

PRESS RELEASE

Bertelsmann's Digital Initiative Kicks Off with 45,600 Applications from Six Continents for First 15,000 Tech Scholarships

- **High interest in Udacity courses on Cloud, Data and Artificial Intelligence**
- **Program offers 50,000 people worldwide a chance at digital upskilling over a three-year period**

Gütersloh/Berlin, December 12, 2019 – Approximately 45,600 people from six continents applied for the first 15,000 tech scholarships in a global education initiative funded by Bertelsmann. Over the next three years, the international media, services and education company will award some 50,000 scholarships to prepare people for an increasingly digital employment market. For the 15,000 chosen during the first application period, the courses in the fields of Cloud, Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) have now begun on the online continuing education platform Udacity, in which Bertelsmann is a major shareholder.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe said: “The overwhelming response to our education campaign shows how great the need for digital skills is, and how many people are ready to prepare themselves for the employment market of the future with a high level of personal commitment. Our aim is to play an active role in ensuring that the existing shortage of skilled workers in the digital sector does not worsen in the years ahead.”

The majority of the 45,600 applications received were for the courses in Artificial Intelligence (41 percent), followed by Data (39 percent) and Cloud Computing (20 percent). In geographical terms, most applications were sent in from India, Nigeria, USA, Germany and Egypt. 2,300 applications came from Bertelsmann employees from all over the world, mainly from the Arvato, Penguin Random House and RTL Group divisions. A quarter of the scholarship recipients are women.

The courses in the fields of Cloud, Data and AI, each lasting three months and focused on real-life, practical applications, are completed online at Udacity – also known as the “University of Silicon Valley.” The learners are guided by instructors, are closely networked with the learning community, and can call on the support of mentors as needed. Upon completion of the course, the top participants will be offered the opportunity to obtain a full Udacity Nanodegree program through a further scholarship.

The second phase of Bertelsmann's digital education initiative, in which another 15,000 scholarships will be awarded, starts in the fall of 2020. The third phase, again with 15,000 scholarships, will launch one year later. The remaining places are allocated to full Nanodegree courses for the top course participants from the three years of the campaign.

The #50000Chances campaign builds on the success of previous initiatives: In recent years, Bertelsmann had already awarded several thousand Udacity scholarships in cooperation with Google. That offer enjoyed great demand as well, and the EU Commission honored the joint continuing education initiative with its “EU Digital Skills Award.”

Research shows that there is already a considerable shortage of skilled workers in the fields of Cloud, Data, and AI: There are only a few hundred thousand qualified experts on the supply side, while demand is in the millions.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has 117,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.7 billion in the 2018 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

About Udacity

Udacity is a global, online, lifelong learning platform connecting education to jobs and providing students with skills to advance careers. Udacity Nanodegree programs provide credentials earned through a series of online courses and projects in an array of subjects from self-driving cars and AI to data science and digital marketing. Udacity collaborates with more than 200 global industry partners, including AT&T, Google, Facebook, Lyft, and IBM, to close talent gaps. Headquartered in Mountain View, Calif., the privately-funded company has operations in China, Egypt, Germany, India and the United Arab Emirates. Its investors include Bertelsmann, Andreessen Horowitz, Charles River Ventures and Drive Capital. For more information, please visit www.udacity.com

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