

UOB announces collaborations with Institutes of Higher Learning and industry partners at Better U to drive job transformation

*The Bank launches Better U Pivot programme for career transitions;
Centre of Excellence to grow AI and Data Analytics talent*

Singapore, 11 October 2024 – UOB is partnering with Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and industry partners to launch an industry-first comprehensive structured 12-month programme with customised learning paths and coaching to support colleagues' transition into new roles within the Bank. Coined as the Better U Pivot programme, this is one of the key initiatives announced today at UOB's annual employee festival, Better U.

As part of its employee upskilling and reskilling programme, UOB also launched the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Analytics Centre of Excellence (AIDA CoE), a joint collaboration with the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) and National University of Singapore (NUS). The programme aims to accelerate the development of AIDA professionals for the finance sector.

Graced by Minister for Manpower Tan See Leng, the Better U Festival, in its sixth edition this year, underscores UOB's commitment to building colleagues' future-readiness and adaptability amid the rapidly evolving financial sector.

Mr Dean Tong, Head of Group Human Resources at UOB, said, "The launch of Better U five years ago has solidified our commitment to building our own timber, and also accelerated the development and implementation of holistic training programmes to nurture growth mindset, digital awareness, and other essential soft skills for all our people."

"Our successes and failures through the years of experimenting have furnished us with insights on what methodologies are effective in augmenting our employees' growth and pitfalls to avoid. We are continually enhancing our support system and programmes to help our colleagues pivot their careers at scale, from areas of low growth to high growth, to remain relevant and achieve sustainable careers. That is the essence of our Better U Pivot programme. This, together with the AIDA CoE, represents a significant step forward in our journey of continuous learning and development, ensuring our team is well-equipped to meet the shifting demands of the industry."



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Pivoting colleagues into future-ready roles

Reskilling and upskilling to stay relevant continues to be the foremost concern for Singapore workers, according to UOB's ASEAN Consumer Sentiment Study 2024¹. Over nine in 10 respondents shared this as their top challenge, a slight inch up compared to 2023. Fully cognisant of employees' concerns, UOB is providing robust training programmes to cater to their urge to stay relevant and to pursue their professional goals.

The Better U Pivot programme was officially launched at Better U with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UOB, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), National University of Singapore (NUS), Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) and the Institute of Banking & Finance (IBF).

The Better U Pivot programme is an industry-leading holistic job transformation initiative, providing in-depth skills analysis and customised programmes to reskill employees through the Career Conversion Programme (CCP) in partnership with IBF and Workforce Singapore. The Pivot programme was first piloted in 2021 with initial participants now successfully operating in their new roles. The new "upgraded" programme rides on the Bank's previous learnings, with expanded components to enhance the robustness of the programme. By collaborating with IHLs, UOB is not only investing in its employees but is also playing a key role in the larger industry's shift towards job transformation in growth areas such as risk and compliance, sales and customer experience.

The programme aims to reskill up to 500 employees, including regional colleagues, over two years, starting from the fourth quarter of 2024. Selected participants will undergo a 12-month structured curriculum designed to equip them with new skills that align with growth areas in UOB.

Designed together with NP, selected participants will benefit from customised learning paths, including structured on-the-job training and upskilling opportunities personalised to each colleague. They will also receive close mentorship from designated coaches and hiring managers, who will provide guidance and wellness support as colleagues adjust to their new roles.

¹ Currently in its fifth year, UOB ACSS analyses consumer trends and sentiments across the region. The 2024 edition was conducted from May to June 2024 and surveyed 5,000 respondents from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam across different demographic groups.



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Scaling deep AI and data analytics capabilities within the financial sector

As the financial sector is constantly being reshaped by new technologies like AI and data analytics, developing a talent pool with deep expertise in this area is a growing priority. To address this rising demand, UOB has partnered with IMDA and NUS to launch the AIDA CoE. This initiative stems from an MOU signed by the AIDA Talent Consortium in 2023, comprising the Monetary Authority of Singapore, financial institutions including UOB, IHLs and training providers, committing to building AI capabilities within Singapore's financial sector. Through IMDA's Company-Led Training Programme under the TechSkills Accelerator (TeSA) initiative, the partners are committed to building AI capabilities via certifiable AI skilling, on-the-job training, and job placement opportunities to support the AIDA CoE. This programme adds on to the Bank's existing curriculum suite, such as the Technology Development Programme and Technology in Finance Immersion Programme, to develop AIDA and tech talents across different fields of specialisation.

The AIDA CoE targets to take in 100 university graduates over the next three years, with applications opening from this quarter. Participants will join the Bank as full-time employees, gaining access to real-world data and applications as they undergo the two-year programme. In the first 12 months, participants will take part in business-driven AIDA projects, paired with centralised training courses by UOB's Data Management Office and mentorship from senior data practitioners. In the following year, participants will undergo specialised training within UOB business units including Group Retail, Group Technology and Operations, Group Wholesale Bank and Group Finance, scaling their AIDA capabilities across different banking disciplines.

Upon completion, participants will be deployed within UOB as Data Scientists, Data Engineers, or AI and Machine Learning Engineers. They will also receive a graduate certificate in [Business Analytics Practice](#), which can be credited towards a Master of Technology in Enterprise Business Analytics with NUS. Participants can also look forward to the dynamic new UOB campus equipped with state-of-the-art facilities in the Punggol Digital District, to be ready by the first quarter of 2027.

The AIDA CoE serves as an industry blueprint for adaptation by other financial institutions, in line with the National AI Strategy 2.0. Interested applicants may find more details on the AIDA CoE via <https://www.uobgroup.com/careers/early-careers/aida.page>.

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About UOB

UOB is a leading bank in Asia. Operating through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, UOB has a global network of around 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. Today, UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings.

For nearly nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to help businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

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