Unique Partnership in Australia Will Foster the Next Generation of Cyber Security Experts

SYDNEY, October 28, 2020 – IBM (NYSE: IBM) is partnering with the NSW Department of Education's STEM Industry School Partnerships Program and the NSW Cyber Security Innovation Node to bolster school students and teachers cybersecurity and cloud computing knowledge to prepare them for the jobs of the future.

Cyber security has never been more important, both as an enabler for Australian industry and as a source of economic growth itself. Australia faces a looming skill shortage with an estimated 17,000 additional cybersecurity professionals required to ensure Australia's digital security by 2026.

In a unique partnership Industry, Education and Government are collaborating to ensure that Australia has the cyber security workforce it needs and to prepare young people with the prerequisite skills and knowledge to pursue a career in this a high tech and highly paid STEM sector.

Being launched as part of Cyber Week is a suite of secondary school based resources which will allow students to gain hands-on experience of designing smart integrated systems and protecting them from cyber-attack.

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres said the education-industry partnership facilitated by NSW Cyber Security Innovation Node would support jobs of the future.

"Building cyber security talent is critical for NSW to benefit from the significant opportunities presented by emerging digital technologies," Mr Ayres said.

"Not only is cyber security a growing sector for high value jobs, strong cyber literacy will support the acceleration of the digital economy. This is great news as we set the state up for economic recovery."

Minster for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee said cyber security is an exciting industry with many employment opportunities in NSW.

"Industry needs a pipeline of cyber security experts to fight off attacks of this kind now and into the future," Mr Lee said.

"Partnerships like this with a world renowned employer, IBM, will deliver state of the art training for a workforce in rewarding and high paying careers."

Earlier this year IBM announced a partnership with the NSW Cyber Security Innovation Node to bolster existing 'cyber-STEM' workforce program with IBM's Open P-TECH platform. The platform helps students and teachers build knowledge on topics including cyber security and cloud computing through online digital courses where students earn 'digital badges' to add to their resumes.

IBM Corporate Social Responsibility Lead at IBM A/NZ, Jade Moffat said "Open P-TECH brings components of the P-TECH program for free to a larger audience beyond the 267 P-TECH schools globally and is a response to the

growing need for emerging technology-related roles in areas such as such as cyber security, where flexible and relevant credentials and skills are paramount."

Also being released in the coming weeks is the iTeachSTEM website which has a range of cyber security resources designed to enrich and engage students. These resources are aligned to the NSW iSTEM curriculum and the team are working on cyber security activities and a new Cyber Security Elective Module to be delivered in the over 300 schools in NSW that deliver iSTEM.

"Occupations in STEM fields such as cyber security are growing faster than most other career fields across the world, and really pervades every part of our lives. In order for Australia to thrive in a post COVID world we need more students developing the future-focused STEM skills in these emerging fields" said Dr Sleap (Project Leader STEM Industry School Partnerships Program).

'I am very proud to be part of a team from Industry, Education and Government who have developed the collaborative eco-system required to tackle the complex problem of future workforce development in Cyber Security' … continued Dr Sleap

Michelle Price, AustCyber CEO said, she welcomes this latest collaboration between industry, Government and Education.

"We need to continue to work at meeting the 17,000 new cyber security professional needed by 2026 to fill the skills gap identified in Australia's Cyber Security Competitiveness Plan 2019. Attracting students to the cyber security talent pipeline early within secondary education is a key factor for building the cyber workforce. Engagement in iSTEM will help to foster and develop students' knowledge, encouraging a pathway into the cyber workforce by engaging in practical tasks encouraging investigation and connections into pursuing cyber careers."

For more information or to arrange interviews please contact:

Sarah Box
NSW Cyber Security Innovation Node
sarah@nswcsin.com.au
0480 290 985

Candice Lester
IBM Communications
Candice.lester@ibm.com
0401 367 343

Dr Scott Sleap
STEM Industry School Partnerships Project Leader

NSW Department of Education

scott.sleap@det.nsw.edu.au

0409366504

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