

UK Businesses Call for Advanced Technology Skills

Influential business leaders across the UK are calling for more graduates with advanced technology and business skills to help them use high-tech systems more effectively across their organisations. According to a survey by ESRI UK, three quarters (74%) of HR leaders think the ideal future manager has an equal understanding of both business and technology.

The research was commissioned by ESRI UK to celebrate Geography Awareness Week. The week includes GIS Day on 17th November which aims to promote geography, inspire future careers and encourage the learning of new geographical skills by both teachers and pupils. The GIS Day research follows on from ESRI UK's recent partnership announcement with the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) to help support and promote the Society's Geography Ambassador Programme that encourages young people to plan careers in geography.

Richard Waite, managing director ESRI UK, said: "Business leaders across the UK are telling us that they need more employees who can help them maximise key technologies such as GIS but who also understand their business needs in these tough economic times. It's clear from the survey that businesses can do more to help them achieve their top priorities but they need the right people to help them do that. Studying geography and learning how to utilise geographic information gives new employees many of the key skills that businesses are crying out for. As an industry it's our job to encourage more people to take up a geography-based career so that businesses and society as a whole can benefit."

Dr Rita Gardner, director of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), said: "It is encouraging to see that business leaders cite geography skills as a key attribute to greater employability in the graduate sector. The Society is working closely with schools and ESRI UK to inspire even more young people with the relevance and applications of geographical knowledge, skills and technology. With the help of businesses and universities, we hope to grow our support for tomorrow's geography professionals in getting a foot on the job ladder and a rewarding career."

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