

Bank Negara's FSTEP starts website to woo foreign grads

THE Financial Sector Talent Enrichment Programme (FSTEP), initiated by Bank Negara Malaysia, has launched a website to attract more foreign graduates into its programme.

Since it was launched in September 2007, FSTEP has enrolled 607 participants, of which 10 per cent are foreign graduates.

"We want to have a good mix of both local and foreign graduates in the programme. We hope to have at least 20-30 per cent foreign participants in FSTEP programme

in two years," said Institute of Bankers Malaysia (IBBM) chief executive officer Dr Mohd Kamal Khir in Kuala Lumpur.

The website, www.fstep.org.my, is also designed to enhance FSTEP brand presence and serves as a communication channel for the organisation to reach to potential participants, he said.

FSTEP, which is managed by IBBM and supported by Bank Negara, aims to train and prepare graduates to meet the needs for skilled talent in the local financial

services industry.

The one-year programme is for graduates in any discipline, with a minimum 3.25 CGPA or those below 30 years of age who are keen to switch to a career in financial services. Participants get a scholarship of RM2,200 per month.

FSTEP is funded by the RM110 million Financial Staff Training Fund, set up by the banking sector, to address staff-pinching.

Despite the current economic challenges, Mohd Kamal said

banks are still employing workers especially in sales.

"Banks have opened new branches and will continue to expand. Here, we (via FSTEP) prepare a ready pool of talent that can be tap for this expansion," he said.

About half of the first batch of 290 participants who had completed the programme in December last year, have gained employment in local and foreign banks here.