



AI CIRCLE × DATA GRADIENT · THE AI STARTER KIT

How to learn AI, and how to keep up.

The papers, books, podcasts, people, and courses our researchers and operators actually use. A living reading list from AI Circle × Data Gradient.

Always up to date at datagradient.org/starter-kit

START HERE

Four steps, in order. Don't try to read everything.

This list is long on purpose, so you can go deep on whatever matters to your work. The path below is how most of our members got started.

01 Learn the vocabulary

Start with a16z's AI glossary so the rest of this list reads cleanly.

02 Read the foundations

A handful of papers explain most of modern AI. Begin with the ones marked Founder pick.

03 Build a listening habit

Pick one weekly podcast and one daily newsletter. Consistency beats volume.

04 Learn from people

Follow practitioners, join a community, and bring your questions to a room.

Founder pick: recommended by AI Circle's founder. Member pick: recommended by AI Circle members. AI Circle partner: companies we host rooms with.



FREE CERTIFICATES · DATA GRADIENT

Want a credential for AI data work?

Data Gradient offers free courses and certificates for AI training and evaluation work. [Browse the courses >](#)

The papers and books behind modern AI.

Research papers (15)

-
- IC** **ImageNet Classification with Deep Convolutional Neural Networks**
2012
The AlexNet paper that launched the deep learning revolution. Krizhevsky, Sutskever, and Hinton won ImageNet 2012 by a massive margin using deep convolutional neural networks, ReLU activations, and dropout. Proved neural networks could dominate computer...
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- NM** **Neural Machine Translation by Jointly Learning to Align and Translate**
2014
Introduces the attention mechanism for sequence-to-sequence models. By Bahdanau, Cho, and Bengio. The breakthrough that enabled neural networks to handle long sequences by learning which parts to focus on. Precursor to transformers.
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- DR** **Deep Residual Learning for Image Recognition**
2015
Introduces ResNets and skip connections, allowing training of networks 100+ layers deep. One of the most cited papers in deep learning skip connections are now everywhere.
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- AI** **Attention is All You Need**
2017 · Founder pick
The foundational paper that introduced the Transformer architecture powering GPT, BERT, Claude, and virtually every modern AI system. Replaced recurrence and convolutions with pure attention, enabling unprecedented parallelization and scale. Must read.
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- GE** **GPipe: Easy Scaling with Micro-Batch Pipeline Parallelism**
2019
Google's technique for training giant neural networks across multiple devices by splitting models into stages and processing micro-batches in parallel. Key infrastructure enabling billion-parameter models that power today's AI.
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- RA** **Retrieval-Augmented Generation for Knowledge - Intensive NLP Tasks**
2020 · Founder pick
Introduces RAG (Retrieval-Augmented Generation), which combines AI language models with external knowledge databases. Allows AI to pull in real information instead of relying only on what's in its training. Biggest use case in the industry. Must read.
[Read the paper >](#)
-
- CA** **Constitutional AI: Harmlessness from AI Feedback**
2022
Anthropic's method for training AI to be helpful and harmless using AI feedback instead of human labeling. Foundation for how Claude and other safe AI assistants are built. Key paper for understanding AI alignment in practice.
[Read the paper >](#)
-

GO **Graph of Thoughts: Solving Elaborate Problems with Large Language Models**
2023 · Founder pick
Extends Chain-of-Thought and Tree of Thoughts by modeling LLM reasoning as a graph, enabling more complex thought patterns like combining, refining, and looping over ideas. Key reading to design advanced reasoning systems.
[Read the paper >](#)

DP **Direct Preference Optimization: Your Language Model is Secretly a Reward Model**
2023
Introduces DPO, a simpler & more stable way to train AI than traditional reinforcement learning (PPO). Eliminates the need for a separate reward model and complex optimization, achieving better results with just straightforward classification.
[Read the paper >](#)

SO **Sparks of Artificial General Intelligence: Early Experiments with GPT-4**
2023
Microsoft Research's exploration of GPT-4's capabilities across reasoning, math, coding, vision, medicine, and law. Documents emergent abilities, limitations, and failure modes. Essential reading for understanding what frontier models can actually do.
[Read the paper >](#)

DP **DeepSeekMath: Pushing the Limits of Mathematical Reasoning in Open Language Models**
2024
Shows how DeepSeek trained an AI to excel at complex math by carefully selecting training data from the web and using a new optimization technique (GRPO). Achieves near-GPT-4 level performance on competition-level math problems.
[Read the paper >](#)

GR **Group Robust Preference Optimization in Reward-free RLHF**
2024 · Founder pick
Solves the problem where AI ignores minority viewpoints by focusing on the worst-performing groups. Instead of optimizing for average preferences, GRPO improves performance for underrepresented perspectives balancing AI behavior across different...
[Read the paper >](#)

AA **AI-Assisted Assessment of Coding Practices in Modern Code Review**
2024 · Founder pick
Research paper from Google on AutoCommenter, an LLM-based system that automatically detects coding best practice violations during code review. Demonstrates how AI can handle nuanced style and readability rules that traditional static analysis tools miss,...
[Read the paper >](#)

AS **A Systematic Survey of Prompt Engineering in Large Language Models: Techniques and Applications**
2024 · Founder pick
Comprehensive guide to prompt engineering, how to write instructions that get better AI results. Organizes techniques by use case with clear examples of what works and when. Essential reference for building with LLMs.
[Read the paper >](#)

RW **RLHF Workflow: From Reward Modeling to Online RLHF**
2024 · Founder pick
Complete guide to online iterative RLHF, the training method behind top chatbots. Shows how continuous feedback cycles beat one-time training. Includes open-source code and datasets to reproduce state-of-the-art results.
[Read the paper >](#)

Books (18)



Agentic Design Patterns

2025

By Antonio Gulli. A comprehensive, code-backed curriculum covering 21 design patterns for building autonomous AI agents. Includes pattern overviews, practical use cases, hands-on examples, and key takeaways. Your recipe book for implementing agentic AI...

[Amazon >](#)



Co-Intelligence: Living and Working with AI

2024

NYT bestseller from Wharton professor Ethan Mollick. The definitive playbook for working, learning, and thriving alongside AI. Essential for anyone looking to harness AI's potential while staying grounded in what makes us human.

[Amazon >](#) · [goodreads >](#)



Hands-On Large Language Models

2024

By Jay Alammar and Maarten Grootendorst. A visually-driven guide with nearly 300 custom illustrations that takes you from zero to confident practitioner in LLMs. Covers transformers, tokenizers, semantic search, RAG, and fine-tuning with intuitive...

[llm-book >](#) · [Amazon >](#) · [O'Reilly Media >](#)



The Hundred-Page Machine Learning Book

2019

Andriy Burkov's concise guide to ML fundamentals in 100 pages. Covers supervised/unsupervised learning, neural networks, model evaluation and practical implementation without overwhelming theory. The go-to starting point for anyone wanting to understand...

[Amazon >](#)



AI Engineering

2025

Chip Huyen's comprehensive guide to building applications with foundation models. Covers prompt engineering, RAG, fine-tuning, agents, evaluation, and deployment. Great guide for anyone building AI products.

[Amazon >](#) · [O'Reilly Media >](#)



Designing Machine Learning Systems

2022

Also by Chip Huyen. Amazon bestseller covering the end-to-end process of designing ML systems for production. Focuses on data engineering, feature engineering, model deployment, and monitoring. Essential companion to AI Engineering for production ML.

[Amazon >](#) · [O'Reilly Media >](#)



Hands-On Machine Learning with Scikit-Learn, Keras, and TensorFlow

2019

Aurélien Géron's practical guide to building ML systems with Python. Covers classical ML through deep learning with hands-on code examples. The go-to technical reference for practitioners who learn by doing.

[Amazon >](#) · [O'Reilly Media >](#)



Deep Learning

2016

One of the most comprehensive books on deep learning. Covers mathematical foundations, neural networks, and modern architectures. Dense but essential for anyone wanting deep theoretical understanding.

[Amazon >](#) · [Free eBook >](#)



Prediction Machines: The Simple Economics of Artificial Intelligence

2022

By economists Ajay Agrawal, Joshua Gans, and Avi Goldfarb who reframe AI as a tool that dramatically lowers the cost of prediction, cutting through the hype to explain what AI actually does and how to apply it strategically. Named one of "the five best..."

[Amazon >](#)



Founder Brand

Member pick

Dave Gerhardt's tactical guide to using your founder story as a competitive advantage. Covers personal branding, social media strategy, platform selection, and measuring results. Practical playbook for founders and CEOs looking to build credibility and...

[Amazon >](#)



The Great CEO Within

Member pick

Matt Mochary's tactical playbook for scaling startups, based on his experience coaching CEOs at top Silicon Valley companies. Covers accountability systems, problem-solving frameworks, transparent feedback, and operational efficiency. Concise, actionable...

[Amazon >](#) · [Google Docs \(Free\) >](#)



The Advantage

Member pick

Patrick Lencioni's case for why organizational health is the greatest competitive advantage in business. Covers building cohesive leadership teams, creating clarity, overcommunicating, and reinforcing through systems. Foundational reading for leaders...

[Amazon >](#)



Dare to Lead

Member pick

Brené Brown's research-backed guide to courageous leadership. Covers vulnerability, values-driven decision-making, building trust, and having difficult conversations. Practical framework for leaders who want to cultivate brave cultures and whole-hearted teams.

[Amazon >](#)



From Research to Production - Industrializing NLP and Large Language Models

Member pick

By Abonia Sojasingarayar and Manan Thakkar. A free eBook covering the full journey from NLP fundamentals to production-ready LLM systems. Walks through text representation, transformers, fine-tuning, RAG, and LLMOps with practical case studies across...

[Link \(Free\) >](#)



Deep Learning for Data Architects

2024 · Member pick

By Shekhar Khandelwal. A hands-on guide bridging data architecture and deep learning, covering neural networks, CNNs, RNNs, GANs, and Transformers with practical Python implementations. Teaches you to transform raw data into actionable insights and build...

[Amazon >](#) · [Free Preview >](#)



The LLM Engineer's Handbook: Master the art of engineering LLMs from concept to production

Member pick

By Paul Iusztin and Maxime Labonne. A practical guide taking you from LLM fundamentals to production deployment using LLMOps best practices. Covers data engineering, RAG, fine-tuning, preference alignment, evaluation, inference optimization, and AWS...

[Amazon >](#) · [Packt >](#)



Mastering NLP from Foundations to LLMs

Member pick

Comprehensive guide starting with NLP basics and advancing to LLMs. Covers mathematical foundations (linear algebra, optimization, probability, statistics) essential for understanding ML and NLP. Includes Python code samples, real-world business problem...

[E-Book >](#) · [Amazon >](#)



Transformers for Natural Language Processing

Member pick

Extensive exploration of transformer architectures and their applications in generative AI and LLMs. Covers Transformer, BERT, GPT, T5, ViT, CLIP, DALL-E 2/3, and GPT-4V. Includes data preprocessing, tokenization, fine-tuning, RAG implementation, and risk...

[E-Book >](#) · [Amazon >](#)

Conversations with the people building it.

Podcasts (17)



Latent Space Podcast: The AI Engineer Podcast

Founder pick

Covers foundation models, code generation, multimodality, AI agents, and GPU infrastructure directly from the founders, builders, and researchers pushing the cutting edge. Features interviews with leaders from OpenAI, Anthropic, Meta, Databricks, Modular,...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



Cognitive Revolution Podcast

Member pick

Host Nathan Labenz scouts AI from every angle. Features interviews with AI builders, researchers, and investors, plus original deep-dive "AI Scouting Reports" on critical topics. Covers a wide range from AI safety debates and global AI policy to practical...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



No Priors Podcast: AI, Machine Learning, Tech, & Startups

Member pick

AI and entrepreneurship podcast hosted by investor Sarah Guo (founder of Conviction) and serial entrepreneur Elad Gil (co-founder of Color Health, author of High Growth Handbook). Features conversations with leading engineers, researchers, and founders...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



AI + a16z Podcast

Member pick

AI podcast from Andreessen Horowitz (a16z) featuring discussions with leading AI engineers, founders, and experts, alongside a16z general partners. Covers how AI is changing everything from art to enterprise IT, including topics like AI agents, coding...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [Website >](#)



Dwarkesh Podcast

Member pick

Long-form interviews with leading thinkers in AI, science, history, and geopolitics. Features conversations with top AI researchers on topics like AGI timelines, scaling laws, and the future of AI research. Known for substantive, intellectual depth.

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [Substack >](#)



Lenny's Podcast

Staff pick

Interviews with world-class product leaders, founders, and growth experts on building, launching, and growing products. Guests include CPOs, founders, and researchers from companies like LinkedIn, Slack, Anthropic, and Duolingo. Covers product management,...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



The Neuron

Member pick

Digestible and authoritative takes on the latest AI developments, trends, and research. Hosted by Pete Huang. Helps you stay up to speed and become an authority in your own circles. Available on all podcasting platforms and YouTube.

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



MLOps Community

Podcast focused on production-grade AI and machine learning operations. Features interviews with practitioners on topics like deep learning architectures, recommendation systems, voice agents, and deploying AI at scale. Also hosts virtual conferences...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



How I AI: Podcast with Claire Vo

Practical AI education hosted by Claire Vo, three-time CPO and founder. Each episode features live demonstrations and screen sharing of specific AI workflows guests use to transform their work. Step-by-step processes you can copy immediately. Guests...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



The AI Daily Brief: Artificial Intelligence News and Analysis

Daily briefing on the most significant AI developments, hosted by Nathaniel Whittemore. Cuts through the noise with analytical depth on the AI revolution, covering technological breakthroughs, AGI development, alignment, and implications for work and...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)



High Agency Podcast

For developers and entrepreneurs building with LLMs and generative AI. Host Raza Habib connects you with leaders at AI frontier companies who share hard-won stories, lessons, and playbooks from shipping successful AI products. Weekly episodes cover...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)



AI & I

Host Dan Shipper (CEO of Every) explores how the smartest people use AI to improve their thinking, creativity, and relationships. Interviews founders, filmmakers, writers, and investors on how they incorporate AI tools into their work and daily lives....

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)



The Gradient Podcast

Deeply researched and technical podcast featuring in-depth interviews with AI experts. Hosted by Daniel Bashir as part of The Gradient, a non-profit run by graduate students, researchers, and engineers. Aims to make AI more accessible and facilitate...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



The AI Podcast by NVIDIA

Bi-weekly podcast hosted by Noah Kravitz exploring AI's impact across industries. Features 25-minute interviews with experts from healthcare, legal, science, and more. Creates a real-time oral history of AI and its transformative influence on our world.

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)



Google DeepMind: The Podcast

Multi-award winning podcast exploring how AI is transforming our world. Hosted by mathematician Hannah Fry, featuring DeepMind scientists and thinkers discussing AI foundations, neuroscience, games, safety, and how AI is accelerating science.

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



Unsupervised Learning: Redpoint's AI Podcast

Member pick

AI podcast probing the sharpest minds in AI. Features interviews with leaders from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Databricks, Scale, and top researchers on what's real today, what's coming, and what it means for builders and businesses. Covers AI products,...

[Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#) · [YouTube >](#)



20VC (The Twenty Minute VC)

Member pick

One of the most influential venture capital podcasts, hosted by Harry Stebbings. Features interviews with top VCs, founders, and operators covering fundraising, scaling startups, and market trends. Offers a multi-cycle investor perspective on AI, with...

[Website >](#) · [Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)

YouTube channels (7)



DeepLearning.AI

Comprehensive resource for structured AI/ML learning. Official YouTube channel from Andrew Ng's DeepLearning.AI, featuring free course content from their Coursera programs. Includes full specializations on deep learning, machine learning, CNNs, sequence...

[YouTube >](#) · [Website >](#)



Jay Alammar

Machine learning researcher, builder, and writer known for visualizing AI/ML concepts. Clear, scaffolded teaching approach with illustrated guides to transformers, GPT-3, BERT, word embeddings, and reasoning models like DeepSeek-R1. Also covers explainable...

[YouTube >](#) · [LinkedIn >](#)



Andrej Karpathy

Founder pick

AI educator and former OpenAI/Tesla AI lead. Features two tracks: a general audience track with comprehensive LLM deep dives, and a technical "Zero to Hero" series that builds neural networks from scratch. Known for clear, thorough explanations of how...

[YouTube >](#) · [Website >](#)



IBM Technology

One of the best channels for beginners. Educational content from IBM experts covering AI, machine learning, data science, and broader tech topics like cybersecurity, DevOps, and quantum computing. Features clear explainers on foundational concepts (LLMs,...

[YouTube >](#)



3Blue1Brown

Founder pick

Staff pick and founder favorite. Uses animation to make tricky topics intuitive and difficult problems simple through changes in perspective. Covers math, physics, and CS including linear algebra, calculus, neural networks, and transformers, all with an...

[YouTube >](#) · [Website >](#)



AI Explained

Deep dives into the biggest AI developments as they happen, from new model releases to industry shifts. Created by the author of SimpleBench, a benchmark exposing the remaining reasoning gap between humans and LLMs. Breaks down complex AI news with...

[YouTube >](#) · [Newsletter >](#)



The AiGrid

Fast-paced coverage of the latest AI research, model releases, and industry developments. Combines breaking news with beginner-friendly tutorials on tools like ChatGPT, Claude, and NotebookLM. Covers everything from new robotics announcements to ethical...

[YouTube >](#)

The field, delivered to your inbox.

Newsletters (8)



The Neuron

Member pick

Daily AI newsletter for business professionals. Covers the latest AI news, product launches, and trends in a digestible format. Also features curated recommendations of the best AI tools by category, explainers on key AI topics, and a free Intro to ChatGPT...

[Subscribe >](#)



AlphaSignal

Member pick

5-minute technical digest for AI developers. Covers the latest breakthrough models, repos, and papers. Customizable by topic (language models, audio/speech, image/video, agents, robotics, dev tools) and tailored for researchers, developers, data...

[Subscribe >](#)

TN

Totally Not Spam

Newsletter about the intersection of AI and Trust & Safety by Alice Goguen Hunsberger of Musubi. Covers AI-powered moderation for social apps, marketplaces, and online communities.

[Subscribe >](#)



Human in the Loop

Member pick

Weekly insights on AI agents, tools, and real-world use cases by Andreas Horn. Covers GenAI innovation, curated tools, and tactical career advice for building and leading in an AI-first world.

[Subscribe >](#)



The Trustible Newsletter

Bi-weekly newsletter covering AI policy, AI governance best practices, and responsible AI adoption. From Trustible, a provider of responsible AI governance software for legal/risk and AI/ML teams.

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AI Frontiers

Expert commentary on AI's impacts across technology, research, policy, regulation, jobs, economy, and security. Platform for dialogue and debate featuring perspectives from specialists across fields. Supported by the Center for AI Safety.

[Subscribe >](#)



Responsible Innovation Labs

Resources and frameworks for startups building responsibly. Covers responsible AI, GTM planning, data minimization, customer discovery, and making responsibility a competitive differentiator. Also offers builder programs, events, and a weekly newsletter on...

[Subscribe >](#)



ML Safety Newsletter

Technical newsletter on machine learning safety research from Dan Hendrycks and the Center for AI Safety. Covers topics like AI scheming, prompt injection, deceptive reasoning, cyberattack capabilities, and safety benchmarks.

[Subscribe >](#)

Substacks (9)



Lenny's Newsletter

Member pick

Deeply researched advice on product, growth, and career. Features tactical frameworks and guides on topics like AI prototyping for PMs, evals, user growth strategies, and feedback. Also includes LennyBot, an AI assistant trained on the archive.

[Substack >](#) · [LennyBot >](#)



OpenAI Global Affairs

Newsletter from OpenAI's Global Affairs team. Covers AI policy, energy infrastructure, US-China AI competition, federal and state AI legislation, and AI's impact on the economy and workforce.

[Substack >](#)



Language Models & Co (Jay Alammar)

Jay Alammar's Substack covering large language models, their internals, and applications. Features illustrated deep-dives on topics like DeepSeek-R1, transformers, tokenizers, and LLM agents. Companion to his YouTube channel and the book "Hands-On Large...

[Substack >](#)



One Useful Thing (Ethan Mollick)

Member pick

Wharton professor Ethan Mollick on the implications of AI for work, education, and life. Research-based essays on AI agents, practical AI usage guides, and how AI is changing how we learn and work.

[Substack >](#)



Dwarkesh

Original analysis on AI progress, scaling, infrastructure, and geopolitics. Mix of AI-focused pieces (RL efficiency, AGI timelines, fab buildouts) and broader intellectual explorations (history, science).

[Substack >](#)



Latent Space

Technical newsletter for AI engineers covering AI UX, agents, dev tools, infrastructure, and open source models. Features deep-dives on coding agents, context engineering, and the AI startup landscape. Includes reading lists, event recaps, and exclusive...

[Substack >](#)



AI Safety Newsletter

Latest news on AI safety from the Center for AI Safety. Covers developments in AI policy, regulation, frontier model evaluations, and safety research. No technical background required.

[Substack >](#)



Interconnects (Nathan Lambert)

Member pick

Essays, audio, and interviews on AI developments from Nathan Lambert. Covers open models, reinforcement learning, reasoning, and model training, at the border between high-level and technical thinking.

[Substack >](#) · [Spotify >](#) · [Apple Podcasts >](#)



AI Law and Policy Syllabus (Nita Farahany)

Duke Law professor Nita Farahany shares her AI Law & Policy course syllabus, reading list, and lecture summaries. Covers AI definitions, training data, deepfakes, and regulatory approaches. Paid subscription for full access.

[Substack >](#)

Blogs (2)



What's AI (Louis-François Bouchard)

Blog and resources from Louis-François Bouchard, co-founder at Towards AI. Covers LLMs, AI agents, prompt engineering, and practical guides for building with AI. Offers free learning guides, courses (Python for AI, LLM development), and a newsletter....

[Blog >](#) · [Substack >](#)



Women in AI Ethics

Blog from Women in AI Ethics (WAIE), elevating diverse voices in responsible AI since 2018. Features career journey interviews, the annual "100 Brilliant Women in AI Ethics" list, book recommendations, and commentary on AI ethics issues like deepfakes,...

[Blog >](#)

Follow the people doing the work.

AI Circle members to follow ⁽¹²⁾

-
- AS** **Abonia Sojasingarayar**
Machine Learning Scientist · Avanade
Distinguished machine learning scientist, LLM and NLP engineer, and technical book reviewer. Author of a free eBook on industrializing NLP and LLMs.
[LinkedIn >](#)
-
- AH** **Andreas Horn**
Head of AIOps · IBM
Oversees IBM's AIOps service portfolio across EMEA, helping enterprises deploy reliable AI systems. Top AI voice on LinkedIn known for practical insights on foundation models, agentic AI, and LLM infrastructure.
[LinkedIn >](#)
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- EO** **Eduardo Ordax**
Generative AI Lead · AWS
15+ years in AI/ML and business development. Go-to-market lead for AWS AI and ML services in EMEA. Creates widely shared educational content on agentic AI patterns, RAG architectures, and prompt engineering.
[LinkedIn >](#)
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- TH** **Tiarne Hawkins**
CEO & Founder · Optica Labs
15+ years in digital transformation with 7+ years leading AI initiatives. Founded Optica Labs to secure AI systems through adaptive stress testing and vulnerability detection. Host of the "You & AI" podcast.
[LinkedIn >](#)
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- HY** **Dr. Han Héloir-Yan**
EMEA Generative AI Solutions Architect · Mistral AI
PhD in Computer Science with 15+ years across financial software, telecom, SaaS, and cloud. Guides large enterprises through LLM integration, vector search, and cloud-native deployments. Previously AI Solutions Architect Lead at MongoDB.
[LinkedIn >](#)
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- JL** **John Larson**
Founder & CEO · Rostra
15+ years as an AI and technology executive (ex-McKinsey). Rostra helps investors and management teams bridge the gap between AI research and commercial success. Fractional Chief AI Officer at SYNTHESIS.
[LinkedIn >](#)
-
- AP** **Akshay Patel**
Product Executive & Builder · AWS
20+ years building and scaling software companies. Leads global SaaS, AI, and agentic SaaS strategy at AWS. Angel investor, executive coach, and public speaker.
[LinkedIn >](#)
-
- PG** **Peter Gostev**
AI Capability Lead · LMArena
AI strategy leader focused on business strategy, product management, and team leadership. Previously led AI at Moonpig.
[LinkedIn >](#)
-

MM

Maya Murad

Senior Technical PM · Microsoft Research

Product manager at Microsoft's AI Frontiers Research Lab, working on new architectures and learning signals. Previously Technical PM at IBM Research. Writes about AI agents, browser-use agents, and human-agent collaboration.

[LinkedIn >](#)

VK

Vladimir Karpukhin

Staff Software Engineer · Google

Co-author of the foundational RAG and Dense Passage Retrieval papers while at Meta AI Research. Previously Lead AI Research Engineer at Arcee.ai and Senior ML Engineer at Meta.

[LinkedIn >](#) · [Google Scholar >](#)

AB

Alanna Brown

VP of Marketing · Bland

Product marketing leader who has scaled startups from \$0 to \$150M ARR. Creator of the State of DevOps Report and co-founder of DORA (acquired by Google Cloud).

[LinkedIn >](#)

AR

Ahmed Rashad

Founder · Perle

Founder of Perle, a human data company. Previously at Scale AI during its hypergrowth from Series C to Series E, with earlier experience at Amazon, McKinsey, and Oracle.

[LinkedIn >](#)

On X (6)



Aadit Sheth

Member pick

Co-founder of The Narrative Company, investor and entrepreneur. Shares threads, posts, and breakdowns on AI, narratives, and communication, with playbooks shared openly.

[Follow on X >](#)



Ethan Mollick

Member pick

Wharton professor researching AI's impact on education, work, and innovation, and co-founder of Wharton Interactive. Shares practical insights on using AI effectively, with a focus on how it's changing how we learn and work.

[Follow on X >](#)



MIT Sloan Management Review

Member pick

Research-backed insights on leadership, management, and the future of work, including AI's impact on business strategy.

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Jay Alammar

Shares updates on his books and visual guides, celebrates open-source ML tools, and posts interactive visualizations of AI research.

[Follow on X >](#)



Andrej Karpathy

Shares thoughts on AI industry developments, how programming is changing with AI tools, and reflections on learning. Also announces his YouTube deep dives here.

[Follow on X >](#)



Learn Prompting

Creators of the internet's first prompt engineering guide. Shares breakdowns of prompting techniques (like Chain-of-Thought), summaries of the latest prompting research papers, updates on HackAPrompt competitions, and events.

[Follow on X >](#) · [YouTube >](#)

Communities to join (8)



Cohere

Official community server for Cohere. Features channels for API discussions and troubleshooting, a "Live Builds" section where members showcase their Cohere-powered projects, and research discussions covering LLMs and NLP advances. Good for developers...

[Join the server >](#)



OpenAI

Official OpenAI community server. Themed galleries for sharing AI-generated images, channels for prompt help, general discussion of AI news, community Q&A, and updates on OpenAI announcements.

[Join the server >](#)



Midjourney

Official community for Midjourney, the AI image generation tool, and one of the largest Discord servers in the world. Features prompt help channels, community galleries organized by theme, and spaces to share edits and real-world projects. Free to join and...

[Join the server >](#)



Learn Prompting

Community server focused on prompt engineering education and prompt hacking competitions. Learn prompt engineering fundamentals, compete in HackAPrompt challenges, or browse channels for AI image prompts, resource sharing, and AI news. Skill levels range...

[Join the server >](#)



r/Singularity

Community server for discussing AGI, futurism, and the future of AI development. Channels for sharing AI news, making predictions, and discussing robotics, space exploration, virtual reality, life extension, and philosophy. Casual and speculative rather...

[Join the server >](#)



Learn AI Together

Large educational community covering the full spectrum of AI/ML learning. Reading groups, applied workshops, learning seminars, and live coding sessions across NLP, computer vision, generative AI, reinforcement learning, and ethics. Structured roadmaps for...

[Join the server >](#)



Data Science

Practical help community for data science, ML, programming, and analytics. Members ask and answer questions across Python, R, math and stats, MLOps, generative AI, and career advice. Includes a resource library with recommended books and courses.

[Join the server >](#)



TensorFlow

Unofficial community server for users of TensorFlow, Google's open-source machine learning framework. Support channels for Python and JavaScript, plus broader ML topics including CNNs, GANs, reinforcement learning, NLP, and AI ethics. Includes ML job...

[Join the server >](#)

Courses and certifications worth your time.

Courses (11)



Cohere LLM University

Free curriculum covering LLM fundamentals (embeddings, transformers, attention) alongside practical modules on semantic search, prompt engineering, RAG, and tool use. Good for learning core LLM concepts with hands-on API practice.

[Start learning >](#)



AWS Skill Builder

AWS's official learning platform with 1,000+ free resources plus subscription labs and certification prep. Covers AI/ML, generative AI, cloud architecture, and all AWS services.

[Start learning >](#)



NVIDIA Deep Learning Institute

Free and paid training in deep learning, AI, and GPU-accelerated computing with hands-on cloud GPU environments. Self-paced courses (1-8 hours) and instructor-led workshops across computer vision, NLP, robotics, and data science.

[Start learning >](#)



Databricks Academy

Free introductory courses and paid certification tracks covering data engineering, ML, generative AI (including RAG), and SQL analytics on the Databricks platform.

[Start learning >](#)



Microsoft Learn

Free modules and learning paths across Azure AI, Copilot, machine learning, and responsible AI, with sandbox environments and certification exam prep.

[Start learning >](#)



IBM Developer AI

Free courses and guided projects covering machine learning, generative AI, data science, and application development, from foundational concepts to hands-on implementation.

[Start learning >](#)



DeepLearning.AI

AI education company founded by Andrew Ng offering specializations on Coursera and free short courses on its own platform. Covers machine learning fundamentals through advanced topics like LLMs, prompt engineering, and agentic AI.

[Course catalog >](#)



Coursera

Major online learning platform hosting courses and certificates from Google, IBM, Microsoft, Meta, and universities. Many courses are free to audit; Coursera Plus provides unlimited access.

[Start learning >](#)



BlueDot Impact

Nonprofit offering free cohort-based courses on AI safety, alignment, and governance with facilitated group discussions. Includes a short self-paced intro, "The Future of AI," and intensive 25-30 hour programs with strong career support.

[Start learning >](#)



All Tech Is Human: Responsible AI Courses

Free series of five short courses on responsible AI covering principles, history, business case, roles, and operational best practices. Completable in a few hours with a certificate of completion.

[Start learning >](#)



Labelbox Library

Guides and tutorials on data labeling, model-assisted labeling, active learning, and GenAI evaluation workflows. Best for practitioners working on data-centric AI.

[Browse the library >](#)

Certifications (7)



Data Gradient Certificates

Free courses and certificates for AI training and evaluation work, from understanding AI systems to prompt writing and context engineering. Pass the assessment to earn a certificate you can share.

[Browse courses >](#) · [Website >](#)

US

United States Artificial Intelligence Institute (USAII)

Globally recognized AI certification body offering four credential tracks for Engineers, Consultants, Scientists, and Transformation Leaders. Self-paced programs (4-25 weeks) require no coding prerequisites and cater to professionals from entry-level to...

[Get certified >](#)



Artificial Intelligence Board of America (ARTIBA)

Global AI credentialing body offering engineer, chartered engineering, and business professional certifications built on vendor-neutral standards. Validates applied competence in ML pipelines, model deployment, and system architecture.

[Get certified >](#)

IA

Intel AI Training

Free, self-paced courses for developers and data scientists to optimize AI on Intel hardware. Covers computer vision, deep learning inference, edge AI, and OpenVINO, with hands-on labs and optional certification exams.

[Get certified >](#)



DataCamp Certifications

Industry-recognized certifications for Data Analyst, Data Scientist, Data Engineer, and AI Engineer roles. Combines timed exams with practical case-study assessments in Python, R, or SQL. Included with a premium subscription.

[Get certified >](#)



Coursera Professional Certificates

Professional certificates from Google, IBM, Microsoft, Meta, DeepLearning.AI, and more, designed to make learners with no prior experience job-ready in 3-6 months. Covers data science, AI/ML, and more with hands-on projects.

[Get certified >](#)



NVIDIA Certification Program

Professional credentials validating expertise in NVIDIA technology. Associate (NCA) and Professional (NCP) exams cover tracks like agentic AI, InfiniBand networking, and accelerated data science. The standard for engineers working in AI factories.

[Get certified >](#)

Toolkits & references (3)



List of 700+ AI Foundation Models

Comprehensive spreadsheet tracking 700+ AI foundation models with key specs: parameters, training tokens, benchmark scores (MMLU, GPQA, HLE), and ALScore ratings. Useful for comparing model capabilities and scale.

[Google Sheet >](#)



OpenAI: A Practical Guide to Building Agents

OpenAI's official framework for building AI agents. Covers when to use agents, how to design them (model selection, tools, instructions), and how to scale from single to multi-agent systems. Includes essential guardrails like safety classifiers, PII...

[PDF >](#)



FirstMark MAD Landscape 2025

FirstMark's map of 1,400+ companies across the Machine Learning, AI, and Data ecosystem, organized by category: applications and agents, infrastructure, ML and AI (build, validate, operate, research), and data sources. The definitive reference for who's...

[PDF >](#)

Who's building what in AI.

A working map of 140+ companies across the stack.

AI Developer Platforms

LangChain	LlamaIndex	Hugging Face
Lightning AI	Contextual AI	Vercel
Arcee	Anyscale	

Local LLM Runtimes

Ollama	LM Studio	Nexa AI
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Agent Platforms

Microsoft AutoGen	CrewAI	Microsoft Copilot Studio
Vertex AI Agent Builder	Salesforce Agentforce	LangGraph
ServiceNow	Writer	Glean
Lyzr AI	Dust	Vellum

Agent Infrastructure

Microsoft Semantic Kernel	FastMCP	Firecrawl
AgentOps	DSPy	

Observability & Evaluation

Braintrust	Arize	Galileo
Patronus AI	Arthur AI	Langfuse

AI Safety & Security

NVIDIA NeMo Guardrails	Guardrails AI	Cloudflare AI Gateway
Cranium	Prompt Security	CalypsoAI
Haize Labs	Lakera	

Routing & Prompt Management

Databricks Mosaic AI Gateway	Martian	PromptLayer
OpenRouter		

AI Governance

IBM watsonx.governance	Credo AI	OneTrust
Securiti		

MLOps

Weights & Biases	MLflow	Domino
BentoML	Tecton	

Data Generation & Labeling

Prolific PARTNER	Turing	Centific PARTNER
Perle	Scale AI	Labelbox
Sama	Toloka	Surge AI
V7	Voxel51	Coactive AI
Tonic	Appen PARTNER	LILT PARTNER

Data Science

Project Jupyter	KNIME	Posit
MathWorks	Deepnote	

Enterprise AI Platforms

Dataiku	Snowflake	Cohere North
ChatGPT Enterprise	DataRobot	H2O.ai
C3 AI		

Speech & Voice

Cartesia	ElevenLabs	Sesame
Vapi	Deepgram	AssemblyAI

Computer Vision

Roboflow	OpenCV	Encord PARTNER
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Frontier Labs

OpenAI	Anthropic	Google DeepMind
Meta AI	Cohere	xAI
Mistral AI	DeepSeek	Thinking Machines Lab
Imbue	Reka	Sakana AI

Research Institutes

Ai2	Kyutai	Mila
Vector Institute	The Alan Turing Institute	ELLIS
Center for AI Safety	Stanford HAI	MLCommons
Epoch AI	EleutherAI	

GPU Cloud

CoreWeave PARTNER	Lambda	Crusoe
Nebius	Voltage Park	RunPod
Modal	Baseten	Scaleway

Inference & Serving

Fireworks AI

SambaNova

NVIDIA TensorRT

Together AI

vLLM

Groq

SGLang

AI Hardware

NVIDIA

AWS Trainium & Inferentia

Tenstorrent

AMD

Cerebras

Google Cloud TPU

Intel

Edge AI

Qualcomm

Armada

SiMa.ai

Edge Impulse

KEEP GOING

Reading is the start. The room is the rest.

Events: luma.com/ai-circle · Membership: ai-circle.org/membership · Suggest a resource: hello@ai-circle.org