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Google Cloud

PIF and Google Cloud to create advanced AI hub in Saudi Arabia

- Landmark strategic partnership signed at FII8 expands Google Cloud region with new state-of-the-art infrastructure
- AI hub is expected to generate thousands of job opportunities and increase the GDP of Saudi Arabia by \$71 billion over the next eight years
- Advances in Arabic-language models along with AI and digital upskilling programs to revolutionize and transform AI experience

RIYADH – October 30, 2024 – PIF and Google Cloud today announced a strategic partnership to create a new global artificial intelligence (AI) hub. The new AI hub will be based near Dammam, in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.

The landmark partnership, which was signed at the Future Investment Initiative 8th Edition (FII8), further establishes Saudi Arabia as a global hub and top AI destination for local and global enterprises and startups. This partnership aims to develop the Saudi workforce through AI programs for millions of students and professionals, supporting the national objective of growing the information and communication technology (ICT) sector by 50%.

Under the partnership, customers will be able to use Google Cloud's technology to support growth across industries and increase capacity for the delivery of AI applications. Businesses and their end consumers can expect to benefit from better quality AI applications and data services, delivered faster locally.

The partnership, which is subject to obtaining regulatory approvals, will feature joint research on Arabic language models as well as Saudi-specific AI applications. Enabled by Google Cloud's years of investment and leadership in custom silicon, this high-performance, purpose-built infrastructure will include the newest tensor processing unit (TPU) and graphics processing unit (GPU) accelerators as well as the Vertex AI platform – Google Cloud's specialized development platform that enables customers to build generative AI applications.

The partnership demonstrates the attractiveness of Saudi Arabia for major technology projects. Investors can benefit from the country's strategic location

at the intersection of three continents, its advanced infrastructure, its position in the rapidly growing markets of the Middle East, and the prospect of reliable and affordable renewable energy to supply the AI hub.

H.E. Yasir Al-Rumayyan, Governor of PIF, said: “We are delighted to welcome this new Google Cloud AI hub to Saudi Arabia. This partnership demonstrates PIF’s dedication to fostering an AI-friendly environment through investments in human capital and technology, upskilling thousands with cutting-edge tools to support our sustainable and innovative infrastructure goals. Saudi Arabia is a prime location for global tech partners as PIF brings both sector expertise and a long-term approach to investment.”

Ruth Porat, President and Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and Google, said: “This strategic partnership will accelerate adoption of AI in the local language and across industries – including healthcare, retail, financial services and more – for enterprises and startups in Saudi Arabia, across the Middle East, Africa and around the world. As part of Saudi Arabia’s rich technology ecosystem, we aim to create highly-skilled jobs for Saudis and opportunities for global businesses to fuel growth through cloud adoption.”

The technology sector is one of PIF’s priority investment sectors, being a key enabler of other key areas of the economy, including entertainment, financial services, healthcare, transport and logistics, and utilities and renewables. PIF’s investments in the telecoms, communications and technology sector include the Saudi Information Technology Company (SITE), which provides digital and cyber services and solutions through national talents, and “iot squared,” which specializes in the Internet of Things.

To advance Arabic-language models, PIF and Google Cloud will explore enhancing the Arabic-language capabilities of Gemini – Google’s generative AI model family – by combining additional Arabic datasets with Google Cloud’s technology. Local businesses, researchers and developers will have the opportunity to connect these models to their systems so they can build sophisticated Arabic language AI agents and applications.

Preliminary research commissioned by Google Cloud and conducted by Access Partnership, a global tech policy advisory firm, estimates the new AI hub could add a cumulative \$71 billion in GDP to the Saudi economy over eight years. The increased economic activity from AI adoption in Saudi Arabia is expected to support the creation of thousands of highly skilled direct and indirect jobs.

The new investments build on Google’s Cloud’s existing presence in Saudi Arabia, which includes the Dammam cloud region, which launched last year and is part of Google Cloud’s current global network of 40 regions.

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About PIF:

PIF is the investment engine driving economic transformation for Saudi Arabia and the world. With an ambitious program to deliver Vision 2030, PIF invests in projects, companies and partners to diversify the Saudi economy, stimulate growth in every major sector, and create new opportunities for investment and employment.

And as a global investor and catalyst of change, PIF actively partners with the most pioneering organizations across the world to accelerate their growth, and transfer the technology and knowledge needed to build industry ecosystems of the future.

Since 2017, PIF has established 95 companies and injects at least SAR 150 billion into the local economy each year. Through strategic investments and partnerships across the Saudi public and private sector, PIF is driving the transition to a more sustainable economy, and laying the foundations for local and international partners to invest in the economic and societal transformation of Saudi Arabia.

For more information, visit the website at www.pif.gov.sa

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About Google Cloud

Google Cloud is the new way to the cloud, providing AI, infrastructure, developer, data, security, and collaboration tools built for today and tomorrow. Google Cloud offers a powerful, fully integrated and optimized AI stack with its own planet-scale infrastructure, custom-built chips, generative AI models and development platform, as well as AI-powered applications, to help organizations transform. Customers in more than 200 countries and territories turn to Google Cloud as their trusted technology partner.

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