SOP FOR MSC IN APPLIED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

During the COVID-19 lockdown in 2021, I began teaching myself to code, with no prior background in computer science. The process was tough, but my curiosity kept me going. While learning to code, I was pursuing my degree in Sociology, and by the time I graduated, I was not only top of my class but also proficient in Web Development. After graudation, I secured a role as a Front-End Developer at Catex Technologies, and through persistence and self-learning, I grew into a Full-Stack Developer, working with technologies such as Node.js, Laravel, React, and AWS.
In my development journey, I have integrated Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as OpenAI's GPT models and Google's Gemini API into real-world applications. This hands-on experience has fueled my curiosity about the broader possibilities of AI. I now aim to go beyond API integration and develop the expertise to design, train, and deploy custom models. I see exciting opportunities to merge my sociological training with machine learning and AI applications.

Several research questions currently drive my exploration:

1. Evaluating the Creator Economy: How can AI help transition the online content ecosystem from a hype-driven model, based on impressions and likes, toward a value-based system that recognizes the substance and societal contribution of creators?
2. Loneliness and Internet Fraud Prevention: How can AI be applied to mitigate loneliness and protect vulnerable populations, particularly the elderly, from fraud and impersonation online?
3. Public Policy and Governance: How can AI be used to improve policy-making, analysis, and evaluation, while also enhancing citizen understanding of governance and increasing civic participation?

The second topic has become a particularly active pursuit, as I am currently designing an application to serve as a proof of concept for fraud detection and AI companionship. Alongside this, I have continued to deepen my technical knowledge through structured online learning, including multiple courses in Python, machine learning, and AI development.

Though I may not come from a conventional computer science background, my transition from Sociology to full-stack development demonstrates both my adaptability and determination. My academic training in sociology provides me with statistical knowledge and with theoretical frameworks for understanding human behavior, social structures, and systemic challenges. This knowledge, I believe, is

essential for designing AI systems that are ethical, inclusive, and socially impactful. My greatest desire is to bring this human-centered approach into AI research, ensuring that innovations not only advance technical frontiers but also address meaningful societal problems.

Pursuing an MSc in Applied Artificial Intelligence at MBZUAI represents the ideal next step in my journey. I understand the rigor this program demands, and I am prepared to go beyond expectations, just as I have in my self-directed journey so far. This scholarship would not only provide me with the academic foundation I need to become an AI researcher and practitioner, but also enable me to fully dedicate myself to exploring innovative solutions at the intersection of technology and society. My long-term vision is to advance AI applications that prioritize human well-being, counter harmful online practices, and create new pathways for value-driven digital economies, as well as innovate ways in which AI tools can improve public policy and governance.

I am confident that the combination of my technical skills, sociological insights, and commitment to research will allow me to thrive in this program and contribute meaningfully to MBZUAI's academic community. Above all, I aspire to become what the President of MBZUAI described in 2023 as a "RenAIssance scholar," serving society with the power that comes from the knowledge I will gain through this program.