

Ashima Suvarna

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🌐 <https://asuvarna31.github.io/>

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research focuses on data curation, evaluation, and post-training methods that enable language models to reason robustly across open-ended tasks. I am interested in safety, reasoning, multi-agent systems and coding agents.

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) <i>Ph.D. in Computer Science</i>	Sept 2024 - Present <i>Advisor - Prof. Saadia Gabriel</i>
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) <i>Masters in Science - Computer Science; Deepmind Scholar</i>	Sept 2021 - Sept 2023 <i>Advisor - Prof. Nanyun Peng</i>
Delhi Technological University (Formerly DCE) <i>Bachelor of Technology - Computer Engineering</i>	Aug 2016 - June 2020

PUBLICATIONS

- Ashima Suvarna**, Kendrick Phan, Mehrab Beikzadeh, Hritik Bansal, Saadia Gabriel.
Unlocking Complex Reasoning in LLMs via Reinforcement Learning on Natural Instructions **In Submission**
- Ashima Suvarna**, Christina Chance, Karolina Naranjo, Hamid Palangi, Sophie Hao, Thomas Hartvigsen, Saadia Gabriel. *ModelCitizens: Representing Community Voices in Online Safety*. [Paper] **EMNLP 2025**
- Hritik Bansal*, **Ashima Suvarna***, Gantavya Bhatt*, Nanyun Peng, Kai-Wei Chang, Aditya Grover.
Comparing Bad Apples to Good Oranges: Aligning Large Language Models via Joint Preference Optimization.
[Website][Paper][Code] **ACL Findings 2025**
- Etash Guha, Ryan Marten, Sederick Keh, ... **Ashima Suvarna**,... Alexandros G. Dimakis, Ludwig Schmidt.
OpenThoughts: Data Recipes for Reasoning Models. [Paper][Code] **Oral, FoRLM@NeurIPS 2025**
- Salman Rahman, Sherif Issaka, **Ashima Suvarna**, ... Yejin Choi, Julian Michael, Liwei Jiang, Saadia Gabriel. *AI Debate Aids Assessment of Controversial Claims*. [Paper] **NeurIPS 2025**
- Ashima Suvarna***, Xiao Liu*, Tanmay Parekh, Kai-Wei Chang, Nanyun Peng.
QUSELECT: Selective Decoding for Questions Under Discussion Parsing. [Paper][Code] **EMNLP 2024**
- Ashima Suvarna**, Harshita Khandelwal, Nanyun Peng. *PhonologyBench: Evaluating Phonological Skills of Large Language Models*. [Paper][Tweet][Code] **KnowledgeableLMs Workshop@ACL 2024**
- Yixin Wan, Arjun Subramonian, Anaelia Ovalle, Zongyu Lin, **Ashima Suvarna**, ..., Kai-Wei Chang.
Survey of Bias In Text-to-Image Generation: Definition, Evaluation, and Mitigation. [Paper][Tweet] **Preprint**
- Zefan Cai*, Po-Nien Kung*, **Ashima Suvarna**, ..., Nanyun Peng.
Improving Event Definition Following For Zero-Shot Event Detection. [Paper] **ACL 2024**

COMMUNITY-LED PROJECTS

OpenThoughts-Agent Project <i>An open-source effort to curate the best datasets for training agents. Released OpenThinker-Agent-v1 the best model of its size on Terminal-Bench 2.0.</i>	Blog
OpenThoughts Project <i>An open-source effort to curate the best open reasoning datasets. Released OpenThinker3-7B, a SOTA open-reasoning model trained using only supervised fine-tuning.</i>	Blog
Evalchemy: A framework for gold standard language model evaluations <i>A unified and easy-to-use toolkit for evaluating post-trained language models on math and coding benchmarks. Developed as part of DataComp community and built on LM-Eval-Harness.</i>	Github

WORK EXPERIENCE

PLUSLAB, UCLA

Research Associate (Advisor: Prof. Nanyun Peng)

Los Angeles, California

Jun 2023 - July 2024

Walmart Inc.

Data Scientist Intern (Mentors: Zongjun Tan, Utkarsh Porwal)

Sunnyvale, California

Jun 2022 - Sep 2022

Dimagi Inc.

Technical Project Analyst

New Delhi, India

June 2020 - August 2021

University of New Brunswick

Mitacs Research Intern (Advisor: Prof. Paul Cook)

Fredericton, Canada

June 2019 - August 2019

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- **UCLA Graduate Fellowship** to support graduate research; awarded to selected students in Fall 2024.
- **Deepmind Scholarship** to fully fund Masters at UCLA CS; awarded to 2 MS students in Fall 2021.
- **Mitacs Globalink Research Scholarship** to conduct research and visit Canada for Summer 2019.
- General Secretary of **Enactus DTU** in 2018; won the **KPMG Grant** to rehabilitate acid-attack survivors.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Organized the **UCLA NLP Seminar Series** [Website] where premier AI/ML researchers present cutting-edge research via talks, 1:1 research discussions and social meetups.
- Created **SheFrames** [Website] a crowd-sourced art project to celebrate women in STEM through comic-style illustrations of submitted stories and anecdotes.

TEACHING

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to NLP (UCLA CS 162)

Spring 2025

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Robotics (UCLA CS 188)

Winter 2026

SERVICE

Reviewer: ACL SRW 2024, NAACL SRW 2024, ICLR Tiny Papers 2024, NeurIPS D&B 2024, EMNLP 2025

Program Committee: SoCal NLP Symposium 2023
