**LEBANON SOFT**SHORE  
Academic Forum 2018

Aligning Software Education with Industry Needs

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**ESIB**

**U S J**

**Mar Roukos**

**Mkalles**

08

June

2018

In Partnership with

**Faculty of Engineering: ESIB - INCI**

**Saint-Joseph University of Beirut**

A project by

**The Lebanon SoftShore Cluster (LSS)**

At

**ELCIM, the Euro-Lebanese Centre for Industrial Modernisation  
IRI, the Industrial Research Institute**

**LEBANON SOFT**SHORE Academic Forum 2018

Lebanon is rapidly evolving towards the knowledge-based economy, which increasingly rely on information technologies. Software is a cornerstone for the information technology, and the dynamics of the software sector are responsible for its increasing specialization. The Lebanese software industry is an expanding industry that is eager to conquer new consumers and markets. Despite its historical legacy of over forty years of existence servicing the Lebanese and the international markets, the Lebanese software industry has gained a new dynamism in recent years, but it faces serious challenges, the most important of which is the lack of highly skilled software developers.

Software development is one of the most demanding jobs in the market today and its demand keeps on increasing. However, there seems to be several issues with regard to employment readiness of Lebanese computing graduates. The supply of graduates in the software development field seems to be insufficient. The Lebanese software industry claims that graduates are not able to meet their requirements. There is apparently a gap between industry requirements and graduates’ market readiness which indirectly reflects a gap between the software education and the software industry.

**LEBANON SOFT**SHORE Academic Forum 2018 brings together Lebanese academics and software industry leaders to discuss these challenges and find ways to bridge the gap between the software education and the market needs. This one-day event is organized by the “Lebanon SoftShore software cluster” (**LSS**), in partnership with the “Ecole supérieure d’ingénieurs de Beyrouth” (**ESIB**) and the “Institut National des Télécommunications et de l'Informatique” (**INCI**) at **USJ**.

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**PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE AGENDA**

# **Friday June 8, 2018**

08:30 - 09:00 Registration and coffee

09:00 - 09:30 **Opening ceremony**

* Welcome note, **Fadi Geara**, Dean, Faulty of Engineering: ESIB - INCI, USJ
* Welcome note, **Naji Abi Zeid**, Director, ELCIM
* Introducing the Lebanon Softshore Cluster, **Sandra Sarkis Matta**, Manager, LSS
* Introducing the Lebanon Softshore Academic Forum 2018, **Walid Karam**, Forum coordinator

09:30 - 10:00 **Keynote speech – Oussama Ziadé**, Chairman, Intelligile Group

10:00 - 11:00 Panel 1: **Computing curricula and education at Lebanese Universities**

Moderator: **Dany Mezher**, Director, INCI, USJ

This panel brings together Lebanese academics from major Lebanese universities in computer science, computer engineering, and related fields. Participants will discuss their programs of study, continuous improvement strategies and curricula updates, technologies used and market relevance, strategies for alignment with the market needs, and student internships and employment readiness.

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 - 12:30 Panel 2: **The Lebanese Software Industry: Employment needs & Challenges**

Moderator: **Michel Chammas**, CEO, BSynchro sal

This panel groups Lebanese Software industry leaders in a panel discussion on software skill needs and available graduating talents, and describe the challenges the industry is facing, including research and innovation requirements, alignment of used technologies in university curricula and the market, the exponential changes the field is facing, and propose recommendations and solutions.

12:30 - 13:15 Panel 3: **Role of multinational technology providers**

Moderator: **Sandra Sarkis Matta**, LSS Cluster-Manager

**Alain Nohra**, Country Manager for Lebanon, Oracle Corporation

**Hoda Younane**, Country Manager for Lebanon, Microsoft Corporation

**Salim Edde**, Chairman Murex (to be confirmed)

13:15 - 14:30 Lunch

14:30 - 15:15 Panel 4: **Case studies**

Moderator: **Walid Karam**, University of Balamand, Forum coordinator

**Fady Bizri**, Co-founder, SE Factory

**Layal Gebran**, Founder & CEO, Moubarmij

15:00 - 16:00 **Round table discussions between universities & software companies**

16:00 - 16:30 **Writing the final recommendations and closing remarks**

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**ABOUT THE LEBANON SOFTSHORE**

The Lebanon Softshore (LSS) is a software cluster managed by the Euro Lebanese Centre for Industrial Modernization (ELCIM) under the authority of the Industrial Research Institute (IRI). Its mission is to propel the Lebanese software industry, a sub-sector of the ICT sector, into the global scene. By offering them the knowledge, the tools and the support to withstand an expansion of that scale, the LSS has counts amongst its members leading IT companies in Lebanon.

The Lebanese software industry has brightly succeeded in developing products and services which can be implemented in and have value in global markets. It is endowed with many assets that make it an ideal partner for foreign clients: advanced technical skills, a strong education system that graduates engineers who are career-ready, have multi language skills, multi-cultural and previous international experience. Being aware of all this potential, Lebanon SoftShore's mission is to position the Lebanese software industry as a major player in the international market through the dissemination of information, branding efforts, capacity building, promotion of activities and collaboration with other stakeholders.

The main advantage of LSS is that it offers a single-entry point to top qualified companies. Based on the client’s needs the cluster selects the group of companies that fits its project scope.

**Cluster Members**

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