

STANFORD DATA SCIENCE SCHOLARS

**A campus-wide community
advancing data-driven discovery**

Rich, complex new data sources, a rapid growth in computing power, and advances in algorithmic and inferential thinking are changing how we interpret the world and make decisions across virtually every field.

Extracting valuable insights from this confluence of data, computing, and methodologies is at the heart of the field of data science. Stanford Data Science (SDS) is leading this field into the future through a campus-wide ecosystem of data-intensive research, application, and education.

Recognizing that doctoral students bring new ideas into their fields and are often the most effective drivers of change, SDS has fostered a thriving community of graduate students—the Data Science Scholars—to help enable significant analytical breakthroughs across campus.

**The Data Science
Scholars program
accelerates discovery to
advance research and
science education across
Stanford and beyond.**



ABOUT THE DATA SCIENCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Data Science Scholars program was launched in 2018 and remains integral to the SDS vision—to accelerate data-driven discovery at scale and to increase data science education across Stanford and beyond.

Data Science Scholars are a vanguard of 26 PhD students who, over the course of a two-year program, pursue data-intensive breakthroughs in a specific domain (such as sustainability, life sciences, or history) or conduct research in computer science and statistics that advances data science itself. In weekly meetings, scholars develop and apply new techniques; explore the technical, professional, and ethical aspects of their work; gain inspiration; and collaborate around shared interests.

Scholars also showcase their work through the annual Data Science Conference—which is open to the full Stanford community—and otherwise contribute to that community, often through programs they help to design. Finally, select scholars help lead “Data Science for Social Good,” an eight-week summer program that trains students how to apply data science for societal impact.

The program’s alumni have gone on to earn competitive positions in academia, industry, and nonprofit organizations around the world—applying their data science expertise in sectors like financial services, clinical life sciences, and environmental protection.

MEET THE DATA SCIENCE SCHOLARS



Shilaan Alzahawi, PhD '24

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

Alzahawi uses organizational behavior studies to understand whether open (or “crowd”) science can improve the reproducibility and credibility of research into fundamental questions about how human beings behave. Alzahawi is an affiliate at the Center for Open and Reproducible Science and a former advisor to SDS’s “Data Science for Social Good” summer program.



Thomas Teisberg, '18, PhD '25

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Teisberg uses data science to help scientists predict how the melting of the Antarctic ice sheet will affect sea levels. As a member of the Radio Glaciology Lab in the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, Teisberg helps develop robotics with ice-penetrating radar to expand subsurface data collection. His research relies on data-driven approaches and physics-informed machine learning to assess ice sheet behavior and optimize resources.



Libby Zhang, PhD '24

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Zhang conducts research that quantifies animal behavior across various spatial and temporal scales—including designing models and algorithms to identify behavioral patterns and facilitate more complex biological investigations. Zhang combines new statistical and machine learning methods with her collaborators’ domain knowledge to help drive new discoveries.

Learn more about all of our scholars and their research [here](#).

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Admission is based on the applicants’ research and commitment to building community. Half of the scholar’s fellowship costs are covered for the two-year program, which affords them time to contribute consistently and meaningfully to data science work on campus. To ensure a balance of first- and second-year students, SDS admits 13 new students each fall. Representation from across Stanford varies with each cohort.

Data Science Scholars by School (2020-22)

17	17	9	5	3	1	1
ENGINEERING	H&S	MEDICINE	SUSTAINABILITY	EDUCATION	BUSINESS	LAW

MAKING YOUR IMPACT

Data science has immense potential to advance research in nearly every field. Donor support for the Data Science Scholars program helps Stanford accelerate transformational discovery for the benefit of humankind.



Seed funding from the university enabled Stanford Data Science to launch this hallmark program, and philanthropy is critical to sustaining it.

There are multiple opportunities to support Data Science Scholars and their work across Stanford's seven schools:

Expendable gifts

- Expendable gifts of any amount provide flexible funding for this multidisciplinary community, allowing the program's faculty director to invest in research, conferences, lectures, staff support, outreach, and other key priorities.
- \$1.5 million supports either all 26 graduate students for a single year, or a single cohort of 13 graduate students for two years.
- \$125,000 provides support for a single graduate student for the duration of the two-year program.

Endowed gifts

- An endowed gift of \$25 million provides a foundation for the program in perpetuity and includes the opportunity to name the program.

Learn more

STANFORD DATA SCIENCE
datascience.stanford.edu

DATA SCIENCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM
datascience.stanford.edu/programs

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