



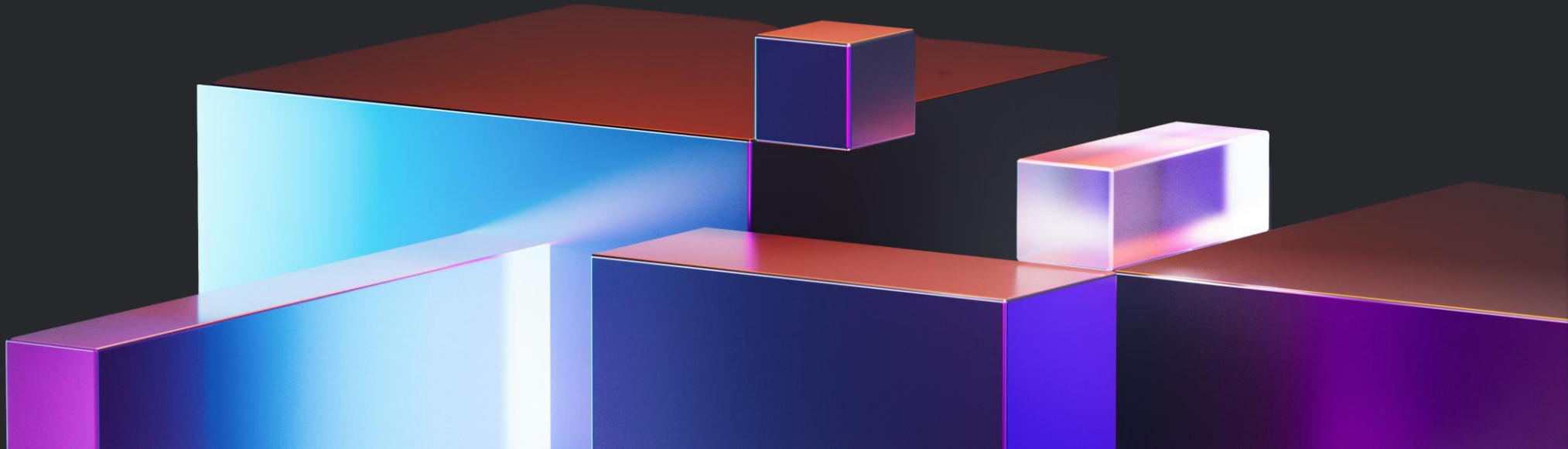
Upskilling for the Future: Building AI Capabilities in Southeast Asia

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Southeast Asia's massive workforce – **3rd largest globally** – faces a critical upskilling gap, especially with the rise of AI. While AI adoption promises a **USD 1 trillion GDP boost** by 2030, unlocking this potential requires a future-proof workforce equipped with AI expertise.

Governments and technology providers are joining forces to build strong AI ecosystems, accelerating R&D and nurturing homegrown talent. It's a tight race, but with focused investments, Southeast Asia can bridge the digital gap and turn its AI aspirations into reality.





Big Tech Invests in AI Workforce



Southeast Asia's tech scene heats up as Big Tech giants scramble for dominance in emerging tech adoption.

Microsoft is partnering with governments, nonprofits, and corporations across Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam to equip [2.5M people](#) with AI skills by 2025. Additionally, the organisation will also train [100,000 Filipino women](#) in AI and cybersecurity.

Singapore sets ambitious goal to triple its AI workforce by 2028. To achieve this, [AWS will train 5,000 individuals annually](#) in AI skills over the next three years.

[NVIDIA has partnered with FPT Software](#) to build an AI factory, while also championing AI education through Vietnamese schools and universities. In Malaysia, they have [launched an AI sandbox](#) to nurture 100 AI companies targeting USD 209M by 2030.



Singapore Aims to be a Global AI Hub

Singapore is doubling down on upskilling, global leadership, and building an AI-ready nation.

Singapore has launched its second [National AI Strategy \(NAIS 2.0\)](#) to solidify its global AI leadership. The aim is to triple the AI talent pool to 15,000, establish AI Centres of Excellence, and accelerate public sector AI adoption. The strategy focuses on developing AI "peaks of excellence" and empowering people and businesses to use AI confidently.

[In keeping with this vision, the country's 2024 budget](#) is set to train workers who are over 40 on in-demand skills to prepare the workforce for AI. The country will also invest [USD 27M to build AI expertise](#), by offering 100 AI scholarships for students and attracting experts from all over the globe to collaborate with the country.



Thailand Aims for AI Independence



Thailand's 'Ignite Thailand' 2030 vision focuses on boosting innovation, R&D, and the tech workforce.

Thailand is launching the [second phase of its National AI Strategy](#), with a USD 42M budget to develop an AI workforce and create a Thai Large Language Model (ThaiLLM). The plan aims to train 30,000 workers in sectors like tourism and finance, reducing reliance on foreign AI.

The Thai government is partnering with Microsoft to build a new data centre in Thailand, offering AI training for [over 100,000 individuals](#) and supporting the growing developer community.



Building a Digital Vietnam



Vietnam focuses on AI education, policy, and empowering women in tech.

[Vietnam's National Digital Transformation Programme](#) aims to create a digital society by 2030, focusing on integrating AI into education and workforce training. It supports AI research through universities and looks to address challenges like addressing skill gaps, building digital infrastructure, and establishing comprehensive policies.

The Vietnamese government and UNDP launched [Empower Her Tech](#), a digital skills initiative for female entrepreneurs, offering 10 online sessions on GenAI and no-code website creation tools.



The Philippines Gears Up for AI



The country focuses on investment, public-private partnerships, and building a tech-ready workforce.

With its strong STEM education and programming skills, the Philippines is well-positioned for an AI-driven market, allocating [USD 30M for AI research and development](#).

The Philippine government is partnering with entities like IBPAP, Google, AWS, and Microsoft to train thousands in AI skills by 2025, offering both training and hands-on experience with cutting-edge technologies.

The strategy also funds AI research projects and partners with universities to expand AI education. Companies like KMC Teams will help establish and manage offshore AI teams, providing infrastructure and support.



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