Kanishka Gunawardana

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Profile

Top-ranked Computer Engineering graduate specializing in computer architecture and embedded systems, with hands-on experience in CPU microarchitecture and RISC-V pipeline design, SoC integration, FPGA prototyping, and pre-silicon verification. Passionate about leveraging hardware–software co-design to create robust, energy-efficient systems that address real-world challenges, while demonstrating strong leadership, teamwork, and a collaborative mindset.

Education

University Of Peradeniya Nov. 2021 – Aug. 2025
Undergraduate in B.Sc. Engineering(Hons.) Computer Engineering ***GPA: 4.0/4.0, Rank: 1/486***

Dharmaraja College Kandy Nov. 2006 – Aug. 2019
G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination ***Z-score: 2.5661***
National Rank - **149/19508**, District Rank - **11/1189**

Experience

Temporary Instructor Aug. 2025 – Present
Department of Computer Engineering, University of Peradeniya
Instructing courses in computer architecture, digital design and embedded systems, including labs and evaluations. Conducting neuromorphic accelerator research with the PeraMorphIQ Neuromorphic Research Group and mentoring project teams at the ESCAL Lab on on-chip learning, memory power optimizations, and system architecture.

Software Engineering Intern Jul. 2024 – Dec. 2024
WSO2 LLC, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Developed Ballerina integrations, including the OpenAI Finetunes Connector. Worked on ISO20022-to-SwiftMT message conversion using Ballerina for financial message interoperability, along with SaaS-based app design and development.

Publications

Optimized Multi-Processor System-on-Chip (MPSoC) Design for Low-Resource JPEG Encoding
K.H. Gunawardana et al. | *ICAC 2024 (Colombo)* | DOI:10.1109/ICAC64487.2024.10851123

- Implemented an FPGA MPSoC JPEG encoder on Cyclone IV using Nios II/e cores; introduced lightweight custom hardware instructions and custom FIFO queues to offload compute-critical stages and reduce processor stalls.
- Achieved 2.8× throughput improvement; superscalar options were evaluated but deprioritised.

Undergraduate Research Thesis

SNAP-V: A RISC-V SoC with Configurable Neuromorphic Acceleration for Small-Scale Spiking Neural Networks (Final Year Thesis) | Nov. 2024 – Jul. 2025

- Designed and developed a dual-core RISC-V System-on-Chip integrating a configurable neuromorphic accelerator with over 1k LIF neurons organized into parallel clusters interconnected through a hierarchical Network-on-Chip (H-NoC), enabling efficient spike-based computation for small-scale SNNs in low-power edge applications.
- Validated the SoC on MNIST using Synopsys (VCS/PrimePower) and Xilinx Vivado, achieving 96.69% accuracy (within an average 2.62% of baseline) and state-of-the-art energy efficiency of 1.39 pJ/synaptic operation.
- Technology: **RISC-V, Chisel, Chipyard, Verilog-HDL, Synopsys VCS/PrimePower, Vivado**

Selected Projects

RV32IM 5-stage Pipeline Processor | *Group* | Dec. 2024 – Jul. 2025

- Implemented a 5-stage pipelined RISC-V RV32IM processor with in-order hazard handling, explored AXI-based memory integration for SoC compatibility, performed RTL power and static timing analysis (0.197 mW, 142 MHz), automated the analysis via a GitHub Actions CI/CD workflow, and prototyped the design on a Virtex-7 FPGA.
- Technology: **Verilog HDL, Synopsys DC, VCS, RTLA, PrimePower, GTKWave, GitHub**

Impact Tracking System for Athletes (3YP) | *Group* | Nov. 2023 – Mar. 2024

- Developed a real-time head impact monitoring system for contact sports using wearable devices and desktop dashboards, facilitating prompt concussion identification, post-session data transmission, and comprehensive analytics for player safety and informed decision-making.
- Contributions: Led hardware and firmware design and development of wearable devices, developed the centralized hub and WIFI local communication, contributed to backend API, and deployed the system on AWS EC2.
- Technologies: **C++, ESP32, Raspberry Pi, MQTT, Python, Express.js, MongoDB, AWS**

Field-Based Approach for Quantifying Plant Leaf Color | *Group* | Aug. 2023 – Nov. 2023

- Developed a mobile application with a backend that utilizes Image Processing and Computer Vision to objectively quantify plant leaf colour by analyzing information extracted from captured leaf images.
- Contributions: Developed the backend API for image analysis using FastAPI and contributed to image preprocessing, including image segmentation with a Mask R-CNN model fine-tuned for leaf segmentation.
- Technology: **Python, OpenCV, Pytorch, FastAPI**

8-bit Single-cycle Processor | Mar. 2023 – Jun 2023

- Designed and implemented an 8-bit single-cycle processor architecture in Verilog HDL with instruction and data caches, featuring a memory unit and a MIPS-inspired ISA supporting arithmetic, logic, and control operations.
- Developed a comprehensive testbench for verification and waveform analysis using GTKWave tool.
- Technology: **Verilog-HDL, GTKWave**

Achievements

SLIot Challenge 2023 | *Sri Lankan Biggest IOT Competition* | *Team: IMPAX* Mar. 2024

- 1st runners-up (Out of 100+ Teams) | *Organized by UOM in collaboration with SLT-MOBITEL and IESL*

MoraXtream 8.0 | *12 hour algorithmic programming competition* | *Team: Five4Five* Nov. 2023

- National Rank - 4 (Out of 400+ Teams) | *Organized by the IEEE Student Branch of the University of Moratuwa*

IEEEXtreme 17.0 | *24 hour algorithmic programming competition* | *Team: Five4Five* Nov. 2023

- Global Rank - 374 (Out of 16500+ participants), National Rank - 24 (Out of 330 Teams)

ACES Coders v10.0 | *12 hour algorithmic programming competition* | *Team: Five4Five* Oct. 2023

- National Rank - 12 (Out of 350+ participants) | *Organized by the ACES*

Selected Certificates

Machine Learning Specialization - Stanford University & DeepLearning.AI (Coursera) Sep. 2023

- Supervised Machine Learning: Regression and Classification
- Unsupervised Learning, Recommenders, Reinforcement Learning
- Advanced Learning Algorithms

Technical Skills

Languages: Python, C/C++, Java, JavaScript, TypeScript, SQL, Verilog HDL, ARM assembly, Ballerina.
Frameworks: Arduino, Express.js, Spring Boot, FastAPI, Node.js, React.js.
Libraries: OpenCV, NumPy, Pandas, Matplotlib, PyTorch, TensorFlow.
Developer Tools: Linux, Git, Docker, AWS, Quartus II, Nios II, GTKWave, Vivado.
EDA & Verification: Synopsys Design Compiler, VCS, PrimeTime, PrimePower, Tcl (EDA automation).

Extra-Curricular Activities

Volunteering Project Nenathambara - University of Peradeniya Sep. 2023 - Jul. 2024
Head of Web Development - Robotics Society, University of Peradeniya Sep. 2023 - Aug. 2024
Executive Committee Member - Robotics Society, University of Peradeniya Dec. 2022 - Sep. 2023
Member of Rotaract Club of University of Peradeniya Dec. 2021 - Dec. 2023

References

Dr. Isuru Nawinne | ***isurunawinne@eng.pdn.ac.lk***

Senior Lecturer, Department of Computer Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

Prof. Roshan G. Ragel | ***roshanr@eng.pdn.ac.lk***

Professor, Department of Computer Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.