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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA



RESEARCH, INNOVATION & IMPACT

Data Science Institute

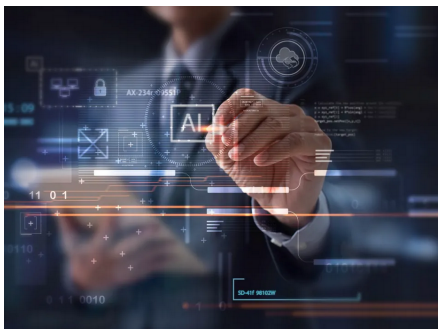
The Data Drip

A DIGEST OF DATA SCIENCE NEWS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA



DATA SCIENCE INSTITUTE

February / March 2025



Ready or not, AI is in your classroom

DSI Director, Nirav Merchant, is leading the development of a platform to provide educators with access to large language models (LLMs) while ensuring content guardrails, privacy, and budget controls. The pilot of AI VERDE (Virtual Explorer for Research, Discovery, and Education) received positive feedback from faculty using LLMs for teaching, such as R programming and MedLLAMA. Moving forward, the platform can be the gateway for AI resources from the National AI Research Infrastructure in supporting novel teaching content and research.

[Read the complete U of A Health Sciences article.](#)



Honors College students build machine learning models during visit to the AI Zone

On March 19, several U of A Honors College students and Prof. Deborah Hughes Hallett visited the AI Zone at the Data Science Institute. Nirav Merchant, Jeff Gillan, and Leonardo Hernandez guided them through a few key AI concepts such as training models, image segmentation, bias, and classification. After a brief presentation, the students explored the web-based tool, Teachable Machine, and built their own machine learning models. This hands-on experience allowed them to deepen their understanding of AI and its real-world applications.



Aligning with the U of A Space4 Center and other projects

The Data Science Institute and Roberto Furfaro, Deputy Director for Engineering at the U of A Space4 Center, are developing the Space4 Platform that uses telescope and analysis workflow automation with AI integration to efficiently track space objects of interest. This platform supports the U of A Space Domain Awareness Program efforts using current technologies.

[Learn more about other DSI collaborative projects](#)

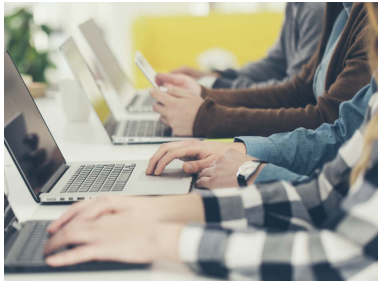
TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS	FRIDAYS
Research Productivity 10:00 - 11:30 AM	Data Science Tapas 1:00 - 2:00 PM	Research Productivity 10:00-11:30 AM	CyVerse Office Hours 10:00 - 11:00 AM
Classical Machine Learning 1:00 - 2:00 PM		NLP for All 12:00 - 1:00 PM	CyVerse Webinars 10:00-10:30 AM
Functional Open Science Skills for AI/ML Applications 2:00 - 3:00 PM		Mastering Generative AI Foundation Models for Research 1:00 - 2:00 PM	
AI Makerspace Meetup Snakes & Lattes 3:30 - 4:30 PM		Bioinformatics & Genomics 2:00 - 3:00 PM	

Spring 2025 U of A DataLab Workshops
Weaver Science & Engineering Library
Room 212 or Zoom
Register for in-person and Zoom link

It's mid-spring semester and useful workshops are still offered

Register for the [U of A DataLab Spring 2025 workshops](#). Get the Zoom link and attend the workshop sessions that interest you! Unless otherwise noted, workshops are via Zoom or at Weaver Science-Engineering Library, room 212. Past workshop sessions are now on the [UArizona DataLab YouTube channel](#).

NEWS & ACTIVITIES



Learn basic computational skills over the weekend

Apply to attend the March 22 and 23, 2025 in-person 9 AM – 5 PM software carpentry workshop that is designed for practicing and aspiring research scientists with no or little experience in working on the command line, programming, and version control. This hands-on workshop held on the U of A campus targets graduate students, postdocs, technicians, and faculty and covers basic computational skills including Python, Unix shell/command line, and git/GitHub. Participants will be encouraged to help one another and to apply what they have learned to their own research problems. Workshop participation is free. **Application to attend is required!** Specific workshop location and directions will be provided to accepted participants.



**Women in
Data Science
Worldwide**

Tucson

WiDS-Tucson 2025 is almost here

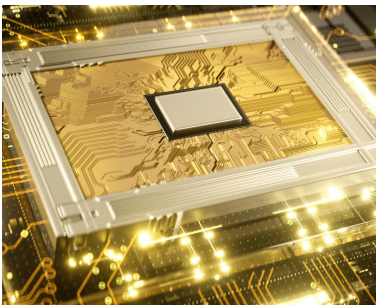
Register now to join us Friday, March 28, 2025, for the free WiDS-Tucson annual conference. This year's theme, Living in the Ever Changing Landscape of Data, brings keynote speaker Catherine D'Ignazio, Associate Professor of Urban Science and Planning in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. WiDS Tucson's mission is to increase participation of women in data science and to feature outstanding women doing outstanding work. **Learn more** and review the conference schedule. The WiDS-Tucson conference is sponsored by DSI, ICDI,

and CALES.



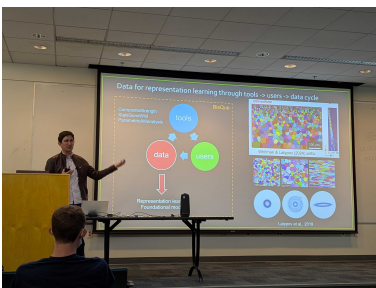
Jetstream2 AI Fellows Program takes flight

[Laura Dozal](#) and [Dr. Greg Chism](#) from the University of Arizona are among the five inaugural fellows in the Jetstream2 AI Fellows Program. In January 2025, Nirav Merchant, Tyson Swetnam, Edwin Skidmore, and other members of the Jetstream2 team gathered at the University of Arizona to kick off the program. Supported by the National AI Research Resource Pilot, the Jetstream2 program runs from January to September 2025 and offers early career and established researchers a unique opportunity to enhance their skills, knowledge, and experience in AI-driven research using Jetstream2. [Read more about the Jetstream2 AI Fellows Program](#) with Indiana University.



Leverage Free Computing Resources for Your Research!

We're seeking capstone projects. The U of A College of Information Science MS Capstone Program is now accepting faculty and lab-sponsored projects for the upcoming semester. Advance your research with dedicated MS Data Science students while gaining free access to HPC resources. [Submit your project idea](#) for Summer 2025 and Fall 2025. For questions, contact [Dr. Greg Chism](#).



U of A represented at UCSB BisQue Deep Learning kickoff meeting

On February 12, Nirav Merchant attended a UCSB meeting hosted by the Center for Multimodal Big Data Science, where the BisQue Deep Learning (BDL)

cyberinfrastructure project was introduced. The project uses advanced AI and deep learning to help researchers manage and analyze large, complex data and makes it easier for them to use tools for detecting objects, tracking movements, and organizing data. One goal is to make these powerful tools available to more researchers, like [Marat Latypov](#) with the U of A College of Engineering, and help them to make new discoveries and solve important problems such as improving healthcare, tackling climate change, and finding sustainable materials.



Seeking nominations for 2025-2026 Data Science Ambassadors

We are seeking nominations for enthusiastic PhD students to support data science literacy at the University of Arizona. Selected applicants will develop a program of support and engagement that reflects and advances the data science needs of their college. All ambassadors will receive training and support in order to foster data science literacy in their respective college and compensation of a \$1,500 stipend for an academic year commitment. The call for nominations will open on March 31, 2025. [Visit the DSA site](#) for more information. DSI, UA Libraries, and the College of Information Science are sponsors of DSA.



Building and expanding the Roots for Resilience program

The Roots for Resilience program is slightly changing its approach based on its past success and feedback from participants. The application process will begin soon—be sure to check the [Roots for Resilience](#) program site

regularly for updates to the program and details. We look forward to welcoming the Fall 2025 cohort to the Roots for Resilience program. DSI, CyVerse, and AIR are Roots for Resilience program sponsors.



Join us for the premier hackathon in the Southwestern United States

Hack Arizona is March 22-23 and brings together student innovators, developers, designers, and problem-solvers to collaborate, learn, and create groundbreaking projects. Network with like-minded individuals, gain hands-on experience, and showcase skills in a competitive yet supportive environment. Hack Arizona is for students in higher education in AZ. Please [register](#) to attend the hackathon.

Share The Data Drip!

Share The Data Drip with your friends and colleagues who can subscribe by [completing this brief form](#). If you have data science news or events that you want to share in The Data Drip or on the DSI website, send us an [email](#).



CALENDAR

Review the [DSI calendar of events](#) for data science activities and workshops available from across campus. Complete the [DSI calendar request form](#) to have your data science event listed in The Data Drip or on the DSI calendar.

Spring
Semester
2025

U of A DataLab Workshops series and sessions

Expert-led sessions with AI & Cloud Tools for Geographic Analysis; AI Applications in Engineering, Life Sciences, Genomics, Healthcare; and more.

Mar
20

Introduction to Speech Technology

A beginner-friendly, hands-on workshop that covers the basics of acoustic modeling, phonetics and the applications of speech tech in modern applications.

Mar
22
&
23

Software Carpentry Workshop (2 days)

Learn the foundational skills necessary to be productive in small research teams. The workshop targets graduate students, postdocs, technicians, and faculty. Undergraduate students can be admitted if space is available.

Mar
25

Reinforcement Learning

Workshop series covers essential concepts in classical machine learning, offered with beginner-friendly, hands-on programming demonstration in Python.

Mar
25

End-to-end ML Workflow pt.2

Continuing from the previous session, this workshop aims to use the previously labelled data in order to train, test and run a model.

Mar
28

Women in Data Science Tucson 2025

The WiDS-Tucson one-day technical conference provides an opportunity to hear about the latest data science related research and applications in a number of domains, and connect with others in the field.

APRIL
04

Drone Day 2025

Drone Day continues to be an opportunity to connect UAV (unoccupied aerial vehicle) users at the U of A and the greater Tucson area.

Yes! Add me to the DSI email list.

Subscribe to the Data Science Institute email list. Or [email the Data Science Institute](#) to let us know how we can be of assistance to you and your research.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE DATA DRIP

You are receiving this email from the **University of Arizona's** mailing list.

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Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The university strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.