

TITLE SME engagement for master programme design - CyberSecPro	TYPE - BEST PRACTICE IN: Industry collaboration BENEFICIARIES Private training providers, Public HEI and VET providers
CONTEXT - Enhancing the role of HEIs in preparing new workforce generations and upskilling the existing workforce to address complex cybersecurity challenges, including threats from advanced AI. - Provision of hands-on academic offering to bridge the gap between formal education, real-world job requirements, and marketable cybersecurity skills.	THE CHALLENGE - SMEs have limited capacities in terms of budget, personnel and time - Tailoring study programmes to the individual needs of the SMEs and upscaling, when operating across countries. - Maintaining consistent engagement from SMEs through the course of programme in the face of fluctuating market conditions or business priorities.
THE ACTION - Co-creation of cybersecurity master's curriculum in collaboration with SMEs to integrate industry demands and real-world business scenarios. - Establishing joint R&D initiatives between HEIs and SMEs to foster innovation, where academic research is aligned with the technological and market needs of the SMEs, leading to shared benefits in knowledge creation and application.	
TAKEAWAYS - Implement engagement models that allow SMEs to contribute to varying levels of involvement, accommodating their resource constraints. Less rigid structures and more flexibility can facilitate engagement on the needs and availability of SMEs. - Develop a customisable, tailored curriculum that aligns with the needs of SMEs, ensuring training is relevant and applicable to them. - Establish regular check-ins and feedback loops, to keep SMEs consistently involved and responsive to the evolving demands of the training programmes.	 Kotty Kioskli, CEO & Cofounder, Trustilio On behalf of CyberSecPro

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