

Zhijie Xiong

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EDUCATION

Columbia University

MA in Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences

Sep 2025-Present

New York

- **Relevant Courses:** Natural Language Processing in Social Science, Projects in Advanced Machine Learning

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)

BSc in Quantitative Social Analysis

Sep 2021-July 2025

Hong Kong

- **Scholarship:** Admissions Scholarship of HKD 30,000 per academic year.
- **Relevant Courses:** Computational Social Science, Quantitative Methods in Social Science

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Face and Object Recognition in Autistic Individuals

Oct 2024-Present

HKUST- Attention Brain and Cognition Lab | Advisor: Prof. Hsiao, Janet

Hybrid

- Conducted in-depth literature review, exploring the current explanation of origin for defective face recognition for autistic individuals, forming the research question and hypothesis.
- Designed and programmed full experimental procedures, integrating EyeLink, PsychoPy, and Pupil Labs systems for synchronized multimodal data collection.
- Contacted and hired over 40+ participants to do the experiments, meanwhile kept in collaboration with Shanghai Children's Hospital to collect diverse samples, cleaned, merged, and documented experiment data from 40+ participants to ensure accuracy and reproducibility.
- Conducted statistical analysis (ANOVA, regression) using R and Matlab to identify behavioral patterns and co-authored the manuscript currently in preparation for peer-reviewed publication.

China Political Economy Database Project

Jan 2022-Sep 2025

HKUST | Advisor: Prof. LIN, Yi-Min

Hybrid

- Systematically collected and thematically organized policy and industry materials on SOE reform, anti-corruption, digital governance, and the development of semiconductors, green energy, and EVs under shifting geopolitical and technological conditions to contextualize quantitative analysis.
- Compiled regional FDI datasets (1985-2023) and financial/PPP market yearbooks to analyze cross-provincial capital flows, local-central policy competition, and regional patterns of globalization.
- Web-scraped and consolidated a firm-level dataset on 5,000-6,000 of China's largest companies using Python and VBA, harmonizing SASAC/MOF SOE lists with major rankings (Fortune, ACFIC, CEDA, Hurun, unicorn) and standardizing ownership and sector classifications to analyze ownership patterns and organizational evolution.

Chinese Patriotic Sentiment Analysis on Weibo

Jan 2023-May 2023

HKUST | Advisor: Prof. ZHANG, Dong

Hong Kong

- Applied dual-axis coding frameworks to quantify nationalist sentiment and discourse patterns through 2,000+ Weibo posts regarding the 2012 Diaoyu Islands incident and US-China Trade War, transforming unstructured text into structured datasets for political communication research.

Course Project

GIS Analysis of Public Toilet Accessibility in Hong Kong

Sep 2024-Nov 2024

HKUST | Advisor: Prof. MA, Zhongdong

Hong Kong

- Conducted spatial analysis using K-means clustering to assess the distribution of public toilets in Hong Kong.
- Identified facility gaps along hiking trails and in public parks, leading to actionable recommendations submitted to local government departments and praised by course faculty (model accuracy: 71.5%).

WORK EXPERIENCE

IBM QMSS Practicum (Generative AI for HHS EPLC)

Sep 2025-Present

UX and App Development Team Lead

New York

- Led a 20-member team to conduct user research, journey mapping, and persona development, translated insights into user stories and product requirements, aligning with Agile sprint cycles and IBM leadership's roadmap priorities.
- Designed and refined UX/UI solutions supporting GenAI-assisted workflows, integrated with back-end tools, improving the task efficiency by ~30%, presented outcomes and future optimization strategies to IBM mentors.

OmniGenie.ai

Aug 2025-Present

Co-Founder/Product Manager

Remote

- Conducted systematic user research and competitive benchmarking, engaging with clients to gather feedback and compare SaaS analytics tools to identify feature gaps and analytical usability challenges.
- Authored PRDs by defining and prioritizing key features, and coordinated UX and engineering teams to align technical implementation with user and data needs, enhancing overall analytical clarity and decision workflow.

Fortune Cookie Technologies Inc.

Nov 2024

Product Manager Intern

Remote

- Designed and executed MVP experiments on Reddit across 300+ budgeting, tax, and investment threads, validating adoption barriers and informing product-market fit pivots within the product lifecycle.
- Analyzed funnel metrics to validate the acquisition-activation-conversion funnel, identified drop-off points, and iterated messaging and engagement strategies that informed community and product decisions with the CEO.

Zuoyebang Educational Technology (Beijing) Co., Ltd.

Dec 2023-Feb 2024

Product Manager Intern

Beijing

- Analyzed 50K+ user interactions using SQL and coordinated with engineering and DevOps teams to run A/B tests, uncovering key usability issues in chart recognition and photo capture; implemented feature fixes that improved user retention by ~20% and contributed to the app reaching #1 in the U.S. educational category.
- Organized 10+ trial sessions with international students and synthesized 1K+ multilingual reviews to identify pain points such as essay writing and translation reliance, informing the feature roadmap and guiding multiple new features launches across the product lifecycle.
- Collaborated with the operations team to refine targeting and resource allocation across YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, increasing user acquisition by ~15% and ad ROI by ~12%, while revitalizing a 3K-member community through localized engagement strategies.

SKILLS

Languages: English (Fluent), Mandarin (Native), Cantonese (Basic), Korean (Basic)

Tools: Programming (Python, C++, VBA, Java, MATLAB), Data Analysis (STATA, R, SPSS, SQL, Power BI, Excel), Product Design (Azure, Figma, PS, AI, Canva), Product Management (Jira)