

## Kleiner Perkins Fellowship

**Question 2: Describe your most meaningful experience(s) and why they matter to you.**

**TL;DR:** When evaluating between two equally good decisions, choose the one with more short-term pain.

Turning down Kleiner Perkins fellowship '21 was one of the most challenging decisions I've made. Everyone I spoke to told me to renege my internship with Qualcomm and take KP. My justification, at the time, was based on *premature optimization*. If the end goal is to make an exponential impact in the world, I should be thinking long-term. Would the fellowship have served my long-term goals of solving critical Machine Learning (ML) challenges? This, at the time, seemed unclear. This is why Qualcomm seemed attractive.

I was brought onto Qualcomm to leverage ML to address one of their core IP bottlenecks and had complete autonomy over how I'd go about solving this. During my internship, I spearheaded the innovation of a novel Deep Learning algorithm that **fundamentally** changes how the semiconductor industry analyzes chip performance. My work was so well-received that there were talks of it being spun off into its own department! During my time there, I gained an invaluable insight that engineers care more about interpretability of ML systems than raw performance. This insight, had it not been for Qualcomm, would've taken years for me to internalize!

Looking back, this was one of the boldest decisions I made—analyzing a situation purely for how it'd pay off 10-20 years into the future. In retrospect, I thought KP would've helped me realize my “purpose.” But that incorrect mindset was why I wasn't ready at the time, and now I am!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I realize the impact mentorship can have on a person's career. I'll be joining Infinitus Systems (KP backed) in 2022 as their 3rd Machine Learning engineer (member of technical staff). It all worked out in the end!