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Data science for all – an open source approach to education

By Ana Echeverri posted Thu September 19, 2019 07:13 PM

Today is an exciting day for me. After months of hard work, IBM, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Linux Foundation are announcing an innovative, first-of-a-kind open source project that will enable universities around the world to build Data Science programs faster.

With IBM's investment and industry expertise, University of Pennsylvania's long-standing academic leadership and the Linux Foundation as a premier open source consortium, we are creating a curriculum kit comprised of a set of open source building blocks for teaching the core concepts of data science in undergraduate and graduate programs. These building blocks are based on Python and open source tools and frameworks, and include slides, documentation, code, and data sets that could be adopted or updated by anyone.

This idea of open source Data Science education is personal to me. Access to education changed my life. Coming from a small town in Colombia, South America, education gave me the opportunity to work with cutting edge Data Science and AI technologies at one of the best companies in the world (IBM). I believe this project will provide a foundation of building blocks for schools to supplement, strengthen and start up their data science programs. And most importantly, because

this is open source, it enables any institution on earth thus providing more opportunities for learners to participate in the AI Economy like I did.

When I first started this project, I met with universities in different regions of the world and a common theme emerged: starting a Data Science program from scratch is incredibly difficult, and universities need educational materials to accelerate their efforts. This was not only encouraging but validated the need: there is a demand worldwide and this concept of open source education could reach across oceans and to our local community colleges.

By making a "starter set" of training materials available and providing guidance on how to build a Data Science program, IBM and cross-industry partners and educators working together can help accelerate the availability of skills building programs around the world.

It is the beginning of a new era for Data Science Education.

The project is in incubation currently as IBM and UPenn create the initial set of materials to contribute. The project will officially launch in early 2020. To get early insights and stay up to date with this project please register [here](#).

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