

SCALE AI wants to encourage vocations and is investing \$1 million in projects to raise technology and digital awareness

Montreal, November 17, 2020. —With a long-term vision of workforce development, SCALE AI is diversifying its interventions with a Youth Awareness program to promote interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers in Canada, through both academic and extracurricular activities.

SCALE AI will invest up to \$1 million over the next two years in projects that will reach at least 12,000 young Canadians and to raise awareness about the possible career paths that await them in AI, data science, or other STEM fields. The program will include diversity and inclusion criteria, with a particular focus on initiatives that seek to engage groups that are less represented in the sector, including women and youth from diverse communities.

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Canada's Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, said, "The artificial intelligence sector is a driver of long-term growth, providing Canadians with high-quality, high value-added and well-paying jobs. In order to grow this sector, we must promote equity, diversity and inclusion in STEM professions as well as educate youth about the opportunities available in these occupations before they have made their career choices. We must ensure that we have a skilled workforce that represents the diversity of talent that exists in Canada, and that's what the SCALE.AI Supercluster is helping to do: it is helping our industries create environments that are more diverse than they were in the past."

Julien Billot, Executive Director of SCALE AI, said, "Creating and maintaining quality jobs in Canada is a priority for us. At a time when there is still a shortage of skilled AI workers, our Talent programs are designed to enable the training of cohorts of experts through both initial and continuing education. The Youth Awareness program is part of our long-term vision to enable high school students and those who must make a career choice to assess all the opportunities offered by careers in the overall STEM family, in general, and AI in particular."

Hélène Desmarais, Co-Chair of the SCALE AI Board of Directors, added, "If Canada is to maintain and strengthen its position in artificial intelligence on the global stage, we must progressively address labour force issues. This means creating the conditions for an increasingly large and diverse pool of experts to meet the needs not only of today, but also those of the coming decades."

Organizations (NPOs and educational institutions) wishing to submit a project and obtain funding are invited to visit scaleai.ca/training/stem-youth-awareness-program, where they will have access to a webinar presenting the program and all the documentation required to apply.

About SCALE AI (scaleai.ca)

The Canadian supercluster specializing in artificial intelligence (AI), based in Montreal, SCALE AI acts as an investment and innovation hub that accelerates the rapid adoption and integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and contributes to the development of a world-class Canadian AI ecosystem.

Funded by the federal government and the Quebec government, SCALE AI has nearly 120 industry partners, research institutes and other players in the AI field. SCALE AI develops programs aimed at supporting investment projects of companies that implement real-world applications in

AI and the emergence of future Canadian flagships in the sector, as well as the development of a skilled workforce.

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Source: Isabelle Turcotte, CMO at SCALE AI

Media Contact: Justin Meloche, 514 995-9704, jmeloche@national.ca