

PRESS RELEASE

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(For Immediate Release)

Enhancing Standards and Building Competence in our Membership Organisations

A new collaboration of three groups has been launched to help bring professionalism to the estimated 25% of the UK workforce working in the not for profit sector.

The Membership and Association Professional (MAP) Network, which consists of MemberWise, MemNet and The Professionalism Group, will provide a three stage process to enhance the standards against which individual and organisational competence can be benchmarked.

Over 500 membership organisations and associations have expressed an interest in the project which includes the introduction of competence-based resources including a Code of Professional Conduct, inclusive professional frameworks and bespoke peer review opportunities. In the past, resources have focused on senior executives and organisational status. However, internal competence based evaluation in the sector has been lacking.

The Network will provide the standards for use by membership organisations and professional associations, who have fought long and hard to gain recognition for the professionalism of their members and who have placed the requirements for professionalism at the heart of their activities.

Richard Gott, from MemberWise says: "From high quality continuing professional development opportunities to well polished member benefit packages, the sector should be justifiably proud of its achievements to date. Although 85%¹ of these organisations have formalised continuing professional development policies in place for their members, how many of them regularly benchmark their own activities and effectiveness against other organisations in the sector? The answer is probably 'just a few' and that is a real contradiction when you consider that they should be exemplifying best practice."

Over the past year the sector has seen a number of networks spring-up to offer assistance. For example MemberWise² and MemNet³ have been in existence for less than two years and their combined memberships far outweigh those of more traditional sector umbrella bodies. The Professionalism Group⁴ now focuses on the concept and ideals around professionalism for organisations and their members.

¹ 2007 Professional Body Survey, Professional Associations Research Network (PARN)

² The MemberWise Network is an independent online network offering good practice information, advice and reputable supplier deals and discounts

³ The MemNet Network is an independent network offering membership-specific information, advice and events

⁴ The Professionalism Group is an independent advice and consultancy organisation established to drive best practice in the sector

Susie Kay, from The Professionalism Group, concludes: “Until quite recently there have only been a limited number of opportunities to establish organisational excellence within the sector. It has also been difficult to take a structured and objective look at internal capability and competence where organisations evaluate the performance of their internal functions by bench-marking their organisation (and internal functions) against best practice or against the leading organisations within the sector. “

To contact the Network and register an interest in this ground-breaking project visit:

The MemberWise website – www.memberwise.org.uk/framework.aspx

The Professionalism Group – www.theprofessionalismgroup.co.uk/collaborative-working/
