

Shijun ZHANG

Assistant Professor

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Appointments

Assistant Professor (Tenure-Track), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), Hong Kong SAR, China	Jul 2024 ~ Present
Phillip Griffiths Assistant Research Professor , Duke University, United States Mentors: Jianfeng Lu and Hongkai Zhao	Aug 2022 ~ Jun 2024
Research Fellow , National University of Singapore, Singapore Mentor: Zuowei Shen	Jan 2021 ~ Jul 2022

Education

Ph.D. in Mathematics , National University of Singapore, Singapore Thesis: <i>Deep neural network approximation via function compositions</i> [PDF , URL] Supervisors: Zuowei Shen and Haizhao Yang	Aug 2016 ~ Jan 2021
B.S. in Mathematics , Wuhan University, China Thesis supervisor: Xiliang Lv	Sep 2012 ~ Jun 2016

Teaching

Operations Research Methods (AMA 3820), PolyU Instructor, Syllabus	Sem 1, 2025/2026
Optimization Methods (AMA 4850), PolyU Instructor, Syllabus	Sem 2, 2024/2025
Mathematical Numerical Analysis (Math 361S), Duke University Instructor, Syllabus	Spring 2024
Matrices and Vectors (Math 218D-2), Duke University Teaching assistant	Fall 2023

Awards

Departmental Best Paper Award, AMA, PolyU, 2024-2025, [URL](#).
Scholar Award, NeurIPS 2022 Financial Assistance Program, [URL](#).
The EASIAM (East Asia section of SIAM) Student Paper Prize, 2020-2021, first prize, [URL](#).

Publications

[number] Author(s). *Paper title*. Journal or conference reference. [[Links](#)]

* Corresponding author † Equal contribution

Preprint(s)

- [17] Hanyu Pei, Jing-Xiao Liao, Qibin Zhao, Ting Gao, **Shijun Zhang**, Xiaoge Zhang, Feng-Lei Fan. *NeuronSeek: On Stability and Expressivity of Task-driven Neurons* Submitted. [[arXiv](#)]
- [16] **Shijun Zhang***, Hongkai Zhao, Yimin Zhong, Haomin Zhou. *Fourier Multi-Component and Multi-Layer Neural Networks: Unlocking High-Frequency Potential*. Submitted. [[arXiv](#)]
- [15] Finglei Fan, Junlong Fan, Dayang Wang, Jingbo Zhang, Zelin Dong, **Shijun Zhang**, Ge Wang, Tieyong Zeng. *Hyper-Compression: Model Compression via Hyperfunction*. Submitted. [[arXiv](#)]

Published (Accepted)

- [14] **Shijun Zhang***, Hongkai Zhao, Yimin Zhong, Haomin Zhou. *Structured and Balanced Multi-Component and Multi-Layer Neural Networks*. **SIAM Journal on Scientific Computing**, 47(5):C1059–C1090, 2025. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [13] **Shijun Zhang***, Hongkai Zhao, Yimin Zhong, Haomin Zhou. *Why Shallow Networks Struggle to Approximate and Learn High Frequencies*. **Information and Inference: A journal of the IMA**, Volume 14, Issue 3, September 2025, iaaf022, <https://doi.org/10.1093/imaiai/iaaf022>. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [12] Qianchao Wang[†], **Shijun Zhang[†]**, Dong Zeng, Zhaocheng Xie, Hengtao Guo, Feng-Lei Fan, Tieyong Zeng. *Don't Fear Peculiar Activation Functions: EUAF and Beyond*. **Neural Networks**, 186, June 2025. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [11] **Shijun Zhang***, Jianfeng Lu, Hongkai Zhao. *Deep network approximation: Beyond ReLU to diverse activation functions*. **Journal of Machine Learning Research**, 25(35):1–39, 2024. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [10] **Shijun Zhang***, Jianfeng Lu, Hongkai Zhao. *On enhancing expressive power via compositions of single fixed-size ReLU network*. Proceedings of the 40th International Conference on Machine Learning (**ICML 2023**), PMLR 202:41452–41487, 2023. [[arXiv](#), [Poster](#), [Conference](#)]
- [9] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, **Shijun Zhang***. *Neural network architecture beyond width and depth*. Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (**NeurIPS 2022**), 35:5669–5681, 2022. [[arXiv](#), [Poster](#), [Conference](#)]
- [8] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, **Shijun Zhang***. *Deep network approximation in terms of intrinsic parameters*. Proceedings of the 39th International Conference on Machine Learning (**ICML 2022**), PMLR 162:19909–19934, 2022. [[arXiv](#), [Spotlight](#), [Conference](#)]
- [7] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, **Shijun Zhang***. *Deep network approximation: achieving arbitrary accuracy with fixed number of neurons*. **Journal of Machine Learning Research**, Volume 23, Issue 276, September 2022, Pages 1–60. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [6] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, **Shijun Zhang***. *Optimal approximation rate of ReLU networks in terms of width and depth*. **Journal de Mathématiques Pures et Appliquées**, Volume 157, January 2022, Pages 101–135. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]
- [5] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, **Shijun Zhang**. *Neural network approximation: Three hidden layers are enough*. **Neural Networks**, Volume 141, September 2021, Pages 160–173. [[arXiv](#), [Journal](#)]

- [4] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, Shijun Zhang. *Deep network with approximation error being reciprocal of width to power of square root of depth*. **Neural Computation**, Volume 33, Issue 4, April 2021, Pages 1005–1036. [arXiv, Journal]
- [3] Jianfeng Lu, Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, Shijun Zhang. *Deep network approximation for smooth functions*. **SIAM Journal on Mathematical Analysis**, Volume 53, Issue 5, September 2021, Pages 5465–5506. [arXiv, Journal]
- [2] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, Shijun Zhang. *Deep network approximation characterized by number of neurons*. **Communications in Computational Physics**, Volume 28, Issue 5, November 2020, Pages 1768–1811. [arXiv, Journal]
- [1] Zuowei Shen, Haizhao Yang, Shijun Zhang. *Nonlinear approximation via compositions*. **Neural Networks**, Volume 119, November 2019, Pages 74–84. [arXiv, Journal]



Shijun Zhang 张仕俊

Assistant Professor, PolyU
Approximation theory
Neural networks

	All	Since 2020
Citations	1476	1466
h-index	11	11
i10-index	12	12
0 articles	9 articles	
not available	available	

Based on funding mandates

TITLE	CITED BY	YEAR
Deep network approximation for smooth functions J Lu, Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang SIAM Journal on Mathematical Analysis 53 (5), 5465–5506	389	2020
Deep network approximation characterized by number of neurons Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang Communications in Computational Physics 28 (5), 1768-1811	277	2020
Optimal approximation rate of ReLU networks in terms of width and depth Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang Journal de Mathématiques Pures et Appliquées 157, 101-135	216	2022
Neural network approximation: Three hidden layers are enough Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang Neural Networks 141, 160-173	176	2021
Nonlinear approximation via compositions Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang Neural Networks 119, 74-84	127	2019
Deep network with approximation error being reciprocal of width to power of square root of depth Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang Neural Computation 33 (4), 1005-1036	76	2021
Deep network approximation: Achieving arbitrary accuracy with fixed number of neurons Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang The Journal of Machine Learning Research 23 (276), 1-60	64	2022
Deep network approximation: Beyond relu to diverse activation functions S Zhang, J Lu, H Zhao Journal of Machine Learning Research 25 (35), 1-39	56	2024
Neural network architecture beyond width and depth S Zhang, Z Shen, H Yang Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems 35, 5669-5681	26	2022
Deep network approximation for smooth functions. arXiv e-prints J Lu, Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang arXiv preprint arXiv:2001.03040	20	2020
Deep neural network approximation via function compositions S Zhang PhD thesis, National University of Singapore	13 *	2020

TITLE	CITED BY	YEAR
Why shallow networks struggle to approximate and learn high frequencies S Zhang, H Zhao, Y Zhong, H Zhou Information and Inference: A Journal of the IMA 14 (3), iaaf022	11 *	2025
On enhancing expressive power via compositions of single fixed-size relu network S Zhang, J Lu, H Zhao International Conference on Machine Learning, 41452-41487	8	2023
Deep network approximation in terms of intrinsic parameters Z Shen, H Yang, S Zhang International Conference on Machine Learning 162, 19909-19934	8	2022
Don't fear peculiar activation functions: EUAF and beyond Q Wang, S Zhang, D Zeng, Z Xie, H Guo, T Zeng, FL Fan Neural Networks 186, 107258	5	2025
Hyper-Compression: Model Compression via Hyperfunction F Fan, J Fan, D Wang, J Zhang, Z Dong, S Zhang, G Wang, T Zeng arXiv preprint arXiv:2409.00592	2	2024
Structured and Balanced Multicomponent and Multilayer Neural Networks S Zhang, H Zhao, Y Zhong, H Zhou SIAM Journal on Scientific Computing 47 (5), C1059-C1090	1	2025
Fourier Multi-Component and Multi-Layer Neural Networks: Unlocking High-Frequency Potential S Zhang, H Zhao, Y Zhong, H Zhou arXiv preprint arXiv:2502.18959	1	2025
NeuronSeek: On Stability and Expressivity of Task-driven Neurons H Pei, JX Liao, Q Zhao, T Gao, S Zhang, X Zhang, FL Fan arXiv preprint arXiv:2506.15715		2025