

SUMMARY

- Economist and data scientist adept at strategy and scoping through to hands-on coding. Strong project and stakeholder management skills, with a focus on collaborative, tangible results.
- *Technical skills:* Machine Learning (regression/classification, clustering and dimensionality reduction in R), Econometrics, Data vis/mapping, basic natural language processing and SQL

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Analytics Lead – Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship (BII+E) Toronto, ON Aug 2017 – Present

- Developed an interactive [map of developer talent](#) in Canada using data from StackOverflow for public release.
- Leading a *State of Canada's Tech Sector* research report planned for Spring 2018, including an interactive data visualization, and new data from StatCan, OECD, Crunchbase, Huawei and Oxford Economics.
- Planning a *Canadian Employment in 2030* project in partnership with [Nesta](#) to forecast demand for occupations and skills in 2030 using a unique combination of expert foresight and machine learning (Gaussian Process Regression).

Economics and Data Science Consultant Toronto, ON Aug 2017 – Present

- Delivered a *Government and Data* instructional onboarding session for the first [Code for Canada](#) fellowship (2017).
- Developing predictive models for a start-up software firm focused on improving fundraising efficiency for non-profits. Streamlined and aligned data for a non-profit implementing a new fundraising database.

Manager, Funding Policy and System Planning – Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) Toronto, ON Aug 2016 – Aug 2017

- Built and managed a new quantitative policy analysis team of 8 staff, primarily data scientists and policy advisors.
- *Analytics and Data Science:* Co-led a cross-ministry research team for a proof of concept linking large administrative data sources. Predicted high school student outcomes with over 80% out of sample accuracy.
- Launched a decision support website with analytics and data visualizations tools built on [Shiny for R](#), Azure, and GitHub, and onboarded partners to scale use of these technologies in government.
- *Policy:* Led a Cabinet submission on the province's Tuition Fee Framework resulting in [its renewal](#), including policy analysis, advanced fiscal forecasting (rule-based optimization) and stakeholder consultations.
- Supported development of funding models and implementation for a new [French-language university, indigenous education expansion](#), student financial aid extension, and university/college operating funding reform.
- *Culture:* Created and 'exported' an innovative culture in government by implementing agile management, starting a [Code Day](#) event series attracting hundreds of attendees, and sponsoring a [challenge](#) on International Open Data Day.
- Delivered presentations on talent needs in government for ~40 social science academics, and demographics and enterprise risk for a ~100 participant enterprise risk management session.

Senior Consultant, Public Sector Strategy – Deloitte Canada Toronto, ON Apr 2015 – Aug 2016

- Lead analyst on projects for 1) a government-wide review of regulatory burden/modernization for manufacturers, 2) a performance review of a large economic development fund, 3) a government-wide business data sharing application, and 4) a digital transformation for a regulator; Obtained Deloitte's highest annual performance rating.
- Developed data visualizations (R, Tableau) to 1) target accessibility regulation enforcement, 2) understand social services provider performance, and 3) understand government regulatory burden on the private sector.
- Won the Corporate Sponsor stream at the City of Toronto's [TrafficJam hackathon](#) as part of the 4-person Deloitte team [conducting advanced analysis](#) and data visualization of traffic congestion data (R, QGIS, Alteryx, CartoDB).
- Led or contributed to business development efforts (workshops, proposals) leading to over \$1.5M in revenue.

ASHER ZAFAR, M.A.

ASHERZAFAR.GITHUB.IO
LINKEDIN.COM/IN/ASHERZAFAR
ASHER.ZAFAR@GMAIL.COM

Senior Policy and Planning Analyst – Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) *Toronto, ON Feb 2014 – April 2015*

- Developed post-secondary funding policies, including enrolment forecasts (R), tuition fees, and graduate funding.
- Led decision-support work for a [policy framework](#) for new university campuses, including the evaluation process and analysis for a panel of Deputy Ministers leading to \$127M in funding for York University's [new Markham campus](#).

Consultant – Certified Management Accountants (CMA) of Ontario *Toronto, ON Jul 2013 – Feb 2014*

- Advised executives and developed automated decision support tools to support merger planning with another designation (SQL, Access, Excel). Delivered a “big data” session to ~150 conference attendees.

Associate Consultant – nD Insight *Toronto, ON Jun 2012 – Apr 2013*

- Developed health system policy proposals focused on ‘nudges’ intended to create \$100M+ in savings to facilitate government negotiations for a large healthcare professional association.
- Developed an econometric demand forecast, scenario model and interactive tool for a large healthcare industry association and its members (R, Excel, VBA) to support government negotiations.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Manager, Marketing, CMA Ontario *Toronto, ON Mar 2010 – Aug 2011*

Various technology marketing roles (*details available on LinkedIn or on request*) *Dec 2007 – Jan 2010*

EDUCATION

Master of Arts, Economics, York University (*GPA 3.8/4.0*) *Toronto, ON Aug 2011 – Apr 2012*

Bachelor of Arts, Economics, University of Texas at Austin *Austin, TX Aug 2003 – Aug 2007*

Continuing Education

- [Data Science Specialization](#) (*pending capstone course*) – Coursera and Johns Hopkins; [Strategic Analytics](#) – CMA Ontario; [Design Kit](#) – Acumen and Ideo.org.

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

- [Civic Tech TO](#): initiatives to apply design and technology to civic issues. Advise on a Toronto [Budgetpedia](#) project, and worked with a community organization to [map opportunities](#) for [social procurement](#) (R, CartoDB; 2015).
- [Better Budget TO \(2015\)](#): researched best practices for a [consultation paper](#) on reforming Toronto's budgeting process, and led a [civic tech and budgets workshop](#) as part of a 100 participant event for bureaucrats and citizens.
- [Alex Mazer for City Council \(2014\)](#): served on analytics and voter strategy team for a Toronto City Council candidate.