AWS and e& to train 30,000 people in AI and cloud technologies across the UAE

New e& Academy program offers AWS certification vouchers to build future-ready workforce and accelerate UAE's digital economy, addressing AI skills gap cited by 46% of organizations

Dubai, UAE, October 16 2025 — Amazon Web Services (AWS) and global technology group e& are bringing to life their digital transformation vision with the launch of the nationwide initiative "**AI Nation – Afaaq**" program to train 30,000 individuals in machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. The program, announced at GITEX Global in Dubai, is part of the strategic US$1 billion alliance between e& and AWS, which was announced in 2024.

e&, which serves more than 198 million subscribers in 38 countries, will work with AWS, the world's most comprehensive cloud provider, to deliver this training through e& Academy, marking a significant milestone in the UAE's digital leadership and talent development journey.

This initiative aligns with growing regional workforce challenges and requirements highlighted in IDC's 2024 report. According to the study, an estimated 88% of United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) organizations recognize AI's business impact. However, although 78% of UAE organizations prioritize AI investment, nearly half (46%) identify the shortage of AI skills and expertise as a critical barrier to large-scale implementation.

By addressing the AI skills gap head-on, the program reinforces e& and AWS's commitment to directly support the UAE's ambitious national goals including the UAE Centennial 2071 plan, which aims to build a future-focused government and a diversified, knowledge-based economy.

The program will be delivered through the e& Academy, ensuring trainees across the UAE have access to world-class training and localized support. AWS will provide 30,000 sponsored vouchers for industry-recognized certifications including 25,000 for the foundational AWS Certified AI Practitioner and

5,000 for the more advanced AWS Certified Machine Learning Engineer – Associate. Learners will also have free access to digital, self-paced training content on [AWS Skill Builder](), one of the most comprehensive online learning centers for cloud skills.

To further support learners on their journey, the program will be complemented by live, interactive 'Cloud Coach' sessions for exam readiness, empowering them with in-demand technical skills that contribute to the UAE's digital-first ambitions.

Harrison Lung, Group Chief Strategy Officer, e&, said: "As AWS's strategic partner, e& is proud to enable this nationwide digital skills program through our e& Academy. This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to developing the next generation of talents that will drive the UAE's innovation and leadership in the global digital economy. By combining AWS's global training excellence with our local expertise and established presence, we are ensuring that learners across the country have access to the tools and support needed to succeed in the era of cloud and AI. This is about building the nation's talent base at scale so employers can hire with confidence and people can step into AI-enabled roles across every sector."

Madhavi Reddy, Managing Director, Middle East North Africa and Turkey, AWS, said: "This initiative represents AWS's deep commitment to making world-class digital skills training accessible across the UAE. By providing 30,000 learners with industry-recognized certifications in cloud and AI, we are helping to build the robust talent base required for the nation's digital transformation journey."

"Our collaboration with e& Academy as an AWS Training Partner is crucial, enabling us to combine AWS's global training expertise with strong local delivery. Together, we are empowering a new generation of builders to turn knowledge into tangible impact for businesses and communities alike."

By developing a large-scale pipeline of talent equipped with advanced skills in cloud computing and AI, AWS and e& are investing in people that will drive innovation, attract investment, and secure the UAE's position as a leading global technology powerhouse for generations to come.

Ready to be part of the UAE's digital future? Take the first step toward your AWS certification - enroll in e& Academy's ML and AI training program. Visit https://www.ea.ae/ai-nation-afaaq-program to begin your journey toward becoming a certified cloud practitioner.

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About Amazon Web Services:

Since 2006, Amazon Web Services has been the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud. AWS has been continually expanding its services to support virtually any workload, and it now has more than 240 fully featured services for compute, storage, databases, networking, analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), mobile, security, hybrid, media, and application development, deployment, and management from 120 Availability Zones within 38 geographic regions, with announced plans for 10 more Availability Zones and three more AWS Regions in Chile, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the AWS European Sovereign Cloud. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—trust AWS to power their infrastructure, become more agile, and lower costs. To learn more about AWS, visit aws.amazon.com.

About e&:

e& is a global technology group committed to advancing the digital future across markets in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe. With the group's financial performance in 2024 showing a consolidated

revenue of AED 59.2 billion and a net profit of AED 10.8 billion, e& continues to maintain its position as a financial powerhouse, reflected by its strong credit rating and solid balance sheet.

Founded in Abu Dhabi over 48 years ago, e& has evolved from a telecom pioneer into a technology group. Its footprint now spans 38 countries, offering a comprehensive portfolio of innovative digital services ranging from advanced connectivity, entertainment, streaming and financial services to AI-powered solutions, cloud computing, ICT, cybersecurity and IoT platforms.

The Group is structured around five core business pillars: e& UAE, e& international, e& life, e& enterprise and e& capital, each catering to distinct customer and market needs. These pillars empower e& to lead in various sectors, from telecom and digital lifestyle to enterprise services and venture investments. The ongoing strategic investments in AI, IoT, 5G and cloud services reinforce its leadership in the global technology landscape, driving the future of smart connectivity and innovation.

Driven by innovation, sustainability and a commitment to digital empowerment, e& is set on creating a smarter, more connected future for individuals, businesses and communities.

To learn more about e&, visit eand.com.