



SDG Teach In 2026 case study

Institution name: Swansea University

Course/subject/module/class name: Pan Wales HE WFGA Hackathon 2026

Educator name: Dr Samantha Burvill, Ms Beth Cummings, Dr Fern Davies, Dr Kate Organ

Overview

The Pan Wales Hackathon is a nation-wide hackathon being held simultaneously across Welsh higher education (HE) institutions. It is an extra-curricular event open to all students at all levels at Swansea University, Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Aberystwyth University, University of Wales Trinity St David, University of South Wales and the Open University. Teams are required to tackle set challenges in their own institutions relating to the [7 WFGA well-being goals](#) provided in the Hackathon and winners from each institution will compete in an all-Wales final hosted at Swansea University.

Approach to the Teach In

In the Swansea University Hackathon (and all others hosted simultaneously in HE institutions) students were focusing on developing innovative ideas to support the seven wellbeing goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFGA Wales, 2015), aligning with the SDGs. Wales became the first country to introduce well-being legislation with the WFGA, with public policy based on the foundations of well-being. This was created for public bodies and focuses on social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being, but is increasingly being focused on in private enterprise as well. It requires public bodies to think about the long-term impact of their decisions. The development of this hackathon provides a way in which awareness can be raised of the Act but importantly provides a vehicle through which students can contribute to the agenda of the Act, enabling a toolkit of ideas to be developed that could potentially be utilised by the commissioner's office and/or public, private and third sector with Wales and beyond.

At Swansea University 27 students from various disciplines, levels of study and cultural background took part in the hackathon. Simultaneous hackathons took place at Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Aberystwyth University, University of Wales Trinity St David, University of South Wales and the Open University with varying participation numbers. The winning teams from all participating institutions will go onto the Pan Wales HE Hackathon 2026 final hosted at Swansea University on April 29th 2026.

Insert any quotes e.g., from an educator or student:

Micheal Olawale (Student):

“The challenge centred around the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. This Act, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is designed to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. It provides a legally binding common purpose through seven well-being goals that guide national government, local authorities, health boards, and other public bodies.

What made this experience particularly meaningful was how the Act pushes us to think differently about systems.

- It encourages us to design solutions with people and communities
- It shifts innovation from solving problems in isolation to building systems that sustain well-being over time

In just 4 hours, we explored how technology and thoughtful design can support this vision. I am grateful that our idea, Hanes, resonated strongly enough with the judges to earn first place out of 10 competing solutions.

Moments like this remind me why I enjoy working at the intersection of people, systems, systems and technology. When innovation is guided by long term well-being, we are not just building solutions for today. We are helping shape the kind of future we all want to live in.”

Dr Samantha Burvill (Swansea University Associate Professor):

“ Students from multiple disciplines, levels, nationalities and cultures working together to develop solutions to the well-being goals of Wales. The enthusiasm from all universities in Wales to take part and make this initiative a reality showcases what makes Wales an incredible place to live, work and study”.

“The energy, innovation and amazing talent of students from across Wales to develop ideas in only 4 hours and pitch these through 5 minute presentations was inspirational to see. What was clear was the passion these students have for making a difference and the change leaders they already are. The Pan Wales Hackathon is a platform for these students enabling them to showcase their ideas and make an impact on Wales and beyond”.

Kelly Jordan (Swansea University Entrepreneurship Manager and Hackathon Judge):

"I had the pleasure of judging Swansea's regional heat for the Pan Wales Higher Education Hackathon aligned to the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations Act. The solutions created by students were incredible, and I'm very much looking forward to hearing from the finalists from the other Welsh Universities".

Olawale Valentine Ogunjobi (student):

"I took part in the very first Pan Wales Future Generations Hackathon/Pan Wales Hackathon Cymru. It brought together students from pretty much every background you can think of; engineering, arts, business, sciences, you name it, to team up and come up with fresh ideas tackling real challenges tied to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Very intense but so rewarding - brainstorming, throwing wild ideas around with people I'd just met, getting feedback from professors and mentors, and then pitching everything in front of everyone. The vibe was electric and everyone was genuinely passionate, super collaborative, and it felt like we were actually building something meaningful together".

"This kind of event sharpens your teamwork, creative thinking, problem-solving, and even your ability to present under pressure. I'm just grateful I got to be involved, learn a ton, meet some brilliant people, and feel like I contributed even a little bit toward a better future for Wales".

Dr Ben Reynolds (Director of Urban Foundry BCorp - Judge):

"I was at Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe judging the Pan Wales Future Generations Hackathon last week, via the Big Ideas Wales programme. Students from across Wales were challenged to develop ideas that respond to the Well-being Goals of Wales. They had only 4 hours to come up with a solution and then pitch it. No pressure! Urban Foundry | B Corp™ was one of Wales' first BCorps and we've also worked with The Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and it was great to see students engaging with these important strategies. The quality of the thinking and the creativity behind the students' ideas was really impressive. Definitely some future change-makers and leaders in that group".

Rhiannon Breeze (Employer Engagement University of Wales Trinity St David)

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"On Wednesday, students from universities across Wales came together for the first ever Pan-Wales Future Generations Hackathon! It was an amazing opportunity for students to step out of their comfort zones, meet new people and refine their skills such as presentation, problem-solving, and teamwork - all while taking part in something unique at a pan-Wales level".

Which of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals does your approach to the Teach In relate to? Please list them below:

All SDGs were covered during this event as they inform the WFGA (2015). A list is provided below.

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals

More information:

Event Feedback:

Feedback was gained from 20 of the 27 students who took part in the hackathon with 88% students rating the overall organisation of the event as excellent or good and 100% of students providing a positive response when asked how the event made them feel. Half of the students had not heard of the WFGA (2015) prior to the event, with 94.4% either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the Hackathon improved their understanding of the WFGA (2015). Whilst over 60% of students claimed they already knew about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 77.8% felt that the event had improved their understanding of the goals further. This suggests that the hackathon enabled increased knowledge and awareness of the SDGs and WFGA (2015) in addition to 77.8% of students claiming an increased interest in sustainability. Students noted quick brainstorming, teamwork, presentation skills, public speaking, organisational skills, leadership, critical thinking and rapid team development as new skills that the Hackathon helped them learn. 67% of students suggested that the Hackathon helped them to apply their knowledge to a real-world problem and 92.8% of students said that they would take part in a Hackathon again in the future.

Award Nominations:

Nomination for Graduate Futures Institute Academic Employability Award for the Pan Wales WFGA (2015) Hackathon.

Pictures:





