Objective

The Innovation Value Institute (IVI) and the Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS) are working on a service contract for the European Commission to support the development of:

- A European Framework for ICT Professionalism with the goal of enhancing ICT professionalism and mobility across Europe.
- A European Training Programme for ICT Managers to promote new competences with a view to better address the challenges of ICT driven innovation and the future Internet.

The target groups are ICT practitioners and ICT managers (Chief Information Officers or their equivalent in smaller enterprises).

Background

The competitiveness and capability of industry are becoming increasingly dependent on the innovative and effective use of information and communication technology (ICT). E-skills shortages, gaps and mismatches negatively affect productivity growth, competitiveness, innovation and employment in Europe.

Recent statistics corroborate this statement:

- the cost of IT project failures in business is estimated at up to €4.5 trillion worldwide
- half of IT projects incur budget overruns of more than 80%,
- there will be a potential skills gap of up to 13% of the EU ICT workforce over the period 2010-2015

The lack of an appropriately trained workforce could become a bottleneck for innovative organisations and enterprises in the public and private sector, impacting on EU competitiveness.

The relatively rigid supply of skilled ICT graduates via the formal education system has reinforced calls for increased emphasis on the training and learning of existing ICT practitioners to ensure they are skilled in the most relevant areas. However, it is not clear for ICT practitioners how to best obtain recognised, transferable skills and qualifications which will serve them in their chosen career. ICT professionals in today’s businesses work across all areas of the organisation rather than being confined to the niches of data centre operations and IT support, demanding a wide range of e-competences, combining both business and technical skills.

The lack of an obvious career structure within ICT and the lack of harmonisation across countries; places significant constraints on the long-term value of acquiring such skills.

The European Commission has long since recognised the importance of educating professionals within ICT as a basis for establishing an ICT profession, as evidenced by milestones such as the Lisbon Agenda, and more recently in the EU2020 strategy and the "Digital Agenda for Europe" flagship initiative. A key underlying message is the imperative to “identify and recognise the competences of ICT practitioners and users….and to develop a European Framework for ICT Professionalism”.

Tender

The European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General, issued in autumn 2010 an open call for tenders on ICT Professionalism and e-Skills.

IVI and CEPIS submitted a joint tender and successfully won the bid in December 2010, with work commencing on 4 January 2011.

IVI is an international consortium-based research institute that was established in 2006 as a joint venture between Intel, The Boston Consulting Group and NUI Maynooth to address the common problem of highly sophisticated organizations ‘shooting in the dark’ with their IT investments.

CEPIS is a non-profit organization, representing the views of European Informatics
ICT Professionalism and e-skills

Professionals on major issues to European Institutions, and has been a champion of the concept of ICT professionalism for many years. Membership today stands at 36 member societies from 33 countries, representing over 350,000 professionals.

Project Overview

There are two main phases to the work.

Phase 1 will deliver an interim report in month 6, covering the state of play regarding the promotion of “ICT professionalism and Training Programmes for ICT Managers” and the identification of good practices.

Our approach for Phase 1 is shown in the diagram below:

Phase 2 of the project develops the proposals at a more detailed level, covering important topics such as technical, legal, financial and institutional framework conditions as well as consideration into the resources needed for a successful, sustainable implementation. The final report will be delivered at a dissemination event, planned for December 2011.

Engagement

One of the key aspects of the project is the need to continually engage with interested stakeholders throughout the duration of the project. It is essential that we truly understand their issues and needs, so that the delivered solution is entirely demand-driven, with a clear value proposition for each stakeholder.

To this end, our initial desktop research will involve a review of the most recent studies, initiatives and policy debate at EU, national, business and professional body levels. The review will also look beyond the EU 27 countries (paying particular attention to Japan, India and USA).

Based on the desktop research, we will conduct a series of interviews with over 100 relevant professionals, representing a wide range of interested stakeholders, understanding the demands and issues confronting these individuals as well as gathering data on existing best practice.

In addition to the interviewees, we will be consulting with key opinion leaders on a regular basis throughout the project, to act as a sounding board for our proposals and ensure that the needs of each stakeholder community are adequately represented.

A Steering Committee comprising five leading figures from industry and academia will provide additional insight and guidance into the direction of the project.

Outcome

The final report will provide evidence and a strong basis for future actions at EU and national level to enhance the ICT profession within Europe.

Further Details

IVI: http://ivi.nuim.ie
CEPIS: http://www.cepis.org
European Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/index_en.htm

Contact

Martin Delaney (IVI): +353 (0) 86 857 1728
Fiona Fanning (CEPIS): +32 (0)2 772 1836
Email: Fiona.fanning@cepis.org
Or info@ICTProf.eu