

NUS, Google to create AI research and innovation centre, train more talent

The collaboration includes a new professorship that aims to promote faculty leadership in AI-related fields

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Other joint ventures between NUS and Google include an on-campus Google Developer Group to equip students with advanced software skills, and a Google PhD Fellowship programme for computer science. PHOTO: BT FILE

[SINGAPORE] The National University of Singapore (NUS) and Google will collaborate to set up a joint research and innovation centre for artificial intelligence (AI) and develop AI practitioners.

The centre will consolidate resources and technology to pursue experimental or applied AI projects across diverse domains, both parties said in a joint statement on Friday (Aug 1).

The centre will, for example, manage a rapid prototyping sandbox, which is to be set up to create a controlled and flexible cloud-based environment, supported by Google Cloud's power-efficient Tensor Processing Units.

This is essential for experimentation, testing and validation of the solutions developed under each of the domains, before they are deployed or scaled in real-world settings.

Other domains in the centre include AI's intersections with education, public health and law, in light of the development of a Singapore law-specific large-language model on Google Cloud by NUS' Faculty of Law, the NUS AI Institute and NUS Computing.

AI talent pipeline, new professorship

The collaboration also includes an AI-focused talent development programme, which will benefit NUS students and researchers, and establishing a Google-supported professorship at NUS.

This programme will complement the joint centre, which is designed to provide training opportunities and certification pathways in Google Cloud AI platforms, and tools for NUS students and researchers to accelerate their applied AI research projects.

The professorship aims to further promote faculty leadership in AI-related fields, foster deeper collaboration between academia and industry, and contribute to cultivating the next generation of talent in AI and digital innovation.

NUS and Google have existing partnerships under an on-campus Google Developer Group to equip students with advanced software skills. Google Cloud is a pioneer industry partner of the NUS AI Institute, and a Google PhD Fellowship programme recognises exceptional work in computer science.

Serene Sia, country director for Singapore and Malaysia at Google Cloud, said: "Our new collaboration truly builds on those successes. It is a significant step forward in Google's commitment to bringing new capabilities for scientific discovery to Singapore. The initiative is poised to steer safe and responsible AI development and accelerate scientific progress that transforms public health, learning experiences and other vital fields."

NUS deputy president for research and technology Liu Bin echoed Sia's sentiment, and noted that the centre would create pathways for research translation and deployment.