JOHANNES **KRUSE**, PhD

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Summary: As a PhD candidate, I specialize in machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), and recommender systems (RS). My expertise includes extensive work in sequential modeling using transformers, recurrent neural networks (RNNs), and convolutional neural networks (CNNs), as well as theoretical studies in reinforcement learning (RL) and multi-armed bandits. I have applied my skills to solve real-world problems, delivering solutions that serve millions of users. I am a dedicated learner who thrives on challenges and is committed to continuous growth in my field.

PUBLICATIONS & PREPRINTS (9)

- **Johannes Kruse**, Kasper Lindskow, Michael Riis Andersen, Jes Frellsen. *Why design choices matter in recommender systems*. **Nature Machine Intelligence** (2025). (Accepted)
- Ryotaro Shimizu, Takashi Wada, Yu Wang, **Johannes Kruse**, Sean O'Brien, Sai HtaungKham, Linxin Song, Yuya Yoshikawa, Yuki Saito, Fugee Tsung, Masayuki Goto, and Julian McAuley. 2025. Disentangling Likes and Dislikes in Personalized Generative Explainable Recommendation. In Proceedings of the ACM on Web Conference 2025 (**WWW '25**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3696410.3714583
- **Johannes Kruse**, Kasper Lindskow, Saikishore Kalloori, Marco Polignano, Claudio Pomo, Abhishek Srivastava, Anshuk Uppal, Michael Riis Andersen, Jes Frellsen. 2024. *RecSys Challenge 2024: Balancing Accuracy and Editorial Values in News Recommendations*. In Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys '24**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3640457.3687164
- **Johannes Kruse**, Kasper Lindskow, Saikishore Kalloori, Marco Polignano, Claudio Pomo, Abhishek Srivastava, Anshuk Uppal, Michael Riis Andersen, Jes Frellsen. 2024. EB-NeRD a large-scale dataset for news recommendation. In Proceedings of the Recommender Systems Challenge 2024 (**RecSysChallenge '24**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3687151.3687152
- Árni Már Einarsson, Elisabetta Petrucci, Jannie Møller Hartley, **Johannes Kruse**. 2024. *"I must have clicked on something": Users´ Experiences and Evaluations of Personalized News Recommender Systems*. **Journalism Practice**. (Accepted/In press)
- Alain Starke, Sanne Vrijenhoek, Lien Michiels, **Johannes Kruse**, Nava Tintarev. 2024. *Report on NORMalize: The Second Workshop on the Normative Design and Evaluation of Recommender Systems*. In Proceedings of CEUR Workshop Proceedings (**CEUR-WS.org**). https://ceur-ws.org/Vol-3898/
- **Johannes Kruse**, Kasper Lindskow, Michael Riis Andersen, Jes Frellsen. 2023. *Creating the next generation of news experience on ekstrabladet.dk with recommender systems*. In Proceedings of the 17th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys '23**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3604915.3610248
- Sanne Vrijenhoek, Lien Michiels, **Johannes Kruse**, Alain Starke, Jordi Viader Guerrero, Nava Tintarev. 2023. *Report on NORMalize: The First Workshop on the Normative Design and Evaluation of Recommender Systems*. In Proceedings of CEUR Workshop Proceedings (**CEUR-WS.org**). https://ceur-ws.org/Vol-3639/
- **Johannes Kruse** and Lars Kai Hansen. 2019. *Det Etiske Råd – Redegørelse om sundhedswearables og big data*. pp. 116–141. https://www.ft.dk/samling/20191/almdel/UER/bilag/2/2095890/index.html

WORKSHOPS, TUTORIALS, DEMOS & OTHERS (6)

- Lien Michiels, Sanne Vrijenhoek, Alain Starke, **Johannes Kruse**, Savvina Daniil. 2025. *NORMalize 2025: The Third Workshop on Normative Design and Evaluation of Recommender Systems*. In Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys '25**). (Accepted)
- **Johannes Kruse**, Kasper Lindskow, Anshuk Uppal, Michael Riis Andersen, Jes Frellsen. 2024. *RecSys Challenge 2024: Balancing Accuracy and Editorial Values in News Recommendations*. (**RecSys '24**). https://recsys.eb.dk/
- Alain Starke, Sanne Vrijenhoek, Lien Michiels, **Johannes Kruse**, Nava Tintarev. 2024. *NORMalize 2024: The Second Workshop on Normative Design and Evaluation of Recommender Systems*. In Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys '24**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3640457.3687103
- Alan Said, Toine Bogers, Christoph Trattner, Simen Eide, Benjamin Kille, Bruce Ferwerda, **Johannes Kruse**. 2024. *Nordic Personalization Workshop*. https://personalizationday.github.io/2024/
- **Johannes Kruse**, Lien Michiels, Alain Starke, Nava Tintarev, Sanne Vrijenhoek. 2024. *NORMalize: A Tutorial on the Normative Design and Evaluation of Information Access Systems*. In Proceedings of the 2024 Conference on Human Information Interaction and Retrieval (**CHIIR '24**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3627508.3638319
- Sanne Vrijenhoek, Lien Michiels, **Johannes Kruse**, Alain Starke, Nava Tintarev, Jordi Viader Guerrero. 2023*. NORMalize: The First Workshop on Normative Design and Evaluation of Recommender Systems*. In Proceedings of the 17th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys '23**). https://doi.org/10.1145/3604915.3608757

EDUCATION

03/2024 – 06/2025   University of California San Diego | Research Scholar   San Diego, California, US
- Conducting research in Prof. Julian McAuley's lab on innovative recommender system architectures and responsible AI.

12/2021 – 06/2025   Technical University of Denmark | Industrial PhD Student   Kgs. Lyngby & Copenhagen, DK
- Project: Responsible Recommender Systems for Danish News Publishing (RRS-DK).
- The project is a collaboration between JP/Politiken Media Group and the Technical University of Denmark.
- Built and deployed the first large-scale recommender system for eb.dk, increasing subscription sales by more than 38%.

09/2018 – 04/2021   Technical University of Denmark | MSc Applied Mathematics   Kgs. Lyngby, DK
- Thesis: Deep learning for Natural Language Processing (NLP). Exploring the use of Knowledge Graph technologies with the objective of enriching word embeddings. Grade: 12 (A+).
- Key Courses: Machine Learning, Advanced Modeling, Time Series Analysis, and Constrained Optimization.
- Contributed to Danish research project *WriteReader* by evaluating machine-generated captions using Recurrent Neural Networks and Convolutional Neural Networks.

09/2019 – 01/2020   Barcelona School of Informatics | MSc Exchange Student   Barcelona, ES
- Key courses: Deep Learning, Kernel-based Machine Learning and Multivariate Modelling, and Human Language Engineering.

09/2015 – 06/2018   Technical University of Denmark | BSc Biomedical Engineering   Kgs. Lyngby, DK
- Thesis: Computational Neuroimaging. Investigation of transcranial magnetic stimulation variability in defined brain states by applying data analysis using Python programming. Grade: 12 (A+).
- Courses: Advanced Engineering Mathematics, Physics, General Chemistry, Human Biology, Medical Imaging.

08/2017 – 12/2017   Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | BSc Exchange Student   New York, US
- Key courses: Biomechanics, Biomedical Product Development, Skilled Performance & Training.

WORK EXPERIENCE

04/2021 – 12/2021   Ekstra Bladet | Machine Learning Engineer   Copenhagen, DK
- Facilitated workshops with stakeholders to ensure alignment on complex mathematical algorithms and project goals.
- Part of the team that built and implemented the core recommendation system infrastructure for EkstraBladet.dk.

07/2020 – 09/2020   Infosys Limited | InStep Intern   Bangalore, IND
- Developed a scalable framework for a conversational search component integrated into an enterprise search engine.
- Built AI-driven modules for question answering and generation using state-of-the-art machine learning techniques.

01/2020 – 09/2020   Implement Consultant Group | Junior Consultant   Copenhagen, DK
- Contributed to the Data & Analytics team by optimizing value chains through advanced machine learning solutions.
- Code contributor to multiple text mining projects, extracting and visualizing topics for document classifcation.

09/2018 – 09/2019   AudienceProject | Data Analyst   Copenhagen, DK
- Developed Python-based software for structural sentence recognition, enhancing document categorization workflows.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to implement solutions tailored to the needs of major departments.

03/2018 – 09/2018   The Danish Ethics Committee | External Consultant   Copenhagen, DK
- Developed a working paper titled *Privacy-by-Design*, exploring technical solutions such as differential privacy, k-anonymity, and multiparty computation to enable citizens to secure full control of their personal data in public spaces.
- Facilitated discussions with leading cryptography experts and summarized findings for the Ethics Committee.

08/2016 – 06/2018   Technical University of Denmark | Teaching Assistant   Kgs. Lyngby, DK
- Clarified learning objectives and fostered productive discussions on Calculus and Algebra courses.
- Supported professors by evaluating and grading mathematical assignments to ensure academic standards.

02/2016 – 05/2018   Novozymes | Student Assistant   Bagsvaerd, DK
- Calibrated and maintained laboratory equipment to ensure precise experimental results.
- Enhanced calibration workflows in the Household Care division, boosting capacity from four to six washing machines.

08/2017 – 12/2017   Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | Research Assistant   New York, US
- Conducted population studies for the Cognitive Science Department, adhering to rigorous scientific protocols.

VOLUNTEER

06/2018 – 08/2018   Engineering World Health (EWH) | Expatriate Volunteer   Dolakha District, NP
- Stationed as an engineer in a remote Himalayan hospital in Nepal for six weeks, providing technical support and maintenance.
- Collaborated with Nepal's Ministry of Health and local hospital staff to advance the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring access to universal health benefits.

SUPERVISION AND MENTORSHIP IN DEEP LEARNING PROJECTS

- Deep learning Course, News Recommendation Systems, Technical University of Denmark (2024). Supervised 26 groups involving more than 100 students working on the RecSys '24 challenge as part of the deep learning course at the Technical University of Denmark, providing guidance on advanced recommender systems techniques and strategies. Role: Co-Supervisor.
- Zhijian Feng, 2023, Technical University of Denmark & Ekstra Bladet. MSc thesis: *Using Image Information in Deep Learning-Based Recommender Systems for News.* Role: Main Supervisor.
- Magnus Waldemar Hoff Harder & Nikolaj Bach Meineche, 2023, Technical University of Denmark & Ekstra Bladet. BSc thesis: *Transformer-based News Recommendations: Leveraging User Click-History with Deep Learning.* Role: Main Supervisor.

INVITED TALKS

2025	Open-Sourcing for Innovation	DN Media Group
2025	RecSys '24: Balancing Accuracy and Editorial Values in News Recommendations	Nordic AI Journalism
2024	Open-Sourcing Datasets and Designing Machine Learning Competitions	University of California San Diego
2023	Creating the Next Generation of News Experience with Recommender Systems	Nordic AI in Media Summit
2023	Creating the Next Generation of News Experience at Ekstra Bladet with AI	Nordic Personalization Day
2022	Do Recommendation Systems Generalize Across News Domains?	The University of Melbourne

Academic Service & Peer Review

Conference on Recommender Systems (**RecSys**)	2023, 2024, 2025
Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (**NeurIPS**)	2025

AWARDS

2024	Best Use of AI in Revenue Strategy Digital Media Worldwide
2024	Best Use of AI in Revenue Strategy Digital Media Awards Europe
2023	Data and AI-driven Transformation Project of the Year Nordic DAIR Awards
2023	Best Product Iteration Global Media Awards

These awards reflect the combined efforts and accomplishments of our talented team at Platform Intellenge in News.

SCHOLARSHIPS

2024	$26,000 in travel grants to support my research visit to the University of California San Diego.
2022	$2,000 travel grant from DDSA to attent 16th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems, Seattle, WA, USA.
2019	$11,000 in travel grants to support study abroad at Barcelona School of Informatics during master's studies.
2018	$55,000 was collectively raised by 16 people to support our six-week volunteer work for EWH in Nepal.
2017	$4,500 in travel grants to support study abroad at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute during bachelor's studies.

$ = USD.

OTHER

Languages	Danish (native), English (fluent), Spanish (intermediate).
Coding	Python (expert), R (proficient), SQL (intermediate), HTML (familiar).
Frameworks	PyTorch, TensorFlow, Hugging Face, Scikit-learn, SciPy, Polars, Pandas, MLFlow, Matplotlib, NumPy.
Passions	Culture (lived abroad in the United States, Australia, Greenland, and Spain), Climbing (certified rock-climbing instructor), Freediving (completed a dive to a depth of 28 meters), Hiking (almost hugged a wild bear).