Fons van der Plas

Educational Technology Consultant Massachusetts Institute of Technology

O fonsp

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Utrecht, The Netherlands

Work Experience

Educational Technology Consultant

Jun 2020 - present

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

CAMBRIDGE, USA / REMOTE

Co-developed the open online course Computational Thinking based on my platform Pluto.jl. Developed lecture and practicals in tandem with a new programming environment and publishing platform.

- Enabled students worldwide to learn numerical mathematics, data science and modeling in a highly engaging way.
- Lecture videos have 2.1 million views on YouTube, lecture notebooks have 800k visits yearly.

Founder and lead developer

Feb 2020 – present

PLUTO.JL ECOSYSTEM

REMOTE

Lead developer of Pluto.jl, a popular free open source project to make scientific computing more accessible and interactive. The Pluto.jl notebook IDE is widely used, and sees **96 hours of active use per hour**.

- Initiator and lead organizer of the 2-day PlutoCon 2021 conference, hosting 21 speakers, 29 interactive posters (notebooks) with 42K views online.
- Collected over \$25,000 in open source grants (GSoC, NumFOCUS), paid out to 7 contributors and infrastructure.
- Reviewed 942 pull requests from 117 contributors.
- · Widely recognized as industry leading interactive scientific computing environment. #1 most starred Julia package.

Interactive Tools Consultant

Sep 2021 – Jun 2022

JULIA COMPUTING, INC.

CAMBRIDGE, USA / REMOTE

Using my experience in Julia-specific Programmer Experience (PX) design to create specialized **app-building tools**, deployed on air-gapped cloud platforms.

- Enabled scientists with no prior developer experience to design and deploy interactive data apps.
- Led a team of 3 in development of low-code scientific tooling.

Work Group Supervisor

Jan 2016 – Aug 2019

TECHNISCH CREATIEF CENTRUM

NIJMEGEN, NL

Teaching art, crafts and programming to children aged 10-16. Designed a new curriculum based on Scratch and MicroBit.

Teaching Assistant

Jan 2017 – Feb 2019

RADBOUD UNIVERSITY

Nijmegen, NL

Taught exercise classes and graded homework for 6 courses totaling 63 weeks in Mathematics and Astronomy.

• Senior TA for *Introduction to Mathematics*, wrote exam questions, exercise solutions, and gave supplemental lectures, earning the **Faculty Award for teaching**.

Education

(unfinished) MSc Computer Simulations for Science and Engineering

2019 - 2020

TU BERLIN

BERLIN, DE

Joint master's program in **mathematical modeling**, numerical analysis, computer science, high-performance computing and visualization. Did not finish because I founded and worked full-time on Pluto.jl.

BSc Mathematics 2015 – 2019

RADBOUD UNIVERSITY NIJMEGEN

NIJMEGEN, NL

Graduated cum laude (GPA: 8.9/10) with 220 EC.

• Bachelor thesis combined probability theory and algebraic graph theory with classical electric power systems modeling to analyze the effect of fluctuating renewable energy sources on failures in Germany's power grid (grade: 9.0/10).

Study exchange 2018

Université Paris Diderot Paris, FR

21 EC in Mathematics courses, taught in French (GPA: 9.2/10).

Open Source Projects

PLUTOTURTLES.JL	Simple to learn drawing package for Julia, based on Logo. Turtle drawings can be played in an animation, highlighting lines of Julia code that control the current step. A collection of sample notebooks teaches Julia fundamentals.	2024
FEATURED	Curated collection of 35 beginner-friendly notebooks from 11 authors, hosted interactively online. Featured notebooks became a new entry point for Julia beginners, and are now listed on julialang.org/learning.	2023
PLUTO.JL	A reactive notebook IDE, based on metaprogramming and graph theory with a custom frontend. The Julia–JS link is among the most stable and flexible in the ecosystem. Provides an intuitive interface using CodeMirror-based frontend. Extensively tested package manager integration led to ground-breaking reliability and reproducibility in educational content .	2020
PRINTI	An open source, public, RESTful API and web server that allows anyone to turn a thermal receipt printer into a web-enabled (IoT) photo printer. Reverse engineered a printer driver; the custom driver is faster than the factory default. Written in C#, Python, JS, and C.	2018
RESIM	A real-time, interactive simulation of various relativistic effects (e.g., Doppler, light aberration, time dilation, and a software event horizon). Produced best-in-class visuals with high performance. Written in C# with OpenGL.	2016
EISINGA	A handheld device that identifies star constellations using accelerometer/magnetometer readings. Designed, printed, and assembled a PCB . Designed in EAGLE, written in C++.	2015

Achievements			Software Skills	
#1 STARRED	Julia package (5k GitHub stars)	2024	Expert	Julia, JavaScript
KEYNOTE SPEAKER	at JuliaCon local Eindhoven	2023	Proficient	React, immer, d3,
COMMUNITY PRIZE	Julia Community Prize	2021	Proficient	CodeMirror, TypeScript,
155K VIEWS	of my lectures and talks on YouTube			puppeteer, HTTP, GitHub
#1 WATCHED	talk at JuliaCon 2020 (46K views)	2020		Actions, Python (SciPy), C#,
INTERVIEWED	for publications on Pluto.jl in LWN.net and Nature	2020		Java, MatLab, R, C++, LaTeX,
STUDENT REP.	during restructuring of the first-year curriculum	2018		Haskell, git, Docker, Adobe
FACULTY AWARD	for my supplemental lectures on Introduction to	2017		Flash, Arduino, EAGLE,
	Mathematics			LabVIEW, ffmpeg
≥100 SOLVED	Project Euler Problems	2016	Effective	Clojure, Prolog, PHP, SQL,
9TH PLACE	Dutch Mathematics Olympiad	2014		Lua, NetCDF, CUPS, CAD,
13th place	Dutch Physics Olympiad	2014		F#, Mathematica

Talks

\square = on invitation, \square = poster, \bowtie = lecture

JULIACON EINDHOVEN, NL	☑ ☐ Pluto.jl – is scientific computing accessible?	2024
WIAS INSTITUTE BERLIN, DE	☐ Julia and Pluto.jl – is scientific computing accessible?	2024
GHENT UNIVERSITY, BE	☑ Julia doctoral school bonus lecture	2024
JULIACON LOCAL EINDHOVEN, NL	☐ (keynote) Pluto.jl – making scientific computing accessible and fun!	2023
JUPYTERCON PARIS, FR	Pluto.jl – reactive and reproducible notebooks for Julia	2023
NETHERLANDS ESCIENCE CENTER	☐ Julia for HPC – reproducible and interactive	2022
JuliaCon	Pluto.jl — one year later	2021
JuliaCon	Open and interactive Computational Thinking	2021
Computational Thinking		2021
Computational Thinking		2021
PLUTOCON	JavaScript inside notebooks	2021
PLUTOCON	Built-in package management in Pluto.jl	2021
PLUTOCON	PlutoSliderServer.jl – notebooks as interactive websites	2021
Computational Thinking		2020
Computational Thinking		2020
JULIACON	Pluto.jl – interactive notebooks	2020