

Billions in New Technology Investment Announced on Day Three of LEAP 2026

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Day Three of LEAP 2026 saw fresh investment committed across Saudi Arabia's technology ecosystem, from billion-riyal digital infrastructure projects to new AI-focused funds and startup expansion plans, underscoring continued confidence in the Kingdom's digital economy.

A major announcement came from NHC Innovation, which unveiled the SAR 3.3 billion Khuzam Digital Valley data centre project, to be developed across multiple phases, and welcomed NAVER Innovation and BytePlus as its first anchor customers.

Eng. Rayan Alaql, Chief Executive Officer of NHC Innovation, commented: "LEAP brings together the global technology ecosystem at a time when Saudi Arabia is accelerating its ambitions across artificial intelligence, cloud and digital infrastructure. At

LEAP 2026, we announced the Khuzam Digital Valley data center project, with total investments of SAR 3.3 billion to be deployed across multiple phases, and welcomed NAVER Innovation and BytePlus as its first anchor customers. This milestone reflects NHC Innovation's contribution to the Kingdom's next phase of digital growth. Through Khuzam Digital Valley, we are building the digital foundations needed to support growing demand for advanced technologies, while creating an environment that brings together global technology partners, businesses and innovators. Announcing this progress at LEAP reflects both our ambition and our commitment to



supporting the Kingdom's digital economy.”

The scale of global technology investment in the Kingdom was further reflected by AWS, which is preparing to launch its first AWS Region in Saudi Arabia this December, backed by more than \$5.3 billion in investment.

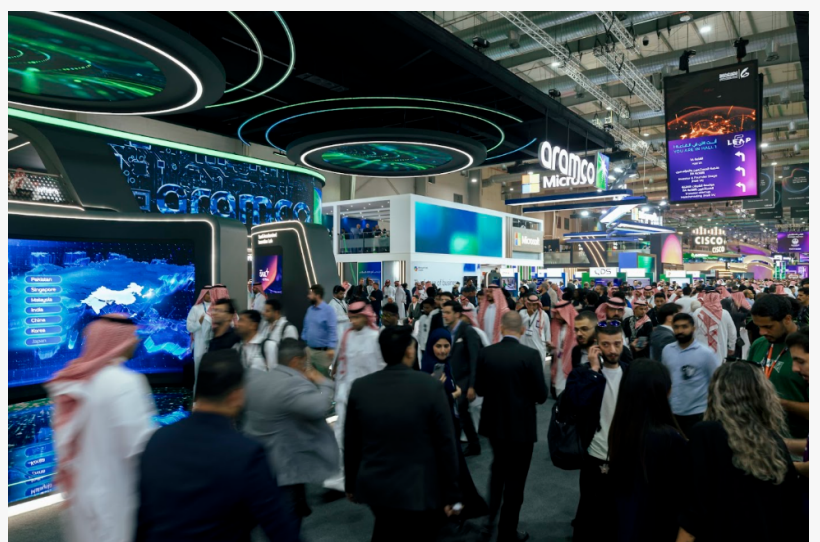
Beyond major infrastructure commitments, discussions across LEAP also explored where the next wave of technology investment is taking shape. At Investing in the Future of Mobility, a panel featuring Mercedes Cebrian, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Parkron; Dong-su Kim, Chief Executive Officer of LG Technology Ventures; and Ahmed Mhiri, Chief Executive Officer of

Free2Move, explored how investment is broadening beyond electric vehicles into autonomous technologies, connected infrastructure and smarter logistics. The discussion highlighted growing investor interest in technologies that solve real operational problems with a clear route to commercial growth, while underscoring the importance of collaboration between investors, technology companies, operators and the public sector in bringing them to scale.

That appetite for emerging technology was also reflected in new capital announced during the day. Foras AI, the MENA-focused artificial intelligence investment platform, announced a \$20 million investment and M&A initiative to back and acquire AI companies across the region, adding a new source of capital for startups building in the Kingdom.

The Digital Government Authority (DGA) and STV also announced a strategic partnership to accelerate innovation in government digital services and AI. Under the partnership, STV will provide technical expertise, identify and support startups and assess opportunities for investment through its AI and emerging technologies fund, while DGA will support participating companies through government use cases, an innovation sandbox, procurement opportunities and regulatory and funding pathways.

Investment in the Kingdom's technology ecosystem was also framed in broader terms than capital alone. In gaming, discussions focused on the long-term foundations required to build a globally competitive industry. At The Saudi Studio Playbook: Building a Global Games Industry from Scratch, Yannick Theler, Chief Executive Officer of Steer Studios, highlighted investment in talent, skills development and local capabilities as critical to sustainable growth, arguing that



international lessons must be adapted to local market realities.

The day also brought further evidence of international companies using investment to expand their presence in the Kingdom. *estaie*, the Dubai-based hospitality platform, announced a \$5.2 million seed round to accelerate its expansion into Saudi Arabia. The company uses AI across pricing, inventory and the booking experience to serve the flexible accommodation market spanning hotels, serviced apartments and residential leasing.

Annabelle Mander, Executive Vice President and Co-Creator of LEAP at Tahaluf, said: "LEAP has always been where ambition turns into commitment. What we have seen across Day Three is investment taking shape at every level of Saudi Arabia's technology ecosystem, from major digital infrastructure and AI investment to startup growth and new global partnerships. These commitments demonstrate the confidence in the opportunities being created across the Kingdom, and LEAP continues to provide the platform where global technology leaders, investors and innovators come together to turn that ambition into action."

For more information, please visit onegiantleap.com.

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About LEAP:

Saudi Arabia's desire to shoot for something beyond the realms of the possible presents the ultimate backdrop for LEAP.

LEAP showcases the Kingdom's technology ambition on a global stage as it continues to grow as a hub connecting three continents. The figures speak for themselves as LEAP 2025 had an attendance of over 200,000, making it the most attended tech event in the world. LEAP features the inspiring tech of tomorrow across all major sectors including health, finance, energy, education, digital entertainment, transport, smart cities and more. The event is also led by a speaker faculty of globally celebrated technology innovators, focusing on the most innovative tech case studies from around the world.

LEAP is not like any other tech event, from the ground up the community, stakeholders and project team are challenged every day to do something wildly creative and bold, something that reflects the seismic advances in tech adoption being seen in Saudi Arabia.

About Tahaluf:

Headquartered in Riyadh, Tahaluf brings together strategically important commercial communities from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the wider Gulf region, and from around the world to a portfolio of world-class exhibitions and digital platforms.

Tahaluf is a joint venture partnership between Informa PLC, the world's largest trade show organiser, the Saudi Federation for Cybersecurity, Programming and Drones (SAFCSP), and Events Investment Fund (EIF). Sela, the Saudi-owned event production company renowned for its

creation of spectacular event experiences, intends to join the joint venture in the near future.

Tahaluf is responsible for the award-winning tech events LEAP, DeepFest and LEAP East, as well as Money 20/20 Middle East, the Global Health Exhibition, Cityscape Global, Black Hat MEA and CPHI Middle East.

For more information about Tahaluf, visit <https://tahaluf.com>

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