

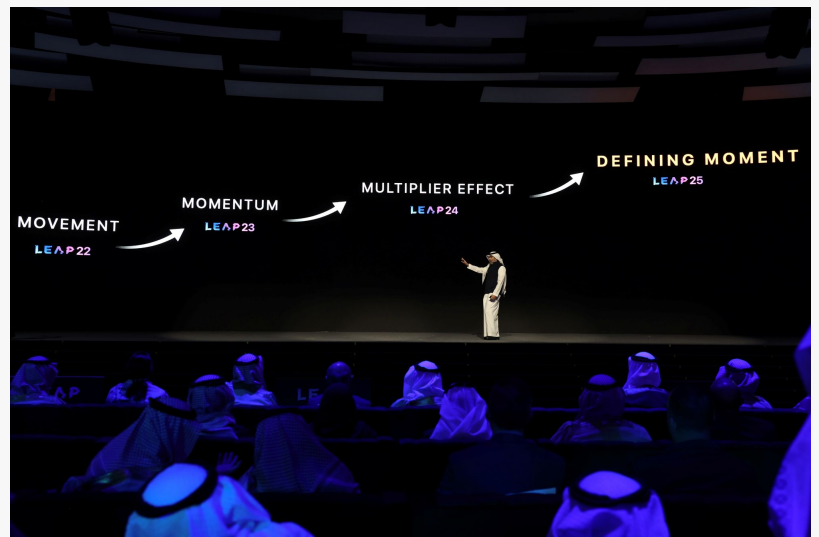
LEAP 2025 Opens with Announcement of Record-breaking US\$14.9 Billion Investment in Artificial Intelligence

RIYADH, RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, February 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LEAP 2025, Saudi Arabia's award-winning global tech event, announced a record-breaking US\$14.9 billion in new Artificial Intelligence (AI) investments that further cement the Kingdom's status as a world-leading AI hub.

Revealed on the opening day of this year's four-day event, which is being held at the Riyadh International Exhibition and Convention Centre in Malham, the new announcements increase the total amount of technology-related infrastructure investments in Saudi Arabia to more than US\$42.4bn since LEAP debuted in 2022.

The new investments in the Kingdom included an announcement between Groq and Aramco Digital confirming a US\$1.5bn plan to expand AI-powered inference infrastructure and cloud computing; ALAT and Lenovo

committing US\$2bn to establish an advanced manufacturing and technology centre integrating AI and robotics; Google introducing new AI-driven digital infrastructure and the launch of a powerful computing cluster to meet regional and global demand; Qualcomm confirming the availability of its ALLAM language model on Qualcomm AI Cloud; and Alibaba Cloud launching the AI Enablement Programme comprising collaborations with Tuwaiq Academy and STC Academy to train national talent.



Other announcements included Databricks investing US\$300 million in integrated PaaS (Platform as a Service) solutions to empower application developers with cutting-edge AI tools; SambaNova committing US\$140m to build advanced AI infrastructure; Global private equity firm KKR, in partnership with Gulf Data Hub, revealing a strategic investment in the development of data centres with a total capacity of up to 300 megawatts; Saudi Arabia's Salesforce investing US\$500m to develop Hyperforce and enhance cloud capabilities for regional customers; and Tencent Cloud allocating US\$150m to establish the Middle East's first AI-powered cloud region.

Delivering a keynote address to formally open LEAP 2025, His Excellency Eng Abdullah Alswaha, the Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), insisted the new wave of investments brings one step closer His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's vision of the Kingdom's tech sector becoming a global beacon for innovation and advancement.

"LEAP 2025 is a defining moment because when the Kingdom works, the region works, and the whole world works," said Alswaha. "LEAP has evolved from a movement to a multiplier effect – but now is our defining moment. Technology has catalysed Saudi Arabia as the biggest success story in youth and female empowerment in the 21st Century, and we are laser-focused on continuing that success story. The intelligence age is here and, in partnership with you, we are going to take that leap together."



Michael Champion, CEO of Tahaluf, which co-organises LEAP with the Saudi Ministry for Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and the Saudi Federation for Cybersecurity, Programming, and Drones (SAFCSP), added: “The massive volume of new investments announced on day one builds on the progress made at LEAP and across the Kingdom in previous years, reaffirming Saudi Arabia’s undisputed status as the primary digital accelerator in the Middle East and North Africa.”

IBM's Arvind Kirshna Predicts Quantum Computing Breakthrough now only “Three to Five Years Away”

Eleven months after announcing IBM’s plans to invest US\$250 million into a global software development centre in the Kingdom, Arvind Krishna, Chairman & CEO of IBM, joined HE Alswaha on the LEAP Main Stage to discuss his experiences identifying “early signals” to stay ahead of emerging industry trends.

The trend that dominated the duo’s conversation was quantum computing - a type of computing that uses the principles of quantum mechanics to solve problems that would take classical computers millions of years to complete - with Kirishna adamant the technology is getting ever closer.

“A breakthrough I think is only about three-to-five years in the future is quantum computing – I think we will see something amazing,” said Krishna. “We’re very excited to already be working on it with some partners in the Kingdom, but I believe quantum computing will open up areas that, for the Kingdom, will be very exciting. It will all be about materials, energy, oil and gas, possibly pharmaceuticals – all areas that are critical to the Kingdom and very much part of Vision 2030.”

From Virtual Boxing to Futuristic Couture, Inaugural Tech Arena Opens Window to the Future

LEAP’s newly-added Tech Arena kicked off with a series of future-focused, interactive sessions highlighting some of the latest technological advancements shaping the technology of tomorrow.

With groundbreaking prototypes in robotics, AI, fashion tech, and mixed reality all being explored, live demonstrations were conducted by global tech influencers alongside BBC Click presenters Lara Lewington and Spencer Kelly.

US-based Engine VR showcased Golden Gloves VR, a platform that uses virtual reality technology to provide an immersive, gamified boxing experience for fitness enthusiasts, professional athletes, and entertainment seekers.

With professional boxer David Perez delivering a live demonstration to watching crowds, Aaron Sloan, the platform’s Founder, said: “ I used to work as a cardiac nurse, but the only two things I ever really cared about were boxing and technology. So, I quit my nursing job and opened up my

own boxing gym; it burned down within a month. It made me realise that building a business in a brick-and-mortar facility was going to be really hard. It just so happened that, around this time, the Quest One headset came out. Not only was it powerful, it was also wireless, which is so crucial for our system to work," said Sloan.

"In order for us to get the traction we needed, we had to replicate as best we could what trainers and boxers were doing in the gym. After a number of different variations, we now have a platform that is being used by sporting bodies across the world, including the Olympics. The system also allows people of determination to take part, making the sport far more inclusive."

Elsewhere, TJ Rhodes, the Senior Research Scientist and Engineer on Adobe's Project Primrose, talked audiences through the Middle East debut of its latest wearable technology. First premiered at Adobe Max in 2023, the Project Primrose dress uses non-emissive textiles and can change the way we merge fashion and technology.

"It has so many use cases beyond the catwalk; it can be a canvas for new designs or even a low-power billboard that can flash text-based advertisements," said Rhodes. "It is also a non-emissive material that can be cut to any shape and dynamically diffuses light. Most special effects can only be experienced on the big screen, but what Project Primrose allows us to do is transform it from the big screen to reality. Imagine if Elsa from Frozen was able to transform her dress to match her actions in a live performance. We're still discovering the possibilities of what this technology can do."

More than 1,800 tech brands and 680 start-ups are exhibiting at LEAP 2025 this week, alongside a stellar lineup of 1,000-plus expert speakers across 15 stages, highlighting the tech that is shaping tomorrow.

For more information on the event and ticket options, visit onegiantleap.com

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