



Jennie Evans. Dragon Innovation Partnership



With a degree in English from UCW Swansea, and a wealth of experience in tourism, business and education, Trinity University College's Director of Development, Jennie Evans, was a perfect choice of partner to co-lead the Dragon Innovation Partnership.

Having worked in her parent's tourism business to pay off her student debts, Jennie worked up a taste for the sector, and later completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Tourism and became Managing Partner of a self catering agency where she gained invaluable knowledge and understanding of what it's like to manage a small business.

A taste of education came whilst lecturing in Tourism at Pembrokeshire College, a post she later left to become National Coordinator for Welcome Host, the Wales Tourist Board's customer service training programme. Five years later, Jennie took a short-term research post with ELWa to investigate quality assurance issues in sixth forms and work based learning, as part of the development of ELWa's Quality Assurance Framework for the post sixteen education sector.

Jennie joined Trinity in 2002 as a Senior Projects Manager, and within four years, became Director of Development. She also undertakes some consultancy work on behalf of Trinity University College, and now heads up the Dragon Innovation Partnership along with Kathryn David from Swansea Metropolitan University, and Ceri Jones from Swansea University.

Jennie lives in Camrose, Pembrokeshire with her eight-year-old son, James.

**Subject: "Ivory towers or towers of strength? How can universities help businesses in the downturn?"**

The Dragon Innovation Partnership project is a collaboration between Swansea Metropolitan University, Swansea University, and Trinity College, Carmarthen that aims to maximise opportunities for transferring knowledge and expertise between the three higher education institutions. (HEIs) and external companies.

The presentation will look at some of the challenges that employers have in engaging with universities and universities have engaging with employers as set out in the two CBI reports below, and outline how the Dragon Innovation Partnership is seeking to address these issues.

Stepping Higher: Workforce Development through Employer-Higher Education Partnership (December 2008). \*There are two simple messages. Employers who are not already working with universities may be losing out\*Secondly, universities need to make it easy and worthwhile for employers to work with them.\*

Future Fit (March 2009) "Many universities are keen to reach out to local and regional SMEs, where there is often an untapped source of employers who do not yet have links with universities....Greater engagement, with both employers and universities actively seeking relationships, would help to ensure that the needs and expectations of each other are better understood and met".