Felix Drinkall

DOCTORAL RESEARCHER · UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Machine Learning PhD Student, University of Oxford, and former Professional Athlete for GB Rowing.

Education

University of Oxford   *Oxford, United Kingdom*

PHD IN MACHINE LEARNING   *October 2021 - Present*

- Researching the best way to use **Natural Language Processing** in a dynamic world for predictive tasks.
  - Researching best methods for **encoding text for forecasting tasks**.
  - Investigating the pitfalls of using language models in dynamic tasks. Measuring information leakage from using statically trained LLMs and **evaluating techniques to mitigate information leakage**.
  - Investigating **LLM knowledge editing** methods to modify problematic numeric information that temporally biases LLMs.
  - **Modelling bidirectional macro-economic causal effects** for diachronic linguistic change.
- Completed the first section part-time as I was rowing professionally, attempting to make the 2024 Olympics.
- Published papers:
  - "Forecasting COVID-19 Caseloads Using Unsupervised Embedding Clusters of Social Media Posts" - NAACL 2022
  - "Time Machine GPT" - NAACL Findings 2024
  - "Forecasting Credit Ratings: A Case Study where Traditional Methods Outperform Generative LLMs" - FinNLP-COLING 2025
  - "(Re)Visiting Large Language Models in Finance" - SSRN 2024 under review (**top 10 most downloaded SSRN paper in last 12 months**)
  - "Stories that (are) Move (d by) Markets: A Causal Exploration of Market Shocks and Semantic Shifts across Different Partisan Groups" - ACL Findings 2025
  - "When Dimensionality Hurts: The Role of LLM Embedding Compression for Noisy Regression Tasks" - arxiv 2025 under review

MENG IN ENGINEERING SCIENCE   *September 2017 - June 2021*

- **First-Class Honours**
- **Recipient of the Vincent's Fernside Scholarship** for academic and sporting success at Oxford University.
- **84% in my Masters' Thesis**: "Forecasting COVID-19 Caseloads using Social Media Posts" - Edgell Sheppee Prize 2021
- Courses: Machine Learning, Machine Vision and Robotics, Medical Imaging and Informatics, Advanced Probability, Systems and Perturbation Methods and Advanced Mathematics.

Experience

Alan Turing Institute   *London, UK*

RESEARCHER   *February 2023 - July 2024*

- I worked as a researcher for the Alan Turing Institute on the **Narrative Detection and Tracking team** under DSTL. We assessed the viability of effectively capturing fine-grained narratives, tracking them and predicting their future dynamics within a community.

PayDay Records   *London, UK*

RESEARCH ENGINEER   *July 2023 - March 2024*

- I worked with a record label to capture fast-growing songs as early as possible. I was **responsible for the full-stack**: building the codebase, overseeing data management, implementing the time series classification, and designing the UI. Every morning, the A&R team would receive an email and a Spotify playlist with promising unsigned songs. The role taught me how to **launch a product to deliver commercial value**.

GB Rowing Team   *Reading, UK*

PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE   *November 2017 - July 2023*

- Throughout my university studies I have had to balance the obligations and responsibilities of a professional athlete. This has made me **able to balance a tough workload and work under pressure** whilst maintaining peak performance in and out of the classroom. The experience taught me how to **operate well in a team and treat feedback as an opportunity**. Faced with missing out on the Olympic squad this summer, I am left with unique lessons from elite sport and a fire in the belly.

Skills and achievements

Technical
- **Advanced knowledge of Python**, specifically the Pytorch and Transformers libraries.
- Presented a tutorial at the OMI NLP SoDaS Conference 2023, 2024 on how to use NLP for social data science.
- Experience **training generative language models from scratch.**
- **Reviewer for the ACL, EMNLP, NAACL and COLING conferences.**

Other
- **Junior World Rowing Champion in 2017** and **U23 World Champion in 2019 and 2021.**
- Competed in the Oxford vs. Cambridge Boat Race
- Winner of the National Pro Corda Chamber Music competition, playing at the Wigmore Hall with my brass band.
- Swiss partner who I am marrying on 21/06/25, meaning that I won't need sponsorship for a Zurich role.