

PayNet Launches Next-Generation Cloud Skills Programme to Bridge Malaysia's Digital Talent Gap in the Financial Services Industry

Program Akar, powered by AWS re/Start with WEPS, will provide Malaysians with free training on AWS Cloud services, including solutions for Financial Services



Image 1:

Representatives from PayNet, AWS, WEPS, APU pictured together with participants of the first cohort of Program AKAR

From Left to Right: Dato' V Rathakrishnan, Managing Director, WEPS; Jun Maria Tan Abdullah, Senior Director, PayNet AKAR; Peter Murray, Country GM, AWS; Farhan Ahmad, GCEO, PayNet; Professor Ho Chin Kuan, Vice Chancellor, APU & Mughilen Rathakrishnan, CEO, WEPS

22 JULY 2024, KUALA LUMPUR – Payments Network Malaysia (PayNet) today launched **Program Akar**, a new programme designed to address the urgent need for digitally skilled workers in Malaysia. Powered by [AWS re/Start](#), this pioneering cloud skills initiative is set to transform the financial services industry by equipping Malaysia's next-generation talent with essential digital skills, and will be delivered through **World Education Placement Services Sdn. Bhd. (WEPS)**.

With 78% of Malaysian employers seeking digitally skilled workers in the next five years, the demand for digital talent has never been higher. However, research by Gallup and AWS found that access to affordable digital skill training remains a challenge for almost half of all Malaysians surveyed, despite over 80% of them

expressing high levels of interest in such programs.¹ Cloud computing plays an important role in enabling AI adoption as it serves as a foundation for innovations that transform all industries. According to a recent Accelerating AI Skills study by Access Partnership and AWS, almost all financial services employers expect to use AI in the next five years (99%). Across industries surveyed, financial services employees are the most optimistic about AI usage in the workplace having a positive impact on their careers (99%), and a majority desire developing AI skills for their career (93%).²

Program Akar aims to address these challenges by providing an accessible and inclusive digital skills program at no cost to participants. Applicants need not have a prior technical background. AWS will provide training resources, cloud services, and technical expertise, while PayNet will fund the programme and advocate for the integration of industry-relevant skills. WEPS will ensure the curriculum is up-to-date and industry-focused, and deliver the programme end-to-end.

As part of this initial collaboration, PayNet, AWS re/Start, and WEPS have committed to starting the program with 100 students in 2024. The first cohort of 50 students will serve as a pilot to gather insights and refine the programme for future cohorts.

To build a strong foundation for potential jobs, participants will undergo a rigorous 47 day training course designed by AWS and PayNet, covering foundational cloud skills and digital payments, including programming, networking, security, and databases. Graduates will also complete the industry-recognised AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification Exam to validate their skills.

Graduates will receive support in securing internships and job placements in Malaysia's financial services sector, enabling them to apply their training in the workforce. PayNet and WEPS will connect candidates with roles such as cloud operations, site reliability, infrastructure support, and technical business support functions.

"At PayNet, we recognise the pressing talent shortage in Malaysia's tech-driven sectors. Our collaboration with AWS through Program Akar aims to bridge this gap by equipping early talent with essential cloud skills," said **Jun Maria Tan Abdullah, Senior Director of PayNet Akar**. "This initiative ensures students receive relevant skills and experiential learning, preparing them effectively for the workforce."

"Malaysia's digital economy and digital inclusion goals are dependent on talent who have the skills and mindset to drive this change," said **Pete Murray, Malaysia Country Manager, AWS**. "PayNet's inspirational vision has resulted in this first-of-its-kind collaboration with AWS and WEPS to empower the next generation of financial services talent in Malaysia with foundational skills in Cloud Security, Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, and Application Modernisation."

¹ <https://training.resources.awscloud.com/workforce-transformation/aws-gallup-asia-pacific-digital-skills-report-2023>

² <https://resources.awscloud.com/ai-skills/2024-aws-study-on-ai-skills-in-asia-pacific>

Training for the first cohort of 50 learners from the Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation (APU) begins in July 2024. Organizations like Bank Negara, Maybank, Public Bank, Hong Leong Bank, and Bank Islam have expressed interest in providing internship opportunities to the program graduates.

“We are happy to collaborate with AWS and PayNet to deliver Program Akar. This initiative addresses the shortage of skilled professionals in Malaysia and builds a diverse pipeline of cloud talent,” said **Mughilen Rathakrishnan, CEO of WEPS**.

The AWS re/Start programme is available in over 60 countries, connecting more than 98% of graduates with job interview opportunities. It is one of the initiatives that has helped AWS to train more than 31 million learners across 200 countries and territories build their cloud skills through its free training initiatives.

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About PayNet

Payments Network Malaysia (PayNet) is the national payments network and central financial infrastructure for Malaysia with the vision to empower Malaysia's digital economy. Our extensive retail payments suite, DuitNow (QR and P2P), JomPAY (Bill Payments), FPX (Online), MyDebit (Domestic Debit), MEPS, and IBG (Interbank GIRO) has near ubiquitous coverage across the nation and is part of the daily fabric of life in Malaysia. In addition, PayNet’s real time retail QR payments network, DuitNow, is also interoperable with domestic schemes in Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia to enable seamless cross-border transactions with those countries. PayNet is committed to promoting a secure, efficient, and innovative payments ecosystem in Malaysia, and works closely with its stakeholders to develop new products and services that meet the evolving needs of consumers and businesses. For further details, please visit our website: www.paynet.com.my

About Program Akar

Program Akar is an initiative under PayNet Akar, aimed at nurturing and developing digital talent for the financial services industry. As a cornerstone of PayNet's ESG commitment, PayNet Akar reflects the company's dedication to talent sustainability and futureproofing the workforce. This initiative ensures young talents acquire the skills needed to meet the future needs of the financial services industry in a rapidly changing environment, supporting PayNet's broader effort to foster a sustainable and inclusive future in the digital payments journey.

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About WEPS

World Education Placement Services Sdn. Bhd. (WEPS) is a leading provider of innovative educational solutions and workforce development programs. With a commitment to bridging the skills gap and empowering individuals for the future of work, WEPS helps transform organizations into skill-based-organizations with cutting-edge educational solutions and workforce development programs through technology platforms and solutions. WEPS offers a comprehensive suite of services designed to meet the diverse needs of learners, educational institutions, and employers.

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About AWS

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