Tina Mai

Applied AI, Engineering, Biological Machine Learning

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Education

Stanford University

Sep 2023 – Present

B.S., Computer Science (AI and Computational Biology)

Experience

Valthos | Founding Engineer

March 2025 – Present

Valthos is a next-generation biodefense company. We build frontier AI systems that can identify biological threats and design countermeasures in real time. Raised $30M from OpenAI, Founders Fund, and Lux Capital. 3rd hire on founding team from Palantir, DeepMind, MIT's Broad Instite, and the Arc Institute.

Arc Institute | Researcher

Feb 2025 – Present

Researching and deploying genomic foundation models @ the Laboratory of Evolutionary Design (Brian Hie). Co-leading an effort to develop the first high-level programming language for generative biology.

Contrary | Venture Partner

Oct 2024 – Present

Contrary is an investment firm creating more than $10 billion in value through investments in companies including Ramp, Anduril, Zepto, and others.

Tilde Research | Engineer

Jul 2024 – Dec 2024

Developed novel interfaces and products enabled by mechanistic interpretability research for machine learning models.

Kndrd | Co-Founder & CTO

Oct 2022 – Aug 2024

Co-founded consumer startup that raised from Matt Higgins (early investor in Pinterest, Resy), Cal Henderson (founder of Slack), etc. Featured 2x in Business Insider, named one of 18 "startups disrupting the social media scene". Wrote full-stack production code and shipped to 10k+ users on the Apple App Store. Developed features from spec to completion.

University of Austin (UATX) | Fellow

Jun 2023

2nd cohort of Forbidden Courses at the University of Austin, founded by Joe Lonsdale, Bari Weiss, etc.

VAST | Founder

Dec 2020 – Oct 2022

Engineered an NLP-based, voice-accessible platform that helps youth with visual, learning, and other disabilities create and publish writing. Presented to members of U.S. Congress at 16.

Selected Awards

Winner, Stanford BASES $100K Startup Challenge | Feb 2024 | Stanford University's largest and oldest startup competition; awarded for Kndrd

Semifinalist, Microsoft Imagine Cup | Mar 2024 | Global AI startup competition; awarded for Kndrd

Speaker, South By Southwest (SXSW) | Mar 2023 | Spoke at one of the largest technology conferences in the world on the promise of nuclear fusion energy. Talk title: "The Future is Fusion: Building a Nuclear Reactor at 17"

Global Finalist, Uber Global Hackathon | Sep 2022 | Top 7% out of 732 teams and 1800+ competitors from 68 countries. Built blockchain app to help independent creators fundraise with cryptocurrency.

1st Place Winner, Congressional App Challenge | Dec 2021 | Recognized by Members of Congress; awarded for VAST

1st Place Winner, World Series of Innovation | Jan 2021 | Developed financial technology software to advance United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 9; awarded by Mastercard

Best-in-Show Award for Innovation, International Plant Mars Challenge | May 2022 | Winning research paper: "Evaluating the Impact of Mycorrhizae Inoculants on Crop Growth in Various Martian Soil Mixtures"