

Lichen Zhang

+1-412-463-5490 | lichenz@mit.edu | lczh.github.io

Cambridge, Massachusetts - 02139, U.S.A.

EDUCATION

- **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** Sep 2022 - Present
Ph.D in Applied Mathematics
◦ Advisor: Jonathan Kelner Cambridge, MA
- **Carnegie Mellon University** June 2021 - May 2022
M.S. in Computer Science
◦ Advisor: Gary Miller Pittsburgh, PA
◦ Thesis: [Speeding Up Optimizations via Data Structures: Faster Search, Sample and Maintenance](#)
- **Carnegie Mellon University** Aug 2017 - May 2021
B.S. in Computer Science Pittsburgh, PA

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Machine learning, optimization, numerical linear algebra, sketching and streaming, differential privacy.

EXPERIENCE

- **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** May 2024 - Aug 2024
Applied Scientist Intern
◦ Mentors: Nina Mishra, Yonatan Naamad, Tal Wagner East Palo Alto, CA
- **Simons Institute for the Theory of Computing** Aug 2023 - Dec 2023
Visiting Student
◦ Data Structures and Optimization for Fast Algorithms program Berkeley, CA
- **Adobe Research** May 2023 - Aug 2023
Research Scientist Intern
◦ Mentors: Zhao Song, Ritwik Sinha, Raghavendra Addanki San Jose, CA
- **University of Washington** June 2022 - Aug 2022
Research Assistant
◦ Advisor: Yin Tat Lee Seattle, WA
- **Carnegie Mellon University** May 2020 - Aug 2020
Undergraduate Research Assistant
◦ Advisor: Gary Miller Pittsburgh, PA
◦ Supported by CMU Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF)

TEACHING

- **An Algorithmist's Toolkit (18.408)** Fall 2024
Teaching Assistant
◦ Instructor: Jonathan Kelner MIT
- **Intro to Numerical Methods (18.335)** Spring 2024
Teaching Assistant
◦ Instructor: John Urschel MIT
- **The Computational Lens (15-155)** Spring 2022
Teaching Assistant
◦ Instructors: Pravesh Kothari and Anil Ada CMU
- **Undergraduate Complexity Theory (15-455)** Spring 2021
Teaching Assistant
◦ Instructor: Pravesh Kothari CMU

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- **Finalist of the Jane Street Graduate Research Fellowship** 2024
Jane Street
- **Reitano Fellowship** Sep 2022 - Aug 2023
MIT
- **Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship** May 2020 - Aug 2020
CMU

TALKS

- **Alternating Minimization for Matrix Completion and Beyond**
 - MIT SPAMS Seminar April 2024
- **Training Multi-Layer Over-Parametrized Neural Network in Subquadratic Time**
 - MIT SPAMS Seminar Oct 2024
 - ITCS 2024 Jan 2024
- **Convex Minimization with Integer Minima in $\tilde{O}(n^4)$ Time**
 - SODA 2024 Jan 2024
- **Sketching as a Tool for Fast Optimization**
 - Google Research (Mountain View) Algorithms Seminar Nov 2023
 - MIT SPAMS Seminar Oct 2022
- **Sketching Meets Differential Privacy: Fast Algorithm for Dynamic Kronecker Projection Maintenance**
 - ICML 2023 July 2023
- **Sketching for First Order Method: Efficient Algorithm for Low-Bandwidth Channel and Vulnerability**
 - ICML 2023 July 2023
- **A Nearly-Optimal Bound for Fast Regression with ℓ_∞ Guarantee**
 - ICML 2023 July 2023
- **Space-Efficient IPM, with applications to LP and Maximum Weight Bipartite Matching**
 - ICALP 2023 June 2023
- **Dynamic Tensor Product Regression**
 - NeurIPS 2022 Dec 2022
- **Fast Sketching of Polynomial Kernels of Polynomial Degree**
 - Workshop on Algorithms for Large Data (Online) Aug 2021
 - ICML 2021 July 2021

SERVICES

- **Conference Reviewer**
 - NeurIPS: 2023, 2024
 - ICML: 2024, 2025
 - ICLR: 2024, 2025
 - AISTATS: 2023, 2024, 2025
 - AAAI: 2025
 - PODS: 2025
 - SODA: 2023
- **Journal Reviewer**
 - ACM Transactions on Quantum Computing

PUBLICATIONS (AUTHOR NAMES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

- [1] Yuzhou Gu, Zhao Song and Lichen Zhang. **Faster Algorithms for Structured Linear and Kernel Support Vector Machines**. In *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)*, 2025.
- [2] Zhao Song, Mingquan Ye, Junze Yin and Lichen Zhang. **Efficient Alternating Minimization with Applications to Weighted Low Rank Approximation**. In *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)*, 2025.
- [3] Yuzhou Gu, Nikki Lijing Kuang, Yi-An Ma, Zhao Song and Lichen Zhang. **Log-concave Sampling from a Convex Body with a Barrier: a Robust and Unified Dikin Walk**. In *Proceedings of the 38th Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)*, 2024.
- [4] Zhao Song, Junze Yin and Lichen Zhang. **Solving Attention Kernel Regression Problem via Pre-conditioner**. In *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS)*, 2024.
- [5] Zhao Song, Junze Yin, Lichen Zhang and Ruizhe Zhang. **Fast Dynamic Sampling for Determinantal Point Processes**. In *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS)*, 2024.

- [6] Yuzhou Gu, Zhao Song, Junze Yin and Lichen Zhang. **Low Rank Matrix Completion via Robust Alternating Minimization in Nearly Linear Time**. In *Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR)*, 2024.
- [7] Zhao Song, Lichen Zhang and Ruizhe Zhang. **Training Multi-Layer Over-Parametrized Neural Network in Subquadratic Time**. In *Proceedings of the 15th Innovations in Theoretical Computer Science (ITCS)*, 2024.
- [8] Haotian Jiang, Yin Tat Lee, Zhao Song and Lichen Zhang. **Convex Minimization with Integer Minima in $\tilde{O}(n^4)$ Time**. In *Proceedings of the 35th Annual ACM-SIAM Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA)*, 2024.
- [9] Zhao Song, Xin Yang, Yuanyuan Yang and Lichen Zhang. **Sketching Meets Differential Privacy: Fast Algorithm for Dynamic Kronecker Projection Maintenance**. In *Proceedings of the 40th International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)*, 2023.
- [10] Zhao Song, Yitan Wang, Zheng Yu and Lichen Zhang. **Sketching for First Order Method: Efficient Algorithm for Low-Bandwidth Channel and Vulnerability**. In *Proceedings of the 40th International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)*, 2023.
- [11] Zhao Song, Mingquan Ye, Junze Yin and Lichen Zhang. **A Nearly-Optimal Bound for Fast Regression with ℓ_∞ Guarantee**. In *Proceedings of the 40th International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)*, 2023.
- [12] S. Cliff Liu, Zhao Song, Hengjie Zhang, Lichen Zhang and Tianyi Zhou. **Space-Efficient Interior Point Method, with applications to Linear Programming and Maximum Weight Bipartite Matching**. In *Proceedings of the 50th International Colloquium on Automata, Languages and Programming (ICALP)*, 2023.
- [13] Lianke Qin, Zhao Song, Lichen Zhang and Danyang Zhuo. **An Online and Unified Algorithm for Projection Matrix Vector Multiplication with Application to Empirical Risk Minimization**. In *Proceedings of the 26th International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS)*, 2023.
- [14] Aravind Reddy, Zhao Song and Lichen Zhang. **Dynamic Tensor Product Regression**. In *Proceedings of the 36th Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)*, 2022.
- [15] Zhao Song, David Woodruff, Zheng Yu and Lichen Zhang. **Fast Sketching of Polynomial Kernels of Polynomial Degree**. In *Proceedings of the 38th International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML)*, 2021.