

# Jim Zhao

PhD in Machine Learning / Optimization | German citizenship

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Website | Google Scholar | GitHub | LinkedIn

## SUMMARY

Third year PhD researcher (Basel) in machine learning/optimization. Focus on second-order methods and efficient/low-precision training; Python/PyTorch; large-scale experimental design and analysis.”

## EDUCATION

**PhD, Machine Learning / Optimization** — University of Basel Feb 2023–present

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Aurelien Lucchi

**M.Sc. Electrical Engineering** — Technical University of Munich Mar 2020– Nov 2022

GPA: 5.93/6.0, Top 1%, Focus: signal processing, biomedical imaging.

**B.Sc. Electrical Engineering** — Technical University of Munich Oct 2016–Feb 2020

GPA: 5.93/6.0, Top 1%

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

**Zhao, J.\***, Singh, SP.\*, Lucchi, A. "Theoretical characterization of Gauss-Newton conditioning in Neural networks", (*NeurIPS*, 2024). pdf | code

**Zhao, J.\***, Lucchi, A.\*, Doikov, N.\* "Cubic regularized subspace Newton for non-convex optimization" (*AISTATS*, 2025) (**Oral**, Top 2%). pdf | code

## EXPERIENCE

**PhD Researcher, University of Basel** — Feb 2023-present

- First-authored two top-tier publications (NeurIPS, AISTATS Oral); maintained public code repos (PyTorch) and reproduction scripts.
- Proved global convergence guarantees for second-order stochastic subspace method for non-convex functions and validated on standard benchmarks vs. first-order baselines; code and configs available.
- Studied influence of neural networks components, deriving tight bounds on condition number of Gauss-Newton matrix in deep linear networks of arbitrary depth and width; validated results empirically.

**Internship TRUMPF** — Industrial image processing Apr-Sep 2019

- Supporting the development of a visual 3D measurement prototype (OpenCV/Python); co-authored a scientific paper on the prototype.

## SKILLS

**Programming:** Python, PyTorch, NumPy, Pandas, SciPy, Matlab, C++ (working)

**ML/DS:** Optimization (first/second-order), quantization, experiment design at scale, reproducibility

**MLOps:** Git, unit testing, experiment tracking (W&B/Hydra), data versioning

**Systems:** Linux, HPC/SLURM; basic profiling (torch.profiler)

**Languages:** German: native, Chinese: native, English: C1 (fluent), French: B1

## AWARDS

AISTATS 2025 Oral (Top 2%) | German Academic Scholarship Foundation (2019-2022)

1st prize, 1st round of German nationwide mathematics competition (2016)