

Global Centre of Rail Excellence and Swansea University agree 'unique' research partnership

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The [Global Centre of Rail Excellence](#) (GCRE) and [Swansea University](#) have agreed a new research collaboration based at the world class GCRE innovation facility being constructed in South Wales.

The GCRE will be a site for international quality rail research, testing and showcasing of rolling stock, infrastructure and cutting-edge new technologies.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two bodies will enable Swansea University and GCRE to collaborate on areas of common research interest.

Swansea University is already a well-established name in rail innovation, being an affiliate of the UK Rail Research and Innovation Network (UKRRIN) as well as having significant expertise in areas including railway signalling, infrastructure and civil engineering.

In addition to rail innovation, the 700-hectare GCRE site provides significant opportunities to support study

in complementary research areas such as renewable energy, natural sciences and a wide-range of engineering disciplines. The partnership allows the site to be utilised by academics from across the University.

Separate to this memorandum of understanding, Swansea University will also **be a partner** in a new Centre of Excellence for Railway Testing, Validation and Customer Experience at GCRE, alongside the University of Birmingham and Cardiff University, following a £15m award from the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund (UKRPIF).

Global Centre of Rail Excellence Head of Strategy and Skills, Rob Forde, said: “It’s fantastic to agree this unique research partnership between the Global Centre of Rail Excellence and Swansea University.

“Swansea has some sector-leading strengths in key areas including rail technology, engineering and infrastructure and GCRE will provide a platform at which their teams can undertake cutting edge research and development, as well providing a fantastic location for students to get skills and experience at a live railway environment.

“In many ways the partnership is a very natural one. Swansea have their home very close to the site and it’s important to us at GCRE that we harness that strength and capability directly on our doorstep. The clients we will be working with and facilitating testing for on site will certainly value having a highly renowned university like Swansea linked to the facility.

“We’re incredibly excited about the partnership we will develop together, in particular to support research collaborations outside of rail. Our site is very large, equivalent to the size as Gibraltar, and with such an interesting landscape at the head of the Dulais and Swansea valley, it can support a broad range of research opportunities in areas such as energy and the natural sciences.

“We’re very much looking forward to developing this unique research partnership with the talented Swansea team.”

Professor David Smith, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Swansea University said: “We are delighted to strengthen our existing relationship with GCRE and enter a more formalised partnership between our two organisations. Our collaboration will include skill development, student training and innovation in digital twinning, energy and net zero, materials, infrastructure and environmental science while supporting regional and national rail technology and innovation.

“GCRE is a unique facility within the UK and, indeed, Europe, and we are very fortunate to have it on our doorstep. We look forward to working with the team at GCRE to develop opportunities for impactful research and education through this new partnership.”

Photo credit: GCRE