

SA ICT skills development gets private sector boost

Information and communication technology (ICT) skills development in South Africa received a boost after business systems software giant SAP and the Media, Advertising and ICT Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT Seta) partnered to support research programmes in the sector.

The MICT Seta will be committing R10-million over four years to place PhD and master's candidates into SAP Research, Internet Applications and Services Africa programmes, Engineering News Online reports.

"The Advanced Human Capital Development Programme, with the support from the Seta and the Department of Science and Technology, will grow the number of PhD and master's candidates in SAP Research Africa to 23," says SAP Research - Internet Applications and Services Africa head Danie Kok, adding that the partnership promotes South Africa's participation in global competitive research programmes, while also contributing to the development of the National System of Innovation by producing highly qualified PhD and master's graduates with practical research experience.

The MICT Seta's funding is part of its mandate to accelerate critical and scarce skills through programmes such as the Advanced Human Capital Development Programme, MICT Seta CEO Oupa Mopaki told Engineering News Online. "In committing R10-million towards this initiative, we are helping to fast-track high-level skills in the ICT sector and help reduce the scarcity of such specialised human capital knowledge," he said, adding that the dearth of ICT PhDs in South Africa must not go unnoticed. "As a Seta, we have a responsibility to address skills needs at entry level, intermediary level, as well as top level," Mopaki said, adding that he is looking forward to "a lasting and mutually beneficial working relationship on this project" involving the MICT Seta and a leading company such as SAP.

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