

Dear madam/sir, (Hiring manager: Filipa Esteves Matos)

With this letter I would like to express my interest in the Summer AI Research Internship at Unbabel. I believe that I provide the right skills to make this internship a success, and I hope that by the end of this letter you will think so too.

Unbabel is exactly the kind of company I want to work for. You accept the challenge of making state of the art research in natural language processing work in a challenging, real world setting. I find that inspiring. [Why they want me.] The internship was brought to my attention by my thesis supervisor Wilker Aziz, who was so very kind to mention me to his academic collaborator, Andre Martins. This connection moreover cemented my belief that Unbabel has a unique intersection with the research community. This intersection is precisely where I see myself work and make an impact.

Currently I am writing a master's thesis in which I investigate the question: What are effective ways of incorporating syntactic structure into neural language models? My research mixes linguistically informed questions, mathematically and computationally elegant solutions, and rigorous targeted evaluation. This is precisely the research that I enjoy and that I excel at.

My attached CV shows that I have a diverse academic background. Moving between programs has taught me how to adapt quickly, work hard, and see the larger picture. I have learned a lot from working on individual projects. These projects provide evidence that also I have the grit to delve deep into a subject and that I have a grasp of the technical details. Examples of this are projects on graph-based and transition-based dependency parsing with various learning algorithms and latent dirichlet allocation with different inference methods. I have also worked on a number of didactic projects that I created with teaching in mind, on such topics as parsing, (neural) language models, and word embeddings. These projects can be consulted on my GitHub page. I strive to make these projects well-organized, well-documented and self-contained. I increasingly see how important such rigor is in promoting transparency and reproducibility of research.

Now that I am almost finished with my studies, I am excited to learn how the research that I participate in translates into real-world applications. I believe that Unbabel is an outstanding place to experience this first-hand, and I am convinced that my research skills will contribute to your company. I hope this letter has conveyed to you my excitement for the position, and that I have convinced you that I am the applicant you are looking for. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards, Daan van Stigt