Christopher Gandrud, Ph.D

Acting Director of Data Science
Spotify

christopher.gandrud@gmail.com
github.com/christophergandrud
ORCID: 0000-0003-4723-7585

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Work Experience

Empathy is at the core of my leadership style, facilitating focus on impactful projects through understanding customer needs and nurturing team dynamics for enhanced productivity.

Spotify (2022-present)

Acting Director of Data Science (2023-Present)

I lead teams of data scientists responsible for personalizing the Home, Search, and promotions experience on Spotify, which accounts for 75% of consumption for over 500 million users. Key projects incldue:

- **Redefining Impact Measurement**: Driving the development of a new framework to redefine and instrument how Spotify tracks and measures the impact of recommendations. This initiative improved the accuracy and relevance of success metrics across key user engagement dimensions and business verticals.
- **Enhancing Discovery and Engagement**: Drove projects that resulted in substantial increases in user discovery and engagement with new video content formats, contributing to significant growth in overall platform consumption, monetisation, and user retention.

Senior Insights Leader (2022-2023)

I guided teams of data scientists and user researchers in developing personalization algorithms and optimizing impression economics, significantly influencing user experience for 400+ million daily users on the Spotify Home.

Zalando SE (2017-2022)

I built and managed a cross-functional organization that developed frameworks, tools, and services aimed at fostering deep customer relationships at Zalando.

Director of Economics and Experimentation (from 2020, Head from 2019)

- **Measuring the right things**: I led managers of teams comprised of economists, data scientists, engineers, and product managers to redefine Zalando's customer-centric KPI framework. This initiative has been pivotal in delivering long-term value to customers and operationalizing insights across the company.
- **Scaling incremental impact research software and services**: I spearheaded the development of Zalando's large-scale A/B testing platform and a broad program that employed causal machine learning methods to assess incremental impacts, enhancing company-wide decision-making processes.

Economics Team Lead (2017-2019)

I established and led a team that developed Zalando's real-time, machine-learned content recommendation system, significantly expanding the company's advertising capabilities and enriching customer content diversity and quality.

Harvard University Institute for Quantitative Social Science (2017)

Research Fellow

I led a team that developed statistical software for both academic and industry applications.

City, University of London (2015-2018)

Lecturer in Statistics and International Political Economy

Hertie School of Governance (August 2013-June 2017)

Post-Doctoral Fellow in International Political Economy and Statistics

Yonsei University (2012-2013)

Lecturer in Statistics and International Political Economy

Education

London School of Economics (2008-2012)

MRes/PhD in Political Science (Quantitative Research Methodology)

Awarded MRes with Distinction

London School of Economics (2005-2006)

MSc in Comparative Politics (Research Methodology)

Graduated with Distinction

McGill University (2003-2005)

BA (Honours) in Political Science & Geography

Graduated with First Class Honours, in the top 10% of the class

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Publications

Book: Reproducible Research with R and RStudio, Third Edition, 2020. *Chapman & Hall/CRC Press, a division of the Taylor & Francis Group*.

For a full list of my publications and open-source software projects, please visit: https://github.com/christophergandrud/cv/blob/main/cv_pdf/Gandrud_cv.pdf

Other Skills

Programming and Machine Learning

I am proficient in AWS, Bash, BigQuery, CSS, GCP, Git/GitHub, HTML, JavaScript, Julia, Jupyter, LaTeX, Linux, SQL, Python, Pytorch, R, Shiny web apps, Stan, and Stata.

Languages

B1 German proficiency. I have also studied Korean, Spanish, and French.