PRESS RELEASE

CIT SEEKS TO PLUG DATA SKILL SHORTAGE

Every day, we create 2.5 quintillion bytes of data, so much that 90% of the data in the world today has been created in the last two years alone. This data is known as "big data" and comes from everywhere: sensors used to gather climate information, posts to social media sites, digital pictures and videos, purchase transaction records and mobile phone GPS signals to name a few. A shortage of people with the skills to make big data work in organisations looks certain as more sectors attempt to use the huge volumes of data they collect to grow their business. A recent Deloitte report stated "Internet companies have led the way in exploring big data, but the sectors that are likely to follow include the public sector, financial services retail, entertainment and media. This could trigger a talent shortage, with up to 190,000 skilled professionals needed to cope with demand in the US alone over the next five years,"

To address this growing skills shortage Cork Institute of Technology, in conjunction with its industry partners, has developed a new and innovative level 8 full-time Higher Diploma programme. Starting in April 2013 the **Higher Diploma in Data Science & Analytics** (Big **Data)** will provide a conversion pathway for graduates from other disciplines. In order to apply for a place applicants must have a Level 8 Honours Bachelors degree. This is a government funded programme under the HEA's ICT Skills initiative (www.ictskills.ie) and the online application process is now open, tuition fees will be waived for all successful applicants.

Visit http://cloud.cit.ie for further details. All suitably qualified graduates are eligible to participate in the HEA's ICT Skills Programme regardless of their employment status and regardless of whether or not they are in receipt of income support. Tuition fees will be waived for all successful applicants.

However, given the priority that is being afforded by the Government to supporting people who are unemployed, in particular those who are unemployed for more than 12 months, to reskill in areas of emerging skills needs, where a provider receives more applications from suitably qualified candidates than there are places available, providers are asked to ensure that these places will be awarded to people who have been unemployed for the longest durations.

Applicants must be highly motivated, capable of independent learning and have Level 8 skills knowledge and attributes already developed. The priority groups identified for re-skilling include jobseekers who would benefit from an opportunity to rapidly and successfully convert their current qualifications to industry relevant ICT skills.

Applicants who have completed a government-funded training programme, such as a Springboard or FÁS course, are eligible to apply to the ICT Skills and Software Development Programme. However two such programmes cannot be pursued concurrently.

Participation in the programmes will not create an entitlement to receive any income support payment from the Department of Social Protection however the Department of Social Protection (DSP) has confirmed that clients who have been on a social welfare payment such as a jobseeker's payment and on the Live Register for at least 9 months in the 12 months prior to the commencement of the programme may be eligible to apply for support under a version of the Back to Education Allowance. Further information will be available on www.ictskills.ie

ENDS

For further Press Information*: Please contact Jean Kearney on 087 2527495 or Ivor Melia on 087 2234193 email: jean.kearney@cit.ie*