Media Factsheet

DEVELOPING AND UPGRADING WORKFORCE CAPABILITIES

IDA will work with Government agencies, infocomm MNCs and infocomm local enterprises to provide skill upgrading and attachment opportunities for infocomm professionals, including fresh graduates with infocomm diplomas and degrees to help retain jobs and create employment opportunities in the infocomm sector.

1. Integrated Infocomm Scholarship Programme

To achieve IDA's vision for Singapore to have infocomm-savvy and globally competitive infocomm professionals to drive national economic competitiveness, it is critical that IDA continues to invest in developing infocomm manpower capabilities to meet the medium to longer-term demand for infocomm professionals. This will also ensure that the infocomm industry will have access to a ready pipeline of infocomm talent when the economy starts to recover from the current crisis.

In line with this, IDA has launched a new scholarship programme for infocomm studies. The Integrated Infocomm Scholarship (IIS) programme targets outstanding 'O' level students and allows these students to pursue infocomm-related diploma and degree courses from polytechnic through to university. This unique programme will also benefit students in many ways, including providing them with opportunities for both overseas and local industry attachments in major infocomm corporations. This five-year programme will be implemented from 2009 and will support scholarships from now till 2013.

In summary, the IIS is a scholarship programme that aims to:

- Attract outstanding O' level students who are interested in pursuing infocomm studies from polytechnic through to university level, and subsequently pursue an infocomm career; and

- Meet the industry's overall manpower needs for infocomm fresh graduates.

The IIS programme gives students the opportunity to gain meaningful and relevant industry exposure and experience of up to six months during the course of their studies at both the polytechnic and university levels. This will be achieved through industry attachments, both locally and overseas, with major corporations.

The scholarship, available to both Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents, is open to outstanding students who have completed their 'O' level

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studies and are keen to pursue a full-time infocomm-related diploma and degree course in a local polytechnic and university respectively.

The scholarship covers tuition fees, annual allowances, computer allowances, as well as overseas and/or local internship allowances of up to 6 months. IIS scholars at the university level will also receive funding support to pursue developmental courses to ensure that they are "industry-ready" once they graduate and enter the workforce. At the end of their university studies, all IIS scholars would go on to serve a three-year bond in the infocomm industry undertaking infocomm-related jobs approved by IDA.

Top performing scholars at the polytechnic level can also apply for the National Infocomm Scholarship ("NIS") programme for sponsorship of their university studies (see below). Where a scholar is awarded NIS, the applicable NIS terms and conditions would apply accordingly.

2. **National Infocomm Scholarship**

The National Infocomm Scholarship (NIS) programme was launched by the IDA. This programme seeks to develop infocomm leaders and ensure a pipeline of talent for the infocomm industry through the award of scholarships from 2004 to 2010. It aims to:

- Make infocomm a top career choice among top students;

- Create 'industry-ready' scholars to be injected into Singapore's infocomm industry; and

- Ensure that the industry has a fair share of top talent to sustain its future growth.

IDA will continue to offer this programme from 2010 to 2013. IDA will also increase the pool of premier scholars through this programme, which today, has already been awarded to 155 top students to pursue infocomm degree courses at renowned universities, both locally and overseas. This scholarship is currently offered in partnership with 26 companies from a wide range of sectors, including banking, telecom, media, infocomm and consultancy companies. This means that scholars are assured of a wide selection of exciting infocomm jobs when they graduate.

3. **Enhanced Critical Infocomm Technology Resource Programme (CITREP)**

The Critical Infocomm Technology Resource Programme (CITREP) is an existing training incentive programme to encourage professionals to acquire critical and emerging infocomm skills. IDA has enhanced the CITREP to further incentivise professionals and companies to continue skills upgrading and competency development during the economic downturn.

The programme supports the course and examination fees for training courses and certifications in the following critical and emerging skill areas

which are articulated in the National Infocomm Competency Framework (NICF):

- Infocomm Security
- Interactive Digital Media
- IT Services
- Network and Communications
- Project Management
- Software and Applications
- Telecommunications

The enhanced CITREP funding allows both infocomm and non-infocomm professionals to update and upgrade themselves in the dynamic, competitive and fast changing infocomm industry as follows:

Enhanced CITREP (for FY09 and FY10)
- For Course and Certification Fees Support, up to 80% (from 50%) of the nett payable course and examination fees, capped at $3,000 per trainee; or
- For Certification Fees Support, up to 80% (from 50%) of the nett payable examination fees, capped at $500 per trainee; or
- For Organisation-Sponsored Trainees only: The sponsoring organisations are eligible for Absentee Payroll, at $50 per day, when they sponsor their employees for Full-Time Training[1].

A total budget of $25 million is estimated for Enhanced CITREP for FY09 and FY10. This programme is expected to benefit 10,000 infocomm professionals over the next two years.

The list of endorsed courses and certifications can be found on the iTRAIN website[2].

Note: CITREP funding does not support GST, registration and membership fees, rebates, incentives, discounts or any training grants offered by the Course Providers, Testing Centres or any other organisations in relation to the endorsed courses and certifications.

To be eligible for funding support under CITREP, a trainee must:
- Be a Singapore citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident;
- Meet the admission criteria set by the Course Provider or Certificate Awarding Body;
- Commence all training courses or certification examinations between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2011 (or otherwise stipulated by IDA);
- Ensure that the endorsed course providers or testing centres have submitted their enrolments for their intended courses or certifications on their behalf in the iTRAIN system before the commencement of the training courses or certifications;
- *For Organisation-Sponsored Trainees*: The sponsoring organisation must be incorporated or registered in Singapore. Employees of local

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[1] Full-Time Training refers to courses conducted on weekdays (Mondays to Fridays) between 8:30am to 6pm (minimum 6 training hours).
[2] Website URL https://itrain.ida.gov.sg/itrain/lst/CourseCataloguePreEnt.jsp

government agencies are not eligible. Employees of these organisations can, however, qualify for CITREP under the self-sponsored category;

- *For Course and Certification Fees Support*: The trainee must complete the course and pass all examinations required by the certification or post-training assessment within 12 months from the course commencement date:
  - o With at least 75% of the training as per endorsed roadmap; and
  - o Achieve the final certification status (applicable to certifiable programmes only) or pass the post-course assessment; and

  For Certification Fees Support: Pass all examinations required by the certification within 12 months from the commencement date of the first examination (applicable to certifiable programmes only).

4. National Infocomm Competency Framework (NICF)

The National Infocomm Competency Framework (NICF) articulates the suite of competencies needed to perform various infocomm job roles. The NICF is also a comprehensive guide for infocomm occupations, training and certifications available. The NICF aims to widen and deepen the infocomm capabilities of infocomm professionals and guide their career development against standards agreed by the industry and companies.

The NICF is co-owned by IDA and WDA. NICF is also used by WDA as part of their Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) system to cater to skills upgrading, manpower conversion and overall manpower development for the infocomm industry.

The NICF brings together three target audiences:
a. Infocomm professionals: Competencies and certifications are defined for career upgrading;
b. Employers: For use in hiring, human resource management and training of staff; and
c. Training providers: For development of curriculum and assessment.

Key Features

NICF provides infocomm professionals and employers with the necessary information and knowledge founded on standards agreed upon by the industry and companies to:

a. Assess competencies and performance of infocomm employees;
b. Develop training roadmaps and development programmes for employees;
c. Guide design of training curriculum and plan career pathways of infocomm employees; and
d. Assess the employability of potential infocomm employees to aid in effective HR recruitment.

NICF Online Portal

Targeting at the infocomm professionals and organisations, the NICF Portal offers a self-assessment checklist where personal skill gaps can be identified for skills renewal and upgrade. The portal also allows employers and infocomm professionals to identify training courses relevant for the respective job roles. This encourages professionals/students to take charge of their own career development and bridge their skill gaps to further their careers. The NICF portal website address is www.nicf.sg.

NICF Enhancements

The NICF will be substantially enhanced with close to 200 job roles, expanded from the current 31 job roles. Job roles in new areas such as Infocomm Sales & Marketing, Healthcare and Financial Services are also included. Companies and professionals will be able to avail the content in 2Q 2009.

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