

IBM and MBZUAI join forces to advance AI research with new center of excellence.

Collaboration will focus on three key pillars: Natural Language Processing (NLP) including Arabic, AI applications in the healthcare industry, and sustainability.



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, May 25, 2022 - Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI)—the world’s first graduate, research university dedicated to Artificial Intelligence (AI)—has announced plans for a strategic collaboration with IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)). Senior leaders from both organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at advancing fundamental AI research, as well as accelerating the types of scientific breakthroughs that could unlock the potential of AI to help solve some of humanity’s greatest challenges.

Professor Eric Xing, President of MBZUAI, delivered short remarks, as did Jonathan Adashek, IBM’s Senior Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, and Saad Toma, General Manager, IBM Middle East, and Africa. The agreement was then signed by Sultan Al Hajji, Vice President for Public Affairs and Alumni Relations at MBZUAI and Wael Abdoush, General Manager IBM Gulf and Levant.

“We’re excited to to be among the first research universities in the MENA region to host a Center of Excellence

for AI research and development with technology and expertise from a world-leading technological giant like IBM. This center will provide highly valuable resource and collaborative environment to our faculty and students to broaden their work in AI. IBM has a long history of technological innovation, and we look forward to joining their latest efforts in our region and together advance AI technology and commercialization for mutual good,” MBZUAI President, Professor Eric Xing said.

Saad Toma, General Manager, IBM Middle East and Africa, said: “This collaboration will help drive innovations in AI which is critical for the future of business and society. We’re bringing together some of the brightest minds across both the industry and academia, while reinforcing IBM’s commitment to promoting knowledge and skills in critical areas for the UAE’s development, where the use of technologies like AI is fundamental.”

Central to the collaboration is the establishment of a new AI Center of Excellence to be based at the university’s Masdar City campus. The Center will leverage the talents of IBM researchers, in collaboration with MBZUAI faculty and students, and will focus on the advancement of both fundamental and applied research objectives.

The initiative seeks to develop, validate, and incubate technologies that harness the capabilities of AI to address civic, social, and business challenges. Further, the collaboration aims to provide real-life applications, particularly in the fields of natural language processing, as well as AI applications that seek to further climate and sustainability goals, and accelerate discoveries in healthcare.

IBM will provide targeted training and technologies as part of the initiative, which supports the university’s vision to be a global leader for advancing AI and its application for the good of society and business. For example, through the [IBM Academic Initiative](#), IBM will provide MBZUAI students and faculty with access to IBM tools, software, courseware and cloud accounts for teaching, learning, and non-commercial research. In addition, through the [IBM Skills Academy](#) program, MBZUAI will have access to curated AI curricula, lectures, labs, industry use cases, design-thinking sessions, and an AI Practitioner certification.

The planned relationship is subject to the parties reaching definitive agreements.

About IBM

IBM is a leading global hybrid cloud and AI, and business services provider. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs, and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Nearly 3,000 government and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently, and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and business services deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's legendary commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity, and service. Visit www.ibm.com for more information.

About Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI)

MBZUAI is a graduate, research university focused on artificial intelligence, computer science, and digital technologies across industrial sectors. The university aims to empower students, businesses, and governments to advance artificial intelligence as a global force for positive progress. MBZUAI offers various graduate programs designed to pursue advanced, specialized knowledge and skills in artificial intelligence, including computer vision, machine learning, and natural language processing. For more information, please visit www.mbzuai.ac.ae

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