ASHKAN ALVAND, PHD

RESEARCH SCIENTIST | UX RESEARCHER

I am a Research scientist with expertise in hypothesis-driven study design, data analysis, and translating complex findings into actionable insights for both scientific and commercial applications. I am passionate about understanding human motivations and experiences to drive better outcomes for human centric organisations.

Work Experience

Wholesale Program Analyst

Foodstuffs North Island Ltd. | Auckland, NZ | Dec 2024–Present {contract}

- Manage $14M Extended Warehouse Management (EWM) project budgets using SAP, resulting in 12% improved resource allocation and consistently meeting financial targets
- Implement agile workflows via Jira for 15+ team members, reducing delivery time of key project milestones by 20%
- Develop sophisticated Excel models for budget forecasting, identifying $1.2M in potential cost savings opportunities
- Developed automation pipelines for EWM workflows using Python scripts, reducing processing time by 80%.

Career Transition Period

Independent Skills Development | Auckland, NZ | Dec 2023–Dec 2024

- Worked as an independent researcher, providing consultation on human-centered study design, quantitative analysis, and peer review of journals and conference papers
- Focused on upskilling in commercial data analysis while serving in operations management at BoulderCo climbing facility
- Completed SQL and Power BI certifications to strengthen commercial data visualisation capabilities

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EDUCATION

2018-2023
PhD in Psychology
(Computational Neuroscience)
The University of Auckland
Auckland, New Zealand

2014-2016
ME in Information Technology
(Computer Networks)
Azad University
Garmsar, Iran

2010-2014
BE in Information Technology
University of Mazandaran
Babolsar, Iran

AWARDS/HONORS

Eisdell Moore Centre mobility grant (Nov 2022)
Travel award from Child Mind Institute (Sep 2019)
Faculty of Science full tuition award (2018-2022)

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Liggins Institute | Auckland, NZ | Feb 2023–Sep 2023

- Developed research solutions for human studies to assess external effects on infant brain development.
- Designed analysis pipelines to extract key insights, securing $120,000 in additional research funding.
- Collaborated with multidisciplinary teams on two research projects involving over 200 patients.
- Analysed 1+ TB of multimodal datasets across two computer vision projects, generating insights that secured $120K in additional research funding.
- Optimised cloud-based data repositories, reducing processing time by 35% and enhancing cross-team collaboration.
- Developed statistical analysis pipelines that identified three key biomarkers in clinical trial data, advancing research outcomes.

Doctoral Researcher

University of Auckland | Auckland, NZ | Jul 2018–Dec 2022

- Conceptualised and designed a clinical study to investigate brain network mechanisms in children with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD).
- Developed testable hypotheses, designed experimental protocols, and conducted rigorous literature reviews and meta-analyses to inform study design.
- Coordinated research logistics and recruited over 70 pediatric participants for projects, collecting behavioral and administrative data through cognitive tests, hearing assessments, and MRI evaluations as well as questionnaire, and general interviews
- Authored 5 peer-reviewed research articles in top-tier journals including Neuroimage and Cerebral Cortex
- Created optimised data analysis pipelines, increasing processing efficiency by 20% and enabling faster research outcomes
- Secured $85K in research funding across multiple projects through effective grant writing and budget management
- Collaborated with international teams across 4 countries, demonstrating strong cross-cultural communication skills
- Mentored junior researchers through their thesis projects, helping refine their research questions, improve analytical skills, and enhance scientific writing, leading to high-quality submissions.