Building an Applied AI Workforce Pathway in Palestine

Courtesy of Palestine Innovation Initiative





A new effort led by the Palestine Innovation Initiative (PII) aims to strengthen how advanced technology talent is developed in Palestine by focusing not only on tools and credentials, but on applied capability, decision-making, and job-relevant experience. The initiative is designed to complement existing academic and professional pathways while aligning advanced training with real workforce demand.

Founded and led by Anan Anabtawi, PII was created in response to a structural reality facing the Palestinian economy. Palestine has no meaningful natural resources, its agricultural capacity is severely constrained, and decades of occupation have limited access to land and water, restricting many traditional forms of economic development. As a result, one of the few scalable opportunities available is the development and export of knowledge, skills, and human capital.

Remote, digitally delivered work – particularly in advanced technology fields – has emerged as a practical pathway for economic participation beyond physical and political constraints. This is especially true in areas such as artificial intelligence, data, and applied systems, where demand is growing rapidly across the Gulf and internationally, and where work can increasingly be performed across borders.

Palestine already has a well-educated population and strong academic foundations in science and engineering. However, fewer opportunities exist for graduates and working professionals to gain structured, applied experience in designing, evaluating, and operating real-world AI systems under realistic organizational constraints.

As demand for applied AI talent accelerates across the Gulf and global markets – often through remote or hybrid roles – this mismatch between foundational education and applied readiness represents both a challenge and an opportunity. PII's response is a focused, practice-driven Applied AI & Decision Systems program, designed to align advanced training with real employer needs while supporting sustainable workforce development.

A core objective of the highly selective three-month program is to develop Berkeley-certified applied AI practitioners who are ready to contribute immediately within complex organizational environments, including government, finance, healthcare, infrastructure, and enterprise technology teams across the Gulf and international markets. The program is explicitly designed to align applied training with actual employer demand.

Applied projects and casework are localized to real market needs, reflecting the types of systems, constraints, and decision environments encountered in regional digital transformation initiatives, regulated industries, and large-scale operational settings. This ensures that participants graduate with experience that translates directly into employability and on-the-job impact, particularly in remote and cross-border roles.

In parallel, the program develops Berkeley-certified professionals trained in advanced applied teaching and mentoring methods, enabling graduates not only to perform individually, but also to train others and multiply impact within their organizations. This approach supports sustainable skills diffusion across the Palestinian technology ecosystem without requiring large-scale or permanent external staffing.

meaningfully in regional and global technology markets – particularly in environments where remote, knowledge-based work represents one of the few scalable economic pathways available.

"This is not about teaching tools," Anabtawi explains. "It's about building applied capability in artificial intelligence that aligns with real demand, supports professional growth, and



UC Berkeley provides academic leadership through program design, assessment standards, and direct remote instructional delivery, ensuring that applied training meets globally recognized benchmarks while remaining grounded in practical, market-relevant application.

Launching in the 2027 academic year, the program is designed to create a durable pipeline of Palestinian applied AI talent capable of participating

enables sustainable participation in the global technology economy."

More information about PII, its partners, and Berkeley University is available at the website of Palestine Innovation Initiative.

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Palestine Innovation Initiative (PII) is a coordination platform that brings together universities, practitioners, and philanthropic or investment-aligned partners to develop applied AI capability consistent with global practice. Its work centers on coordinated training, applied engagement, and the development and export of AI-enabled skills.