

Aditya Narendra

Testimonial of working with Prof. Maria Dainotti:

I am a final year doctoral student at the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland, under the supervision of Prof. Agnieszka Pollo and Prof. Maria Dainotti. I started working with Prof. Dainotti in August 2020 and joined as a PhD student in January 2021. My work focuses on machine learning applications in gamma-ray bursts (GRBs) and active galactic nuclei (AGNs). As of October 2024, we have published 9 research papers in highly reputed international astronomical journals.

Working with Prof. Dainotti has been a thrilling experience. She is highly motivated and is an incredibly hard worker. Her dedication to the field of GRBs is truly inspiring and motivates me to push further and work harder to match her. When I started working with her, I had finished my master's degree and an internship. I was looking for opportunities where I could work on addressing astrophysical problems using machine learning. Prof. Dainotti provided me with the perfect work environment for me to flourish and reach my potential. When I started working with her, I had no idea about how a proper international research project is conducted and how a research article is written. Prof. Dainotti was incredibly patient, and she taught me and showed me how to do science properly and correctly. We have gone on to produce nine machine learning publications. Most importantly, we showed in one of our recent publications on GRB redshift estimation the reliability of machine learning based redshift estimates. This had not been achieved in the field prior to our efforts and it is a truly groundbreaking moment.

Prof. Dainotti was also very helpful in providing the initial codes for the various projects. This helped me to get onboard very quickly and start working. These were instrumental in helping me learn new coding languages like R and Mathematica. My knowledge and skills have been built on top of this. Hence, I am truly grateful to her for helping me find my footing in research.

Finally, on a personal note, Prof. Dainotti has been very kind to me. She always inquires about my well-being and safety and respects my decisions and choices. Over the years, we have developed a lot of inside jokes and funny incidents that bring a lot of joy and laughter during our meetings, even though I have been working with her remotely for majority of my PhD career.

For any undergraduate or graduate students reading this, I will provide this analogy: Working with Prof. Dainotti is like doing whitewater rafting. It is tough and difficult. But if you manage to do it, it will be a thrilling experience, and you will go far in your scientific career.

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