



**Lowri
Roberts**
Innovation
Management MSc



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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About Lowri

Lowri Roberts is a Business and Marketing Development Specialist working for Antur Cymru through a Business Wales contract. Privately, she also provides marketing strategy consulting services. Lowri is currently studying for an MSc in Innovation Management at MADE Cymru.

In November 2022, Lowri was invited to present at the International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM) Conference in Athens, Greece. She collaborated with Alan Mumby, Graham Howe, and former MADE Cymru lecturer Jaymie Phillips on a presentation called "The Evolution of Innovation Management Courses for Business Growth."

The presentation discussed the evolution of a master's course that was originally designed to upskill the manufacturing sector in Wales into a course that improves understanding and knowledge of managing innovation and new product development for business professionals across Wales. The presentation also highlighted the wider appeal and application of innovation management beyond the manufacturing sector.

Can you explain a bit about your current job role?

Before joining Antur, I have had a diverse commercial career, where I was deployed to various divisions that required my skills in resilience, relationship management, and problem-solving. My ability to speak at conferences in the UK and Europe on relevant subjects has enabled me to support clients and businesses through various challenges by utilising my expertise in finance, operations, logistics, marketing, HR, knowledge transfer, and partner relationships.

In my role at Antur, I see myself as a facilitator or a connector who consistently learns and applies knowledge in business. I enjoy mentoring clients who are struggling with digital marketing and sustainability, which are relevant and current topics. As a business advisor, it is crucial for me to stay updated and knowledgeable, which is why I enrolled in the MSc in Innovation Management.

A recent example of my work and how I supported a client was when they received an order to supply 15,000 of a product within a given time-frame, and the product had to meet sustainability criteria. The client was worried about the process and successful delivery, so they asked for my support. As I was familiar with the client and had supported them from the outset, I was able to assist in developing a process plan that enabled the client to deliver the required outcomes.

Why did you decide to study the Innovation Management MSc?

I am a curious person who enjoys learning and pushing myself to achieve more, both professionally and personally. A colleague had shared information about MADE Cymru through our intranet, and I was intrigued, so I reached out to Alan Mumby for more information. After speaking with Alan, I was sold on the programme. My partner Nick Palmer, who works in the same sector, also enrolled in the programme, as we thought it would be a great opportunity for us to learn and discuss shared interests.

What challenges did you face professionally that you thought the course might address?

In the businesses I work with, I often encounter a disconnect between products, processes, and people. I often act as a link between development and growth by asking questions and suggesting alternative processes. I hoped that the course would provide me with new methodologies to support businesses in developing NPD or moving into international markets by creating cohesive and collaborative methods of working.

I also have a fascination with the circular economy and circular HR, believing that continuously developed individuals are more beneficial for business outcomes.

How has the course had an impact on you and your business so far?

As the course progressed, I developed my network, my international thought process, and my strategic thinking. I used to think that I had a good grip on strategic marketing, but the research into larger organisations, biometrics, emerging economies, and the opportunity to engage with business leaders from around the world have allowed me to apply a more academic approach to innovation thinking and implement it throughout my organisation.

I use these skills daily and have recently helped a private client navigate a net zero journey and grow their business after the challenges posed by Covid-19.

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~ Lowri Roberts

What have you enjoyed about the course?

What I loved most about the course was finding a mentor in Alan. He's knowledgeable, interesting, and down-to-earth with great stories to share.

I also loved the renewed interest in reading that the course sparked in me. My favourite modules were International Innovation, New Product Development, and Industry 4.0. The tutors and speakers on this course were fantastic.

Finally, I enjoyed the peer group. I've been in working groups with a wide variety of students and have benefited from their knowledge and experiences. We formed WhatsApp study groups for mutual support and many of us are still connected. This has allowed me to utilise their course experiences to build my presentation for Athens, and they have been excessively generous with their feedback and time.

Prior to studying this course, when and where did you last formally study?

Before this course, I was finishing up my CIPD Level 7 in HR while taking an Introduction to Innovation short course, both of which were completed through remote learning.

What is next for you when you complete the course?

When I complete the course, I plan to continue building on the skills and networks I've created in the innovation process. I'm fascinated with Innovation strategy and its associated academic knowledge and frameworks, and how they can be applied through collaboration between institutions and businesses (which is a global challenge).

I hope to share my understanding of the Business Sophistication pillar and sub-pillars and support growth of the relationships between institutions and businesses, helping them extend their knowledge about what innovation is and how to apply this into their business strategies

I also hope to maintain and grow my relationships with academic and industry peers across the globe through collaboration, as I believe this is fundamental to gaining a broad perspective. ISPIM welcomed me with open arms and the feedback on my presentation was positive, offering further interaction. I hope to visit further studies to benefit businesses in Wales, and who knows, a PhD may be calling!



To find out more about the MADE Cymru Innovation Management and Upskilling for Industry 4.0 courses, please visit www.madecymru.co.uk

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