

Microsoft partners with YES to deliver youth AI training

Microsoft South Africa and the Youth Employment Service (YES) have joined forces to deliver state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) training to 300,000 young South Africans. This programme is set to equip the youth with digital skills, fostering a future of innovation and driving employability and economic growth.



The AI Youth Training Platform, an extension of the enduring relationship between Microsoft and YES, was applauded at today's 'A New Era with AI' event hosted by Microsoft in Sandton. The event was attended by over 1,000 IT professionals and developers spearheading the AI transformation within the country.

Together, YES and Microsoft have curated and developed bespoke training material to create a comprehensive training path that caters to varying levels of exposure to AI and computer science. The platform is designed to ensure that all young people gain access to, and awareness of AI, enabling them to build skills from novice through to expert level.



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Lindsey Schutters 25 Oct 2023



Acknowledging that the realm of AI is unfamiliar territory for many, an introductory AI learning module has been designed. This module provides an entry-level view of AI for the youth, with an emphasis on highlighting the purpose and value of AI in a practical and accessible manner.

“This collaborative effort with Microsoft is a testament to our ongoing commitment to equipping the youth with the digital skills for future-facing sectors and careers. The significant number of beneficiaries underscores the scale of impact we want to achieve through this partnership,” says Ravi Naidoo, CEO of YES.

Making AI accessible

From a practical level, this partnership is geared towards creating a surge in job creation and enhanced employability to make significant strides for the country to put in place a more digitally inclusive economy.

"Together with YES, we are not only addressing the pressing issue of youth unemployment but also helping create a culture of innovation and employability through digital capability building," says Lillian Barnard, President for Microsoft Africa.

"Microsoft's approach to AI is based on meaningful innovation, empowering people, and responsibility. This partnership delivers on these three pillars as the means to grow a new talent pool for digital businesses to tap into not only in South Africa, but the rest of the world,"

As young people exit the formal training programme at YES, they will have not only an awareness of how AI can improve how they work and how this could become a career or profession moving forward.

Participants who complete the AI Expert Module and who meet key criteria, will be eligible for certification.

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