help the birth and growth of businesses in the optoelectronics sector - one of the strengths of the regional economy and a key technology in a range of important industries. According to the latest available figures, the Welsh Optoelectronics sector has sales revenue of nearly £1 billion and employs more than 5,000 people.

Last year, OpTIC won a top European award for innovation. The European Commission's RegioStars awards are designed to celebrate innovative regional development projects which other European regions could learn from. The RegioStars jury said that Technium OpTIC was "a particularly good example of an industry led cluster built on a pre-existing industrial strength in the region."

Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones said: "This new arrangement builds on the close relationship that has been evolving between Technium Optic and Glyndŵr University, which has had research scientists based at the Technium for some time. "This closer linkage with the University exemplifies the way in which higher education can play a bigger role in the Welsh economy. It will help build a culture of collaboration between business skills and academic expertise which can drive the Welsh economy up the value chain through more research, more innovation and more commercialisation of intellectual property."

Professor Michael Scott, Vice-Chancellor of Glyndŵr University, added: "OpTIC Glyndŵr is an exciting development for the University. The company cements the University's position at the forefront of optoelectronics research in North Wales. I'm sure that OpTIC Glyndŵr will complement perfectly the work which has already been done by our research scientists based at the centre."

Trefor Jones, Chairman of Optopreneurs Ltd, which managed the Technium facility from its launch under a fixed term five year contract, said: "The Optopreneurs Board is very proud of the achievements of OpTIC but a new structure was required to build upon the success and ensure an even more exciting future for the enterprise. The science and technology OpTIC is involved in will prove to be even more vital in the coming years and I am confident the outcome means an outstanding scenario can develop for Wales."

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