



PROGRAM GUIDE

AWS Equity Equivalent Investment Program

2024



AWS Overview

AWS provides cloud computing, which is the on-demand delivery of IT resources over the internet. Instead of purchasing, owning, and maintaining servers, customers can access computing power, data storage, and other services from a cloud provider like AWS. AWS offers pay-as-you-go pricing, where customers only pay for the resources they use, as opposed to the traditional IT model where expenses come as a fixed cost. Organizations of all types, sizes, and industries use the cloud for various purposes, including data backup and recovery, software development and testing, data analytics, enterprise resource planning, email, virtual desktops, contact centres, and customer-facing web services.

Cloud computing users have access to a broad range of the latest technologies, so they can innovate faster, experiment freely, and quickly set up and use resources as needed. They do not have to overprovision resources upfront to handle peak levels of business activity in the future. Instead, they provision only the resources they need. AWS is the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud provider, offering more than 200 fully featured services from data centres globally. Millions of customers—ranging from start-ups to large enterprises and public sector organizations—use AWS to lower costs, increase agility, and innovate faster.

AWS helps customers launch and grow their businesses. Access to cloud computing lowers the cost of starting new businesses, encourages innovation, and spurs development of new technologies. It also attracts more funding for start-ups, which generates further economic growth. Researchers from Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) found that AWS lowers the cost of starting new businesses by 15%–27%. Their study affirms that “many practitioners see the introduction of cloud computing services by Amazon as a defining moment that dramatically lowered the initial cost of starting internet and web-based start-ups”¹

In addition to economic gains, replacing in-house computing with cloud technology is also better for the environment. A [study](#) by 451 Research estimates that AWS's infrastructure is 3.6 times more energy efficient than the median of U.S. enterprise data centres surveyed and up to five times more energy efficient than the average in Europe. By adopting AWS technology, private and public sector organizations can take advantage of the energy efficiency and clean energy goals of AWS while meeting their own computing needs.

¹Ewens M, Nanda R, and Rhodes-Kropf M. Cost of Experimentation and the Evolution of Venture Capital. NBER Publications. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2018.



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About the AWS Equity Equivalent Investment Program

Fostering Diversity and Inclusion in the South African AWS Partner Ecosystem

Amazon's mission is to be earth's most customer-centric company. We foster diversity and inclusion globally and look for ways to amplify underrepresented voices and empower diverse communities. The Amazon Web Services Equity Equivalent Investment Program (AWS EEIP) is an 18-24-month enablement and acceleration program for South African Black-Owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who want to build their AWS business and grow as partners in the Amazon Partner Network (APN). We recognize the challenges that SMEs have in accessing low-cost funding, accessing markets and connecting with buyers, building networks and developing and enabling their people. Whether you are new to cloud or need help accelerating your AWS partner journey, the AWS EEIP offers a range of benefits to help you grow your business, enable your team and become a Validated partner in the AWS Partner Network (APN).

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

SMEs must be 100% Black-owned and meet all three Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) ownership criteria (i.e., economic interest, voting rights and net-value points) at the date of application and if selected—throughout their participation in the program.

SMEs must hold a valid Level 1 B-BBEE Certificate or Affidavit at the date of application and, if selected—throughout their participation in the program.

SMEs must be Exempted Micro Enterprises (EMEs) or Qualifying Small Enterprises (QSEs) at the date of application.

[Read application guide for complete eligibility requirements](#)



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

About the AWS Partner Network

The AWS Partner Network (APN) is a global community of partners that leverages programs, expertise, and resources to build, market, and sell customer offerings.

This diverse network features 100,000 partners from more than 150 countries. As an AWS Partner, you are uniquely positioned to help customers take full advantage of all that AWS has to offer and accelerate their journey to the cloud. Together, partners and AWS can provide innovative solutions, solve technical challenges, win deals, and deliver value to our mutual customers.

Why become an AWS Partner ?

Innovate, expand your customer reach, and grow your business with technical, marketing, and funding resources from AWS. Together, partners and AWS can provide innovative solutions, solve technical challenges, win deals, and deliver value to our mutual customers.

Innovation

Leverage the latest AWS technologies to experiment, build, and deliver differentiated customer offerings.

Customer Reach

Take advantage of the global reach, scalability, expertise, and robustness of AWS to expand your customer base and identify new opportunities.

Growth

Engage with AWS to enhance the value of your unique offerings with resources, programs, and benefits that drive greater profitability.



To learn more about the APN, visit <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/>

AWS EEIP Partner Paths



Software Path

For organizations that develop software that runs on or is integrated with AWS



Training Path

For organizations that sell, deliver, or incorporate AWS training



Services Path

For organizations that deliver consulting, professional, managed, and value-added resale services



To learn more about AWS Partner Paths, visit <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/paths/>



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Program Benefits

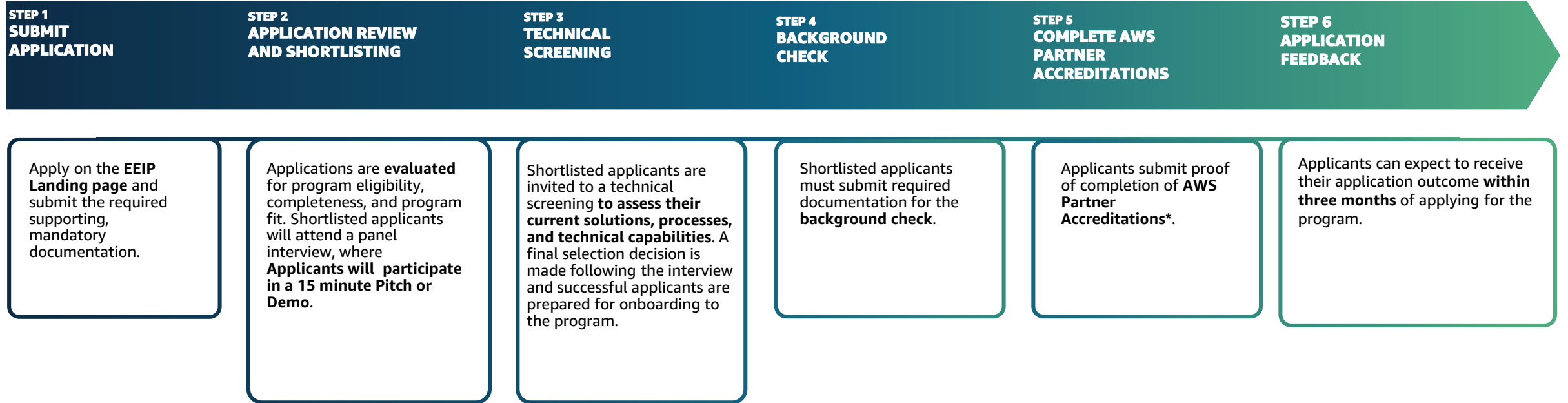
TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION	ENABLEMENT	OPERATIONS	ACCELERATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">AWS Skill Builder SubscriptionsAWS Classroom TrainingAWS Foundational Certification VouchersAWS Associate Certification Exam VouchersAWS Professional Certification Exam VouchersAWS Specialty Certification Exam VouchersScrum Certification Training and Exam FeeFinOps Certified Practitioner Course and Exam Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1:1 Consultant Led Product Workshop1:1 Consultant Led Business Transformation Workshop1:1 Weekly Technical Support Office Hours1:Many Technical Enablement Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Headcount Funding to subsidize your compensation costs as you grow your teamOffice SubsidyHardware BenefitAdministration Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fully Funded APN Program fee upon meeting APN Software Path Validation RequirementsMarket Development FundsAWS Credits to help cover your AWS service usage

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Application Process



*AWS Training and Certification provides free digital AWS Partner Accreditation courses for individuals in business and technical roles. These courses give you a foundational understanding of AWS products and services, best practices, and APN programs. AWS Partner Accreditation courses are available on demand and allow you to learn at your own pace. To learn more about the AWS Partner Accreditation courses, visit <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/training/accrreditation/>

AWS Partner Paths and Partner Journey

Read up on what partners can expect over the course of their AWS EEIP participation.





AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Services Partner Journey

	What will you do?	Whom will you meet?	Expected time commitments	Program milestones
Month 4-9: Phase 4: Enablement and Acceleration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ During this phase, your team is working on:▪ Achieving the deliverables in the transformation roadmap including:▪ Building your cloud centre of excellence▪ Defining your cloud value proposition▪ Defining your marketing strategy and developing your marketing collateral▪ Achieving Validation Requirements. You are required to achieve Validated status within 6-months of completing your transformation workshops. You will also be required to meet other KPIs during this time.	Partner Technical support and enablement consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ We estimate that 4-5 hrs per week will be required to achieve the deliverables in your transformation roadmap▪ 1 per week to update your sales pipeline▪ 1 hr a week to update your KPIs▪ 1hr per week to meet with your Partner Development Manager▪ 1hr per week to meet with your technical support consultant▪ 4hrs per quarter to meet with your ESD consultant, prepare and review your quarterly report▪ AWS will deliver various partner enablement workshops throughout the course of the EEIP. We estimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ After achieving the Validation requirements for your Partner Path , you will unlock:▪ \$2500 APN Program fee▪ AWS Promotional Credits for solution development▪ Partner Opportunity Acceleration (POA) funding for POC & Migrations▪ You will remain eligible for the benefits unlocked in Phase 3 -contingent of meeting your KPIs
Month 10-18 Phase 5: Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ During this phase, your team is working on:▪ Demand generation▪ Revenue generation▪ Delivering value to your customers▪ You will also be required to meet other KPIs during this time.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 1 per week to update your sales pipeline▪ 1 hr a week to update your KPIs▪ 0.5hrs per week to meet with your Partner Development Manager▪ 1hr per week to meet with your technical support consultant▪ 4hrs per quarter to meet with your ESD consultant, prepare and review your quarterly report▪ 3hrs per month to attend enablement workshop	



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Services Partner Journey

	What will you do?	Whom will you meet?	Expected time commitments	Program milestones
Month 1: Phase 1: Onboarding and Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Company Due DiligenceDirector Due DiligenceContractingPayments Process orientationPrepare your team for Foundational and Associate Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AWS EEIP Program TeamAWS Sales LeadersOther EEIP partnersTransformation Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2hrs of interview time per Director for the due diligence assessments1hr contracting and payments workshop1-day partner welcome event1- day AWS Cloud Practitioner Essentials classroom training3-days Architecting on AWS Classroom training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">After contracting, you will be eligible for:Fully funded training platform subscriptions for your teamFully funded AWS classroom training and AWS certification vouchers to help you complete Phase 2
Month 2-3: Phase 2: Foundational Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Your team must successfully complete at least two AWS Cloud Practitioner Certifications by the end of month one and two AWS Associate Certifications by the end of month three.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AWS Authorised Training ProviderTechnical support team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Team members who will be completing their certifications will need to provision enough time for intense study.Expect preparation time to vary depending on the level of your teams AWS knowledge and experience. See the training and certification AWS Ramp-Up Guides for additional information https://aws.amazon.com/training/ramp-up-guides/	Partners need to successfully complete Phase 2 to proceed to the Transformation Workshops
Month 3-4: Phase 3: Transformation Workshops and Roadmap	Transformation workshops and approval of the transformation roadmap	Transformation	Transformation workshops are conducted over 2-3 days. Your team members will only be required to attend the workshop sessions that are relevant to them. Expect to commit your leaders for 5-6 hrs in total for the ESD consultant alignment sessions	Program Milestone: Funding Unlocked After completing Phase 3, you will unlock: Headcount funding Operational funding Hardware benefit



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Software Partner Journey—Foundational Phase

	What will you do?	How long will it take?	Milestones
Month 1 Onboarding and Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Contracting▪ Payments Process orientation▪ Complete Alliance Lead/Technical Alliance Lead Partner Learning Plan - Software Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 3 days per person to complete Alliance Lead Partner Learning Plan▪ 1hr contracting and payments workshop▪ 1 day partner welcome event▪ 1 day AWS Cloud Practitioner Essentials classroom training▪ 40-50hrs per person to complete FinOps practitioner self led training	<p>After contracting, you will be eligible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fully Funded AWS Skill Builder Subscriptions▪ Fully funded AWS classroom training▪ Fully funded AWS Foundational Certification Vouchers
Month 2 Foundational Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Complete AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification▪ Complete FinOps Certified Practitioner▪ Complete Product Workshop▪ Write a Press Release and supporting FAQs for your solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expect exam preparation time to vary depending on the level of your teams AWS knowledge and experience. See the AWS Training and Certification Ramp-Up Guides for additional information.▪ 3 days per team to complete the Product Workshop	<p>By the end of Month 2 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Delivered a complete PR FAQ for your solution▪ At least 1 AWS Foundational Certified Individuals [AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification]▪ At least 1 FinOps Certified Practitioner
Month 3 Transformation & FTR Roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Complete Transformation Workshops [AWS EEIP Launch Ready]▪ Complete Scrum Certification Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 4 days per team to complete the Transformation Workshops [includes all meetings, workshops and alignment sessions]▪ 3 Days Classroom Training – Scrum Certification	<p>By the end of Month 3 your team should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A Business Transformation plan▪ A 100-Day roadmap to successfully complete your AWS Foundational Technical Review (FTR)▪ At least Certified Scrum Master



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Software Partner Journey—Build and Validate Phase

	What will you do?	How long will it take?	Milestones
Months 4 - 6 Build	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work through Business Transformation plan and FTR Roadmap activitiesComplete AWS Developer Associate Certification and AWS SysOps Administrator Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3 days to attend Classroom Training for Associate Exam preparation.1hr per week to meet with your Partner Development Manager1hr per week to meet with your technical support consultantAWS will deliver various partner enablement workshops throughout the course of the EEIP. We estimate an average of 3hrs per month will be scheduled for these workshops.	<p>By the end of Month 6 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">At least 3 AWS Associate Level Certified Individuals [AWS Solutions Architect, Developer or SysOps Administrator Associate].Completed 60-70% of FTR and Transformation Plan Milestones.
Months 7 Validate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work through Business Transformation planRequest a Foundational Technical Review	<p>Expect completion time to vary depending on individual team progress</p>	<p>By the end of Month 7 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Successfully completed the FTR for your software [Meet Validation requirements].Completed 100% of Transformation Plan Milestones.

Market and Sell Activities will be outlined in partner's individual Business Transformation plan



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Software Partner Journey – Differentiate Phase

	What will you do?	How long will it take?	Milestones
Months 8-9 Well Architected Partner Roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Begin to work towards your AWS Well-Architected Software Partner Program designationComplete Security Engineering on AWS Classroom TrainingComplete Architecting on AWS – Accelerator Classroom Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partners are required to use the knowledge and skills gained in implementing their Business Transformation plan & FTR roadmap to build and manage their own Well Architected Roadmap.5 days to attend Classroom Training for AWS Solutions Architect Professional Exam Preparation3 days to attend Classroom Training for AWS Security Specialty Exam Preparation	<p>By the end of Month 8 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reviewed the requirements for the AWS Well-Architected Software Partner ProgramCompleted an evaluation of your architecture and gap analysis .Developed a roadmap and project plan to achieve the designation by month 14.
Month 12 Professional & Specialty Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete AWS Security Specialty CertificationsComplete AWS Solutions Architect Professional Certifications	<p>Expect completion time to vary depending on individual team progress</p>	<p>By the end of Month 12 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">At least 3 AWS Professional/Specialty certified individuals [At least 1 Security Specialty and 1 Solutions Architect Professional]Completed all other required training/certification
Month 12 – 18	Milestones		
	Month 12 Onwards Accelerate Go-to Market Activities	Month 14 Achieve Well Architected Partner Designation	Month 18 Offboard



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Training Partner Journey - Foundational Phase

What will you do?

How long will it take?

Milestones

Month 1 Onboarding and Orientation

- Contracting
- Complete Orientation and Onboarding (Including Payments Process orientation)
- Complete the Improve Customer Outcomes with AWS Training course
- Complete the Sales Readiness Training & Knowledge Check

- 1hr contracting and payments workshop
- 1 day partner welcome event
- 1 day to Complete the Improve Customer Outcomes with AWS Training course (All)
- 1 days to Complete the Sales Readiness Training & Knowledge Check

By the end of Month 1 your team should have:

- Signed contracts (by all parties)
- At least 1 employee who has completed the Improve Customer Outcomes with AWS Training course and the Sales Readiness Training & Knowledge Check

After contracting, you will be eligible for:

- Fully Funded AWS Skill Builder Subscriptions
- Fully funded AWS classroom training
- Fully funded AWS Foundational Certification Vouchers

Month 2 - 3 Foundational Preparation

- Prepare for the AWS Authorized Instructor certification (Delivery)
- Complete AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification
- Complete Product Workshop
- Complete Setup of your Class Materials Environment and AWS Lab Environment
- Complete AWS Authorized Instructor exam (Delivery)
- Write a Press Release and supporting FAQs for your solution

- Expect exam preparation time to vary depending on the level of your teams AWS knowledge and experience. See the AWS Training and Certification Ramp-Up Guides for additional information.
- 3 days per team to complete the Product Workshop
- 2 days per team to complete the PR/FAQs for your solution

By the end of Month 2 your team should have :

- Delivered a complete PR FAQ for your solution
- At least 1 AWS Foundational Certified Individuals [AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification]
- At least 1 AWS Authorized Instructor (Delivery)



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Training Partner Journey – Build Phase

	What will you do?	How long will it take?	Milestones
Month 4 Transformation Roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete Transformation Workshops [AWS EEIP Launch Ready]Complete Transformation Roadmap/PlanComplete Training Partner Business Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">4 days per team to complete the Transformation Workshops [includes all meetings, workshops and alignment sessions]3 days per team to complete your Business Transformation Roadmap/Plan2 weeks to complete your Training Partner Business Plan	<p>By the end of Month 4 your team should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A Business Transformation planA 100-Day roadmap to successfully complete your Transformation Plan Milestones.Approved Training Partner Business Plan
Months 5-7 Build	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work through Business Transformation plan and FTR Roadmap activitiesDeliver Marketing Demand Generation Campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1hr per week to meet with your Partner Development Manager1hr per week to meet with your Technical Support ConsultantAWS will deliver various partner enablement workshops throughout the course of the EEIP. We estimate an average of 3hrs per month will be scheduled for these workshops.	<p>By the end of Month 7 your team should have :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Completed 100% of you Transformation Plan Milestones.At least 1 Delivery of Marketing Demand Generation Campaigns

Market and Sell Activities will be outlined in partner's individual Business Transformation plan



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Training Partner Journey – Differentiate Phase

	What will you do?	How long will it take?	Milestones
Months 8-13 Grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accelerate Go-to Market Activities• Achieve at least 70% of Select Training Partner Experience and Customer Success Requirements	6 Month workplan to accelerate Go-To-Mark Activities	By the end of Month 13 your team should have : <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Achieved at least 70% of Select Training Partner Experience and Customer Success Requirements
Month 14-16 Grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Complete the Improve Customer Outcomes with AWS Training course▪ Complete the Sales Readiness Training & Knowledge Check▪ Prepare for the AWS Authorized Instructor certification and complete exam (Delivery)▪ Complete AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification▪ Accelerate Go-To-Market Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 Month workplan to accelerate Go-To-Mark Activities• 1 day to Complete the Improve Customer Outcomes with AWS Training course• 1 days to Complete the Sales Readiness Training & Knowledge Check• Expect exam preparation time to vary depending on the level of your teams AWS knowledge and experience. See the AWS Training and Certification Ramp-Up Guides for additional information.	By the end of Month 16 your team should have : <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ At least 3 AWS Sales Enablement Trained Individuals▪ At least 3 AWS Cloud Practitioner Essentials Trained Individuals▪ At least 3 AWS Authorized Instructors (Delivery)▪ Completed all other required training/certification▪ Achieved 100% of Select Training Partner Experience and Customer Success Requirements
Month 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare Scale Up Plan to Achieve Advance Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 – 4 weeks to prepare a detailed 12-month plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed Scale Up Plan / Updated Business Plan
Month 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offboarding Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 – 2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully Offboarded



AWS EQUITY EQUIVALENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Training and Certification Requirements by Role Type

Role Type	AWS Partner Accreditations*	Alliance Lead Partner Learning Plan - Software Partner	Technical Alliance Lead Partner Learning Plan - Software Partner	AWS Foundational Certification [AWS Cloud Practitioner]	AWS Associate Certification [AWS Solutions Architect, Developer or SysOps Administrator]	AWS Professional/ Specialty Certification [AWS Solutions Architect Professional or Security Specialty]	APN Marketing Academy	Scrum Certification	FinOps Certified Practitioner
Technical Lead	●		●		●	●			●
Developers/Solutions Architects/Engineers	●	●			●	●			●
Business/Executive Manager	●	●		●					●
Compliance Manager	●		●	●				●	●
Product Owner/Product Manager	●		●	●				●	●
Project Manager/Scrum Master	●	●		●				●	●
Sales/Marketing	●	●		●			●		●

Partner Success Stories

Hear how our AWS EEIP partners accelerated the development of their AWS skills, expedited their cloud readiness and enabled their teams through the program.



Think Tank



Executive Summary

Think Tank is a technology company that specializes in ICT education and education technology (EdTech) solutions for individuals and businesses across all industry verticals. Think Tank joined the AWS Equity Equivalent Investment Program (AWS EEIP) in 2022. As part of the program, they gained access to the Launch Ready Program headcount funding, market development funding and AWS training and certification. As a result, Think Tank has been able to accelerate its [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#) journey, becoming an AWS Select Tier Services Partner within 12 months and an [AWS Authorized Training Partner \(ATP\)](#) within nine months of joining the program.

Challenges Before the AWS EEIP

Think Tank was founded in 2016 by Tebogo Moleta, to provide access to high impact ICT education to unemployed Youth and curb the rate of unemployment. Think Tank creates platforms and systems that help individuals and Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) businesses thrive in their entrepreneurial journey. Tebogo's vision was to become the leading education technology (EdTech) solution provider in Sub-saran Africa and beyond. Tebogo acknowledges that he couldn't afford to hire experienced technical resources, which led him to hire university graduates and provide them with training, work experience and industry certifications. After these graduates got their certifications and work experience, they would get poached by larger businesses. "This meant we had to do the same process over and over again which effectively meant the business was not growing". says Tebogo.

Impact of the AWS EEIP

After joining the program in November 2022, Think Tank leveraged the partnership with AWS to hire senior technical candidates. The headcount subsidies enabled Think Tank to hire for 12 new roles and ramp up their skills by achieving 26 foundational, eight associate and six professional and specialty certifications.

About the Partner

An Select Tier Training and Services Partner, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, creating the next generation of engineers and entrepreneurs through education and technology.

<https://www.thinkt.co.za/>

“Before joining the program, we had six team members of which three were permanent and three were on fixed term contracts. To date we have a total of 12 permanent and two contracted employees.”

Tebogo Moleta, Founder and MD, Think Tank

Think Tank previously solely focused on ICT training as they did not have resources, both financially and human capital, to focus on any other service. With the growth in headcount, they were able to create additional business units within the business, i.e., Ed Tech, Cloud and Cyber Security professional services.

The AWS EEIP helped Think Tank to dive deep and discover what they wanted to be famous for in the market through the business transformation workshops facilitated by One Linkage. Tebogo acknowledges that through the workshops he was able to see Think Tank for what it truly is and helped him come up with actionable steps on how to improve it for the better. "Through the AWS EEIP program we have identified our strengths and core competencies and have since selected our niche. We now have laser focus and because of it, we're more deliberate and are able to optimize our resource utilization". By identifying what our niche is, we have been able to launch 12 opportunities on our Partner scorecard.

The program's investment in office space, hardware, training opportunities, support workshops and exhibition attendance are among Tebogo's program highlights.

“There's honestly just a lot to talk about and so much to be grateful for in this program”.

Tebogo Moleta, Founder and MD, Think Tank

“The AWS EEIP has transformed and impacted our business in a meaningful way and in the fastest time possible.”

Tebogo Moleta, Founder and Managing Director, Think Tank

“The EEIP is definitely not an easy program to participate in, but the evident business growth and transformation is all worth it. The AWS EEIP program will make you think critically about your capabilities as an entrepreneur and your overall business, but in that same light, it'll help you realize what is truly important and help keep laser focus and help you maximize your efforts”.

Tebogo Moleta, Founder and Managing Director, Think Tank



Umdoko internet



Executive Summary

Umdoko Internet is a software development house, that joined the AWS Equity Equivalent Investment Program (AWS EEIP) in 2022. As part of the program they they gained access to the Launch Ready Program, headcount funding, market development funding and AWS training and certification. As a result, Umdoko Internet has been able to accelerate its [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#) journey, becoming an AWS validated Software Path Partner within 15 months after joining the program.

Challenges Before the AWS EEIP

Umdoko is a start-up company providing modern software development by creating custom software that inspires people and drives business forward. Shakes Mkhonza founded Umdoko in 2016 while he was employed, with the vision of creating an environment for software developers to have creative freedom to build and create software. Umdoko officially started trading in 2019 with Shakes being the only employee. The business started with Shakes taking on the role as an independent contractor by writing software code.

Being founded by a software developer, Shakes, acknowledges that his business was poorly structured and disorganized as he didn't have prior business experience. He compares the way he ran his business to a spaza shop that is disorganized, ran by the owner and that doesn't have a formal way of invoicing and no operational structure. "Umdoko's greatest challenge was unclear leadership structure, lack of defined roles and responsibilities, inadequate communication channels, inconsistent decision-making processes, and a general absence of cohesive policies and procedures. Even though the business was unorganized internally, we were delivering for customers." says Shakes.

Impact of the AWS EEIP

Umdoko's vision is to use modern technology to better humanity by implementing generative AI into customer solutions. "Our platform, [Amusema.com](#) helps customers to stream line and manage their events.

About the Partner

An Select Tier Training and Services Partner, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, providing modern software development. Our technologies and solutions underpin the key objectives and values of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

<https://umdoko.com/>

Impact of the AWS EEIP

The platform is an all in one management platform, allowing live interactive streaming natively, providing our customers with tailor made billing per usage. "The AWS EEIP has provided us with access to industry experts who helped us make our goal a reality through building, rebuilding and reinventing.." says Shakes.

"I always thought AWS was expensive, but after becoming an AWS EEIP partner and receiving training and certification, I committed my entire business to AWS and we built our platform on AWS."

Shakes Mkhonza, Founder, Umdoko Internet

When Umdoko applied for the AWS EEIP program, they registered on the APN as a services path partner, even though they wanted to build code. The program team and consultants helped Umdoko identify their core business and super powers. "By attending the three-day product strategy workshop facilitated by Koedr, we were able to flesh out our concept, understand who our customer was and get clarity of thought about what we were ultimately going build". says Shakes. After Umdoko completed their product strategy workshop they attended the two-day launch ready program facilitated by One Linkage. During the launch ready program, Umdoko evaluated their capabilities against the best practices described in the [AWS Cloud Adoption Framework \(CAF\)](#) and built their Most Viable Product (MVP). After completing the launch ready program Umdoko enrolled for the Software Path on the [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#). "We received support from the EEIP Team, the program is intense, it was a tough love situation that yielded results of being a validated partner through obtaining the [AWS Foundational Technical Review \(FTR\)](#).

"Through the program we have created 12 Jobs of which nine are youth. Through the program we have been able to go from one employee to 12 within 14 months. Which has enabled us to build and deliver for customers, we have launched 22 opportunities on the APN. Our team has also been able to complete eight foundational certifications and seven technical certifications. The program offers numerous benefits to combine financial prosperity with social impact, allowing black businesses in South Africa to make a meaningful difference in the world." says Shakes.



"The program offers numerous benefits to combine financial prosperity with social impact, allowing black businesses in South Africa to make a meaningful difference in the world"

Shakes Mkhonza, Founder,
Umdoko Internet

Pax Divitae

Executive Summary

Pax Divitae is an advisory services, value realisation and innovations company that joined the AWS Equity Equivalent Investment Program (AWS EEIP) in 2022. As part of the program they gained access to the Launch Ready Program, headcount funding, market development funding and AWS training and certification. As a result, Pax Divitae has been able to accelerate its [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#) journey, becoming an AWS Advanced tier partner within 12 months after joining the program.

Challenges Before the AWS EEIP

When Phakiso founded the business in 2020, the business was funded by the revenue generated by the Advisory business unit, which introduced cash flow issues as the business started to grow. This was primarily due to Pax Divitae hiring employees who had little to no experience while trying to obtain new business, as their customers were requesting mid-level (3-5 years) experience teams to fulfil their project. Pax Divitae did not have a clear offering or strategy. "We didn't have a clear strategy for what we wanted to specialize in the innovation business unit after we had made a large investment in another Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM's), they were not supportive, and instead found reasons for us not to progress". says Phakiso. When the investment fell through Pax Divitae had greater cashflow issues and made enough to pay salaries at the end of the month.

Impact of the AWS EEIP

Through the Product strategy workshop facilitated by Koedr in their first quarter of the program, Pax Divitae was encouraged to think about what they wanted to be famous for on AWS. During this workshop, Pax Divitae dove deep into their business units and strategically developed a flywheel around their existing advisory business and the innovation lab. The formation of the innovation lab was vital to the business as it was seen as a skills development opportunity for Youth in South Africa. "The vision for the innovation lab was to train unskilled, unemployed Youth and feed them into the organization as junior talent". says Phakiso. In 2020 when Pax Divitae was founded, the advisory unit was bringing in revenue, which he reinvested into the innovation hubs. His greatest challenge was making ends meet at the end of the month, as the innovation business unit did not close deals then. Now, the youth build solutions using AWS to deliver customers' requirements and visions while they are getting hands-on experience in delivering to real customers.

About the Partner

An Advanced Tier Services Partner, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, providing advisory services, value realization and innovation.

<https://paxdivitae.com/>



"Our goal still is to develop a strong partnership with AWS while creating solutions to solve problems faced by South Africans to change the trajectory of society through technology."

Phakiso Mataitsane, COE, Pax Divitae

After completing the product strategy workshop Pax Divitae attended the Launch Ready planning workshop, facilitated by One Linkage. The workshop helped the team re-look at their objects for the business beyond the two years of the program. "They helped us review our team structure and guided us into the [AWS Cloud center of excellence](#)". says Phakiso. The Pax Divitae team migrated 95% of their business to AWS since becoming an AWS EEIP partner. For Phakiso, being part of the program accelerated their plans to migrate and build on AWS. It has enabled them to lead their innovation driven by AWS technology and solutions.

The AWS EEIP has enabled Pax Divitae to scale its delivery capacity and enlarge their offerings that contribute to the long-term sustainability of the company. Pax Divitae has since created 25 permanent jobs and 10 fixed-term contract roles, which has allowed the team to innovate customer-centric solutions. Phakiso is confident that the solutions the innovation team is building are not only for individual customers but for the market, which creates sustainable revenue for the business.

Pax Divitae is focused on continuous innovation through the development of their employees, and has been able to encourage a continuous learning culture through the AWS EEIP investment in training for employees. "As much our team needs to build, they need to learn and keep relearning as things change on a daily basis" says Phakiso. Since joining the program, Pax Divitae has completed 25 foundational certifications and 12 Technical certifications. "The AWS EEIP has provided us with an opportunity to fast track our business through the coaching provided by the program team and consultants. "The program gave the team and the business structure and has made us see what is possible." says Phakiso.



"The AWS EEIP has provided us with an opportunity to fast track our business through the coaching provided by the program team and consultants, the program gave the team and the business structure and has made us see what is possible."

Phakiso Mataitsane, CEO, Pax Divitae

BATSAMAYI

Executive Summary

BATSAMAYI joined the Amazon Web Services Equity Equivalent Investment Program (AWS EEIP) in 2021 as part of the program's second cohort. In the first year of the program, BATSAMAYI leveraged the AWS EEIP benefits to deepen its AWS skills and build delivery capacity. BATSAMAYI achieved customer success and became an Advanced Tier Services partner on the [AWS Partner Network \(APN\)](#) in just over a year. With continued support from the AWS EEIP, BATSAMAYI has been able to sustain its APN success, while optimizing its strategy and operations for scale and sustainable growth.

Navigating Business Growth Challenges

Through the [AWS Partner Transformation Program \(PTP\)](#) engagement in the first year of the AWS EEIP, BATSAMAYI was prompted to think about and build towards what they wanted to be famous for on AWS. The experience BATSAMAYI had accumulated over the years in building and testing software allowed BATSAMAYI to evolve their strategy and focus on how they could build a flywheel around their existing Quality Assurance and Software Development offerings. BATSAMAYI then formed their Cloud Division, which focuses on developing cloud-native applications in AWS and providing Cloud Managed Services for customers.

The formation of the Cloud Division was a natural progression for BATSAMAYI, as prior to moving to AWS, the team had faced challenges deploying and maintaining resilient infrastructure for their applications whilst maintaining a low cost. "We have been building for a long time... now let's add Cloud because we have been building these products [that need] hosting and there's a gap in the infrastructure service. Let's learn that because we already know what it requires," says BATSAMAYI's Managing Director, Cinga Nyangintsimbi. The AWS EEIP headcount funding enabled hiring for the Cloud Division, and the AWS EEIP training and certification funding, along with the support provided by the AWS EEIP program team, enabled the technical ramp-up for the Cloud team. The formation of the Cloud Division was not without challenges, as Cinga then found himself spread thin across multiple customer engagements.

BATSAMAYI

"We had four divisions - Cloud, Quality Assurance, and Bespoke Software Development,, which included building both internally and externally." Cinga says. He also felt that much of his time was taken up by managing aspects which were not core to securing the future of BATSAMAYI in the long term. "My responsibility is securing our future and how we win our targets. I managed a lot of things. For example, in Quality Assurance, if the client wanted to talk, they would do it through me." This prompted Cinga to rethink BATSAMAYI's organizational structure and how the BATSAMAYI team was being enabled.

Though the external bespoke software development work BATSAMAYI had delivered for customers was vital to its growth as an APN partner, Cinga also recognized that delivering bespoke software solutions for customers meant BATSAMAYI would spend more time delivering for a smaller pool of customers. For Cinga, it was important to further refine BATSAMAYI's offerings and recalibrate the business and the Divisions. Ultimately, Cinga aimed for each project in the BATSAMAYI pipeline to be a good fit for their current capabilities but also align with their strategic vision and future ambitions.

Impact of the AWS EEIP

For Cinga, the EEIP came at the right time on BATSAMAYI's journey. The AWS EEIP has enabled BATSAMAYI to scale its delivery capacity and introduce new offerings that contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Company. "The program came in at the perfect time when we needed it to build out on the cloud," he says.

Having had the support to scale from 18 to 50 employees, and grow BATSAMAYI into an AWS Advanced Tier Services Partner, Cinga had the confidence to eliminate external bespoke software development offerings in order to build toward a more scalable revenue generation model. "We stopped developing for individual customers and started developing for us". Prior to the AWS EEIP, it would have been more challenging for BATSAMAYI to consider building their own products, which they would ultimately take to market.

"My responsibility is securing our future and how we win our targets. I managed a lot of things. For example, in Quality Assurance, if the client wanted to talk, they would do it through me."

Cinga Nyangintsimbi, Managing Director, BATSAMAYI

BATSAMAYI cont.

“We have the investment benefit that helps us grow our business ... If we only had the two Divisions, [Quality Assurance and external Bespoke Software Development,] it would not have given us the time to build our own internal products through the Bespoke division.” says Cinga.

The AWS EEIP headcount funding also enabled BATSAMAYI to hire Team Leads for each of the divisions, freeing Cinga up to focus on the long-term future of BATSAMAYI. “Now we have three independent Divisions, which each have Team Leaders. They now manage the delivery of each of their teams. The difference is I no longer need to be as involved in the day-to-day as I used to be.”

BATSAMAYI has always fostered a culture of continuous professional development, even requiring the Quality Assurance team to complete new industry certifications provided by the International Software Testing Qualifications Board (ISTQB) twice yearly. BATSAMAYI has not only maintained this learning culture, but has leveraged the AWS EEIP training and certification funding to scale it across the organization.

“If you give someone the opportunity and you tell them what they need to do, they will figure it out...but you have to know they will do it their own way. You have to be involved here and there. You need to have trust.”

Cinga Nyangintsimbi, Managing Director, BATSAMAYI

BATSAMAYI

Providing opportunities for people to grow is especially important to Cinga, who shares: “If you give someone the opportunity and you tell them what they need to do, they will figure it out...but you have to know they will do it their own way. You have to be involved here and there. You need to have trust.” The training and certification funding has helped to support technical enablement and development within BATSAMAYI and the team has completed over 50 AWS Certifications and 128 AWS Partner Accreditations since starting on the AWS EEIP program. For Cinga, being a part of the AWS EEIP has been akin to having an investor who does not take equity, but is equally concerned about the growth of your business.

“It has helped us accelerate. It’s a catalyst and having someone to hold us accountable has helped. It’s amazing and we appreciate it so much... It’s also challenging, but it’s for our own benefit.”

About the Partner

An Advanced Tier AWS Services Partner, based in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, we empower organizations to reach unprecedented technological excellence through cloud-based solutions, with a focus on Cloud Migrations, DevOps and Security.

<https://batsamayi.com/>

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs

Q: I do not qualify for the AWS EEIP but need help to build my partner business. Are there other AWS programs for partners than I can explore?

A: Yes. Whether you are just beginning to build or expand your business, AWS offers various programs to help you succeed at any stage of your journey. Visit <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/programs/> to find out which partner programs you can leverage to build your AWS business, market and differentiate your offerings or grow with the AWS Partner Network (APN).

Q: Will each participant receive an equal investment?

A: No. Program benefits will be allocated on a case-by-case basis at AWS' sole discretion. AWS will allocate program benefits based on the interventions required for the participant to achieve the program outcomes.

Q: What are the requirements to become a "Validated" partner?

A: Visit the links below to read the validation requirements for the Services, Software and Training paths:

- Services Path: <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/services-tiers/>
- Software Path: <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/foundational-technical-review/>
- Training Path: <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/training-partner-program/>

Q: What happens if my business is selected but does not meet the agreed Key Performance Indicators and milestones?

A: Participants who do not meet their KPIs and or milestones may have some or all of their program benefits suspended until they have met the agreed KPIs and milestones. Participants who repeatedly fail to meet the agreed quarterly KPIs or milestones will be off boarded from the program.

Q: Will AWS share participant identities with the public or other stakeholders?

A: All participants are required to sign a marketing authorization and release permitting AWS to reproduce, distribute, publish and translate marketing materials, which include written testimonials, recorded testimonials and case studies about AWS services, names and logos of the participant. AWS will get prior written authorization from the participant to use the materials other than as prescribed in the marketing authorization and release. Participants may refuse the request.

Q: Once selected for the program, can my selection be revoked?

A: Yes. Once AWS completes the selection process, we will conduct background checks on your business and your directors. Should the results be unfavorable, your selection to the program can be revoked. Selection can also be revoked if you have not complied with the terms and conditions of application or if the information submitted to AWS as part of your application is found to be incomplete, incorrect or misleading, or if there is a change in your eligibility status.

Q: How long does the selection process take?

A: Up to 3 months

Q: My chosen partner path does not require AWS certifications to achieve "Validated" status. Will the accreditation and certification requirements still apply to me?

A: Yes. All AWS EEIP participants must meet the minimum knowledge requirements stipulated in the program.

Q: If our team completes certifications before contracting, will AWS refund our certification expenses?

A: No, AWS will not reimburse any applicant for any preparatory costs or costs for other work done in connection with the application process.

Q: My team has already completed all the AWS certifications required. Will we be required to achieve alternate certifications or can we proceed directly to Phase 3?

A: Teams who meet all the minimum certification requirements are required to maintain the minimum certification requirements in the KPIs throughout the course of the program.

Q: Why are applicants required to complete accreditations as a pre-requisite for selection?

A: AWS Partner Accreditation courses give individuals in business and technical roles a foundational understanding of AWS products and services, best practices, and APN programs. As the AWS EEIP accepts applicants who may not have AWS or APN knowledge, accreditations are required to ensure that all selected applicants have the foundational understanding of AWS and the APN before committing to the program.

Q: Will taking part in the AWS EEIP give me access to sales leads?

A: Participants who become ACE Eligible may receive AWS referrals. Visit <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/programs/ace/> to learn more about the ACE Program.

Q: Will AWS share participant data with AWS customers?

A: Should we receive a request for participant information which is not publicly available, AWS will redirect the request to AWS EEIP participants who can elect to share their information directly with the customer or give us consent to do so on their behalf. Participants may refuse the request.

Q: Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

A: You can reach out to your Partner Development Manager or contact the AWS EEIP Program team at: equityequivalentinvestmentprogram@amazon.com

Acronyms

- i. **ACE:** APN Customer Engagements Program
- ii. **APN:** Amazon Partner Network
- iii. **AWS EEIP:** Amazon Web Services South Africa Equity Equivalent Investment Program
- iv. **APN:** Amazon Partner Network
- v. **B-BBEE:** Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
- vi. **B-BBEE Codes:** Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Amended Information and Communications Technology Sector Codes
- vii. **CIPC:** Companies and Intellectual Property Commission
- viii. **DTIC:** Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
- ix. **EME:** Exempted Micro Enterprise
- x. **MDF:** Market Development Funds
- xi. **ICT:** information and Communications Technology
- xii. **KPI:** Key Performance Indicator
- xiii. **QSE:** Qualifying Small Enterprise
- xiv. **SARS:** South African Receiver of Revenue
- xv. **SME:** Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Links

- i. APN Customer Engagements Program <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/programs/ace/>
- ii. AWS EEIP Contact equityequivalentinvestmentprogram@amazon.com
- iii. AWS Partner Accreditations <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/training/accreditation/>
- iv. AWS Partner Network <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/>
- v. AWS Partner Paths <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/paths/>
- vi. AWS Partner Programs <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/programs/>
- vii. AWS Services Partner Validation requirements <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/services-tiers/>
- viii. AWS Software Partners Validation requirements <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/foundational-technical-review/>
- ix. AWS Training Partner Validation requirements <https://aws.amazon.com/partners/training-partner-program/>

