

# Vidminas Vizgirda (prev. Mikucionis)

Computer Science PhD Student at the University of Edinburgh



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## Education

- 2021 – 02/2025\*  
University of Edinburgh
- PhD Informatics Institute for Language, Cognition, and Communication
- Human-Computer Interaction and Design-Based Research project on how to facilitate finding, using, and sharing educational resources for school teachers
  - Relevant courses: Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing, Qualitative Research
- 2021 – 2023  
University of Edinburgh
- PgCAP Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice
- 60-credit part-time degree in teaching in Higher Education, leading to FHEA accreditation
  - Relevant skills: working with diverse audiences, communicating technical information
- 2017 – 2021  
University of Edinburgh
- BSc Computer Science and Management Science (Honours)
- Degree classification: 1<sup>st</sup> class honours (83.33% average with Class Prize for Top Performance in Computer Science and Management Science (BSc))
  - Relevant courses: Algorithms and Data Structures, Human-Computer Interaction

\* Expected graduation date

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## Publications

Stein, J. M. L., Vizgirda, V., Van Kleek, M., Binns, R., Zhao, J., Zhao, R., Goel, N., Chalhoub, G., S Albayaydh, W., and Shadbolt, N. (2023). “‘You Are You and the App. There’s Nobody Else.’: Building Worker-Designed Data Institutions within Platform Hegemony”. In: *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI ’23)*. April 23–28, 2023. Hamburg, Germany: ACM, New York, NY, USA.

Farrow, R., Baas, M., Cardoso, P., Cox, G., Czernowogora, A., DeWaard, H., Essmiller, K., Helton, E., Huth, K., Iniesto, P., Johnson, K. R., Peramunugamage, A., Pitt, R., Sousa, L., Vizgirda, V., and Weller, M. (Oct. 16, 2022). *GO-GN Research Review 2022*. Global OER Graduate Network. url: [https://go-gn.net/gogn\\_outputs/researchreview-2022/](https://go-gn.net/gogn_outputs/researchreview-2022/).

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## Work Experience

EWADA Summer Intern at the University of Oxford Aug – Nov 2022 and Jul – Sep 2023

Design-Based Research, Co-Design, MIT Solid, Natural Language Processing [oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk](https://oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk)

- Creating a solid-based worker platform that enables gig workers (such as Amazon workers or Uber drivers) to take better control of their personal data
- Participatory research in designing and evaluating software *with* users rather than *for* users
- Implementing automatic data integration using local Large Language Models

Software Engineer Intern at Microsoft Norway Jul – Sep 2020 and Jun – Sep 2021

User Experience, A/B Testing, TypeScript, React.js, Accessibility, Telemetry [microsoft.com](https://microsoft.com)

- Developed new features in Search used in online Microsoft services (like SharePoint, Outlook Web Apps, Delve, OneDrive Business) using React.js, RxJS, Redux, and TypeScript
- Verified implementation in team bug bashes and telemetry monitoring during gradual feature rollout
- Ensured project sustainability by writing detailed documentation and implementing unit and visual regression tests using Storybook.js, Enzyme, Selenium, and Jest

Software Developer Intern at Esri Inc Jun – Aug 2019

C++, C, TypeScript, Node.js, JSON, YAML, Continuous Integration, Teamwork [esri.com](https://esri.com)

- Developed a VS Code language server extension, that provides validation, auto-completion, go-to-definition, find-all-references features when editing Esri’s custom YAML specification files, which helped in-house developers work more efficiently
- Used C++, C, TypeScript, and Node.js, with language bindings between different modules

## Teaching support at the University of Edinburgh

Sep 2018 – present

Education, C, Java, Python, Interpersonal Communication, Time management

[web.inf.ed.ac.uk](http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk)

- In a variety of roles (Teaching Assistant, Marker, Tutor, Lab Demonstrator), I help lecturers with organising courses, managing lab sessions, answering student queries, and teaching in workshops and tutorials
  - 2 Informatics Staff Awards for Work as a Teaching Assistant in Informatics IB in Spring 2021 and 2022
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## Recent Projects

### Principal Investigator for PTAS project at the University of Edinburgh

Oct 2022 – Jul 2023

Leadership, User Research, Copyright, Accessibility, CMS and web frameworks

[ed.ac.uk](http://ed.ac.uk)

- Obtained and managed £2500 grant funding for a Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) project titled "Set Them Free! Open Publishing of INFIB Course Materials"
- Led a team of 4 student RAs on conducting a systematic review of tools for open educational publishing
- Created prototypes and evaluated with student focus groups. Project led to <https://opencourse.inf.ed.ac.uk/>

### Digital Research Services Ambassador at the University of Edinburgh

Apr – Aug 2023

Python, Flask, JSON Schema, PostgreSQL, Working with diverse audiences

[tusail.eu](http://tusail.eu)

- Improved existing prototype engineering materials database to a production-ready version for TUSAIL, an EU Horizon 2020 project
- Worked with teams from School of Engineering and University's Digital Research Services to elicit requirements and build the new database back-end and front-end, which balanced performance, ease of editing, and comprehensiveness of metadata with frequently changing schemas

### Start-up co-founder at Altra ERC

Oct 2020 – Jun 2022

Python, Natural Language Processing, Data Mining, Entrepreneurship

[altra.space](http://altra.space)

- As a software developer and business lead, I work on applications that help Scottish teachers save time, and co-organise the running of our start-up, supported by [Edinburgh Innovations](#)
- Wrote initial back-end code for the [Altra Past Paper Explorer](#), which allows users to search past SQA exam questions by keyword, when previously these were only available as separate PDF documents. 600 daily users

### "Fill in the World", university honours project

Sep 2020 – May 2021

TypeScript, Express.js, Ionic, Phaser, MongoDB, Child-Computer Interaction

[project-archive.inf.ed.ac.uk](http://project-archive.inf.ed.ac.uk)

- Created front-end and back-end for a web-based co-op multiplayer game for learning English. Players create worlds by writing names of objects to place on an interactive game map and can discover new objects with a flashcard-like system
  - Designed and evaluated the project with the help of primary school teachers and children with their parents
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## Certifications

- [FHEA \(Fellowship in Higher Education Academy\)](#) – October 2023
  - [Celonis Data-Driven Management Masterclass](#) – Summer 2021
  - [Microsoft Accessibility in Action](#) – Summer 2020
  - [Edinburgh Award – PALS Leader Volunteers 2018/19](#) – Spring 2019
  - [Edinburgh Award – International Summer Work Experience 2018](#) – Summer 2018
  - [CPA \(C++ Programming Associate\)](#) – Summer 2016
  - [CLA \(C Language Programming Associate\)](#) – Summer 2016
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