

INVESTMENT CONCEPT NOTE

Wales on the Cote d'Azur

A modern platform for inward investment, brand diplomacy and strategic introductions in Cannes.



Imagine a superyacht wrapped in the Welsh flag, moored in Cannes during the Lions or MIPIM, with Ian Rush hosting business leaders, investors and football royalty on board. It is not a stunt; it is a serious economic diplomacy platform with a world-recognised face that opens doors no government minister could open alone.

Rush has deep roots in Italian football culture and European networks that go far beyond Wales. During his time as a footballer he built relationships across the world; those players and club executives of his generation now run clubs, academies, federations and investment vehicles.

His Ian Rush Foundation has already taken him to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the USA, Asia, Pakistan and India to support football. Ian's work to develop and support partnerships with global sponsors and brands is exactly the skill set needed here. Ian has worked with all major brands and sponsors in and around the game.

Rush played in the era of Platini, Cantona, Papin and Zidane, men who are now deeply embedded in French business, investment and cultural life. A Welsh Government investment, in collaboration with our yacht in Cannes, could generate more serious business conversation in an evening than a year of trade missions.

Cannes Lions is the global creative and media industry gathering - perfect for attracting tech companies, media businesses, digital agencies and creative industries to Wales. MIPIM in March is the world's largest property and real estate event - ideal for developers and infrastructure investors. The Cannes Film Festival in May is where entertainment, IP and content investment meet. All three happen within a few miles of each other on the same stretch of coast.

Is everyone listening to those on a Welsh Government trade stand at a convention centre, or does everyone want to be on a Wales Government and Ian Rush boat?

The Welsh Government's international trade arm, the Development Bank of Wales, and Welsh Government trade missions already have budgets for exactly this kind of inward investment promotion. The missing piece is a compelling, memorable centrepiece. A Welsh-flagged superyacht with Rush as host, a curated guest list of serious investors and business leaders, and a simple message - "Wales is open, ambitious and connected" - delivered by one of the most recognised Welsh faces on the planet, would be transformative.



Positioning concept for professional inward investment engagement in Cannes.