

SMU Academy, Straits Interactive tie up to train data protection officers

Singapore BUSINESSES and workers looking to train and get up to speed on data protection can turn to a new collaboration which aims to provide hands-on training and professional certification courses.

Singapore-based data protection software firm Straits Interactive has teamed up with SMU Academy, the professional training arm of Singapore Management University, to form a new Data Protection Excellence Network, which will also provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) here with resources to train their own data protection officers.

The network will offer courses in data protection, with lessons in topics such as data legislation, information privacy and hands-on data protection training.

It will hold classes not only in Singapore, but also in other countries in the region such as Malaysia and the Philippines.

Part of the collaboration includes two new advanced certificates in data protection offered by SMU Academy. In a first in the region, the certificates will lead to an advanced diploma with digital credentials.

NTUC assistant secretary-general Melvin Yong, who announced the initiative on Monday, said Singapore

faces an urgent shortage of skilled data protection officers due to the growing introduction of data protection legislation worldwide and a step-up in enforcement by an increasing number of countries.

"In Singapore, we project that our industry will require more than 10,000 data protection professionals within the next three years," said Mr Yong.

He also announced the launch of a new Professional Conversion Programme in data protection, which is supported by Workforce Singapore and SkillsFuture Singapore.

This programme will train professionals and mid-career switchers to

convert their skills into becoming data protection officers.

"These initiatives will help professionalise the role of the data protection officer. The Professional Conversion Programme will also help SMEs acquire their own data protection expertise," said Mr Yong.

Straits Interactive chief executive Kevin Shepherdson said: "The motivation to start the Data Protection Excellence Network was to address the need to enhance data protection competencies in the Asean region, where data protection laws are relatively new, and amid the new General Data Protection Regulation, which went into force in the European Union."