

# KAI ZHEN

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## EMPLOYMENT

### Full-Time

#### Amazon.com, Inc.

- Senior Applied Scientist Jul. 2024 – Now
  - Amazon AGI, Pittsburgh, PA
    - Led multiple projects at Amazon AGI, optimizing text-speech LLMs and AGI Sensory's Large ASR models towards best-in-class conversational AI in both Cloud and Edge scenarios.
    - Pioneered innovations in neural efficiency (8-bit, sub-8-bit quantization, sparsification, knowledge distillation) for Amazon Large and Advanced Model OptimizationS (ALAMOS).
    - Patented and published work in top speech processing and machine learning conferences.
    - Provided mentorship to junior scientists, engineers, and interns.
- Applied Scientist II Apr. 2021 – Jun. 2024
  - Alexa Hybrid Science, Pittsburgh, PA

### Internship

#### Amazon.com, Inc.

- Applied Scientist Intern Summer 2020
  - Alexa Speech, Pittsburgh, PA
    - Project: Network Compression for On-Device Speech Recognition  
<Best Internship Poster Presentation>

#### LinkedIn Corporation

- Machine Learning & Relevance Intern
  - Ads-AI Group, Mountain View, CA Summer 2019
    - Project: Ads Response Rate Prediction with Language Model Enriched Semantic Features
  - Company Standardization Group, New York City, NY Summer 2018
    - Project: Relevance Ranking via Non-Categorical User Inputs for LinkedIn Resume Builder

### Academic Part-Time

#### Indiana University

Aug. 2015 – Mar. 2021

- Research Assistant: Audio Signal Analysis/Synthesis Technology Based on Machine Learning
  - Published in leading machine learning and speech processing conferences and journals
  - Contributed to 5 US patents as an inventor
- Associate instructor in Department of Computer Science and Intelligent Systems Engineering

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## EDUCATION

### Ph.D., dual major in Computer Sciences and Cognitive Science

May. 2021

- Indiana University, Bloomington, United States
- Committee: Minje Kim (chair, IU Intelligent Systems Engineering), Robert Goldstone (co-chair, IU Cognitive Science), Donald Williamson (IU Computer Science), and Shen Yi (U. of Washington, Speech and Hearing Sciences)
- Dissertation: "Neural Waveform Coding: Scalability, Efficiency and Psychoacoustic Calibration"  
<Winner of the Outstanding Research Award (IU Cognitive Science)>

### M.S., major in Computer Science

Jul. 2015

- Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

### B.S., major in Software Engineering

Jul. 2012

- Xidian University, Xi'an, China

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## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Conference Reviewer

- IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP): 2019 - 2025
- ISCA Interspeech: 2022 - 2023
- EURASIP European Signal Processing Conference (EUSIPCO): 2022 - 2023
- IEEE Workshop on Applications of Signal Processing to Audio and Acoustics (WASPAA): 2021 - 2023
- IEEE International Conference on Data Mining (ICDM): 2020
- Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI): 2017 - 2018

### Journal Reviewer

- European Association for Signal Processing (EURASIP) Journal on Audio, Speech, and Music Processing
- IEEE MultiMedia
- Speech Communication

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## PUBLICATIONS

### Referred International Conference Proceedings

- [C010] Yifan Yang, **Kai Zhen**, Ershad Banijamal, Athanasios Mouchtaris, Zheng Zhang, "AdaZeta: Adaptive Zeroth-Order Tensor-Train Adaption for Memory-Efficient Large Language Models Fine-Tuning," in *Proceedings of the 2024 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP)*, Miami, USA, 12-16 November, 2024.
- [C009] Rupak Vignesh Swaminathan, Grant Strimel, Ariya Rastrow, Harish Mallidi, **Kai Zhen**, Hieu Nguyen, Nathan Susanj, Athanasios Mouchtaris, "Max-Margin Transducer Loss: Improving Sequence-Discriminative Training Using a Large-Margin Learning Strategy," in *Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, Seoul, Korea, 14-19 April, 2024.
- [C008] Martin Radfar, Paulina Lyskawa, Brandon Trujillo, Yi Xie, **Kai Zhen**, Jahn Heymann, Denis Filimonov, Grant Strimel, Nathan Susanj, Athanasios Mouchtaris, "Conmer: Streaming Conformer with no self-attention for interactive voice assistants," In *Proc. Annual Conference of the International Speech Communication Association (Interspeech)*, Dublin, Ireland, August 21-24, 2023.
- [C007] **Kai Zhen**, Martin Radfar, Hieu Duy Nguyen, Nathan Susanj, Grant Strimel, Athanasios Mouchtaris, "Sub-8-bit Quantization for On-Device Speech Recognition: A Regularization-Free Approach", *IEEE Workshop on Spoken Language Technology (IEEE SLT)*, Doha, Qatar, January 9-12, 2023.
- [C006] **Kai Zhen**, Hieu Duy Nguyen, Raviteja Chinta, Nathan Susanj, Athanasios Mouchtaris, Tariq Afzal, and Ariya Rastrow, "Sub-8-Bit Quantization Aware Training for 8-Bit Neural Network Accelerator with On-Device Speech Recognition," in *Proceedings of Annual Conference of the International Speech Communication Association (Interspeech)*, Incheon, Korea, September 18-22, 2022.
- [C005] **Kai Zhen**, Hieu Duy Nguyen, Feng-Ju (Claire) Chang, Athanasios Mouchtaris, "Sparsification via Compressed Sensing for Automatic Speech Recognition," in *Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, Toronto, ON, Canada, June 6-12, 2021.
- [C004] Haici Yang, **Kai Zhen**, Seungkwon Beack, Minje Kim, "Source-Aware Neural Speech Coding for Noisy Speech Compression," in *Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, Toronto, ON, Canada, June 6-12, 2021.
- [C003] **Kai Zhen**, Mi Suk Lee, Jongmo Sung, Seungkwon Beack, and Minje Kim, "Efficient And Scalable Neural Residual Waveform Coding with Collaborative Quantization," in *Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, Barcelona, Spain, May 4-8, 2020.
- [C002] **Kai Zhen**, Mi Suk Lee, Minje Kim. "A Dual-Stage Context Aggregation Method towards Efficient End-To-End Speech Enhancement," in *Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, Barcelona, Spain, May 4-8, 2020.

- [C001] **Kai Zhen**, Jongmo Sung, Mi Suk Lee, Seungkwon Beack, and Minje Kim, "[Cascaded Cross-Module Residual Learning towards Lightweight End-to-End Speech Coding](#)," in *Proceedings of Annual Conference of the International Speech Communication Association (Interspeech)*, Graz, Austria, September 15-19, 2019.

### International Journal Articles

- [J002] **Kai Zhen**, Jongmo Sung, Mi Suk Lee, Seungkwon Beack, and Minje Kim, "Scalable and Efficient Neural Speech Coding: A Hybrid Design", *IEEE/ACM Transactions on Audio, Speech, and Language Processing (IEEE/ACM TASLP)*, **30** (2021): 12-25.
- [J001] **Kai Zhen**, Mi Suk Lee, Jongmo Sung, Seungkwon Beack, and Minje Kim, "[Psychoacoustic Calibration of Loss Functions for Efficient End-to-End Neural Audio Coding](#)," *IEEE Signal Processing Letters (SPL)* **27** (2020): 2159-2163.

### Patents

- [P005] Kim, Minje, Mi Suk Lee, Seung Kwon Beack, Jongmo Sung, Tae Jin Lee, Jin Soo Choi, and **Kai Zhen**. "[Apparatus and method for speech processing using a densely connected hybrid neural network](#)," U.S. Patent Application 17/308,800, filed November 11, 2021.
- [P004] Mi Suk Lee, Seung Kwon Beack, Jongmo Sung, Tae Jin Lee, Jin Soo Choi, Minje Kim, **Kai Zhen**, "[Method and apparatus for processing audio signal](#)," *US Patent App. 17/156,006*, 2021.
- [P003] Minje Kim, **Kai Zhen**, Mi Suk Lee, Seung Kwon Beack, Jongmo Sung, Tae Jin Lee, Jin Soo Choi. "[Residual coding method of linear prediction coding coefficient based on collaborative quantization, and computing device for performing the method](#)," U.S. Patent Application 17/098,090, filed May 13, 2021.
- [P002] Mi Suk Lee, Jongmo Sung, Minje Kim, **Kai Zhen**, "[Audio signal encoding method and audio signal decoding method, and encoder and decoder performing the same](#)," U.S. Patent Application No. 16/543,095
- [P001] Minje Kim, Aswin Sivaraman, **Kai Zhen**, Jongmo Sung, et al, "[Audio signal encoding method and apparatus and audio signal decoding method and apparatus using psychoacoustic-based weighted error function](#)", *US Patent Application*, US 2019 / 0164052 A1.

### Peer Reviewed Workshops & Forums

- [W005] **Kai Zhen**, Martin Radfar, Hieu Duy Nguyen, Nathan Susanj, Grant Strimel, Athanasios Mouchtaris. General Quantization for On-Device ASR. *Amazon Machine Learning Conference (AMLC)*, 2022.
- [W004] **Kai Zhen**, Hieu Duy Nguyen, Feng-Ju (Claire) Chang, Athanasios Mouchtaris. Network Sparsification for On-Device ASR. *Amazon Machine Learning Conference (AMLC) Workshop on Network Inference Optimization*, 2020.
- [W003] **Kai Zhen**, Aswin Sivaraman, Jongmo Sung, Minje Kim. [On Psychoacoustically Weighted Cost Functions Towards Resource-efficient Deep Neural Networks for Speech Denoising](#). *The 7th Annual Midwest Cognitive Science Conference*, 2018.
- [W002] Peter Miksza, Kevin Watson, **Kai Zhen**, Sanna Wager, Minje Kim. Relationships between experts' subjective ratings of jazz improvisations and computational measures of melodic entropy. *The Improvising Brain III: Cultural Variation and Analytical Techniques Symposium*, Atlanta, GA, in Feb, 2017.
- [W001] **Kai Zhen** and David Crandall. [Finding egocentric image topics through convolutional neural network based representations](#) (extended abstract). In *Proceedings of the IEEE Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR) Workshop on Egocentric Computer Vision*, 2016.

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### HONORS, AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP

<b>Outstanding Research Award</b>	Apr. 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given by <a href="#">Cognitive Science Program at Indiana University</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Top-Rated Intern Poster</b>	Aug. 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Among 17 interns receiving the highest rate out of more than 180 participants</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Summa Cum Laude</b>	Jul. 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate with honor from Xidian University</li> </ul>	

**China National Scholarship**

Nov. 2010, Nov. 2011

- For the effort on maintaining top-tier GPA and mathematical contest in modeling (MCM)
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**INVITED TALKS**

[T003] [Microsoft Research Talks](#), September, 2020 [[Video link](#)]

[T002] Indiana University Hearing Sciences Seminar, March, 2019

[T001] Indiana University Grey Matters, Graduate and Post-doc Colloquium, March, 2019

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