

Cross-Party Group Minutes

Meeting Minutes:

Cross Party Group Title:	<u>Cross Party Group on Wales International AGM</u> This meeting's focus: Wales and Vietnam – a success story.
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday 17 May 2023, from 11.30-12.30.
Location:	Hybrid – Conference Room A

In attendance:

Name:	Title:
Heledd Fychan MS	Chair
Luke Fletcher MS	
Alun Davies MS	
Ruth Cocks	British Council Wales
Mathilda Manley	British Council Wales
Brooke Webb	Heledd Fychan MS support Staff
Nguyen Hoang Long	Ambassador of Viet Nam to the United Kingdom and Ireland.
Maija Evans	British Council Wales
Rebecca Gould	British Council Wales
Alexandra Buchler	UWTSD
Keiron Rees	Global Wales Unis Wales
Sarah Moran	Researcher, Senedd
Elin Jones	UWTSD
Ian Cooke Tapia	Cooked Illustrations
Rob Humphreys	Council of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
Susana Galvan Hernandez	Taith
Sarah Horner	Hijix



Laura Fergusson	Global Wales
Richard Davies	Parthian

This list may not reflect the full attendance of the meeting as some joined online and were unable to be noted down – Please contact Brooke.webb@senedd.cymru with any corrections.

Apologies:

Name:	Title:

Summary of Meeting:

1. AGM (election of chair and Secretariat)

Members reelected Heledd Fychan MS as chair of the Wales International Cross-Party Group and the British Council were reconfirmed as Secretariat for the year.

2. Welcome from the Chair

The chair welcomed ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long, Ambassador of Viet Nam to the United Kingdom and Ireland and attendees to the meeting. Before opening the meeting up for comments and questions the chair invited Rob Humphreys, Rebecca Gould and Richard Davies to give presentations as part of the 50 Years of Diplomatic Relations celebrations between UK and Vietnam, we look at the lessons and opportunities arising from a continued and concerted effort of international cross sector engagement using the Wales-Vietnam long standing partnership as a case study.

3. Presentation Rob Humphreys / Global Wales (Education)

Rob Humphreys, Chair of HEFCW, discussed the approach of the Global Wales (GW) partnership in developing links with higher education in Vietnam. The aims of the partnership included increasing the number of Vietnamese students studying in Wales and developing joint research projects. Vietnam's young demographic, growing middle class, and fast-growing economy make it strategically important to the UK and the West. The GW partnership had

expanded to cover further education. Bilateral meetings were held with senior HE figures, ministers, and senior officials from the Vietnamese government. Areas of mutual interest between Wales and Vietnam include AI, cyber-security, green energy, tourism, maritime science, agriculture, governance and funding of higher education, and the "industrial revolution 4.0." The GW partnership emphasized reciprocity and a sector-to-sector approach, rather than a purely commercial one. Building trust is important for developing more commercial agreements and repeat visits by Welsh leaders are seen as respectful and indicative of long-term commitment. Wales should leverage UK-wide assets and actors, such as the British Council and FCDO, in promoting its international initiatives. The cultural distinctiveness and attributes of Wales, including its history, minority cultures, and the Welsh language, were appreciated by Vietnamese counterparts and can aid in building trust and marking Wales as distinct.

4. Presentation Rebecca Gould (Head of Arts, British Council Wales) and Richard Davies (Publishing Director, Parthian)

Richard and Rebecca Gould are currently in Vietnam to meet with Vietnamese publishers. The provided an update about the aims of the meeting in Vietnam which is to explore LGBTQI/Queer writing, natural habitats in relation to climate change, and the history of Vietnamese-British communities with a focus on Wales. The objective is to develop stronger links between writers in Vietnam and Wales during the UK/Vietnam season of culture, leading to future collaborations and the publication of a collection of poems in both print and online formats. The publication will serve as a legacy for the program and will be celebrated in Wales through readings and events organized by Parthian and Dyddiau Du, a queer writing space in Cardiff. The meeting also seeks to establish a publishing exchange, enabling the publication of a Welsh novel in Vietnam and vice versa.

5. Discussion and Q & A

A discussion followed on the various points raised. RH made the further point that he hoped that the experience of Global Wales, and that of others working in any number of spheres internationally for Wales, would inform any review of the Welsh Government's international strategy.

6. Chairs Roundup and meeting actions

The chair thanked everyone for their contribution and thanked the ambassador for his attendance. The next cross party group meeting will be held on Tuesday the 3rd of October 2023.