Sara Zanzottera

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I am an experienced software engineer and open-source maintainer with a focus on Python. I worked on projects ranging from GenAI voice chatbots to particle accelerators to LLM frameworks, data pipelines, IoT projects, and web apps. I thrive in remote, unstructured, multicultural teams where quick iteration cycles and continuous delivery are key. I have several years of experience maintaining large and small OSS projects. I am also skilled at managing communities, writing documentation, tutorials and blog posts, and giving talks. Check out my blog (https://www.zansara.dev/) and my GitHub profile (https://github.com/ZanSara/).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead AI Engineer

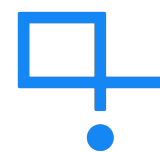*Kwal Inc.* - *Apr. 2024 to Dec. 2024* - *Remote*

AI and LLM expert, working on voice LLM recruiters at scale. I implemented several iterations of our in-house agents, making them able to handle spoken conversations of arbitrary complexity and length regardless of the context window size. I also worked on the design, validation and testing of the agent's prompts, their behavior, and the offline conversation analysis. I led the efforts to release part of our codebase as a new OSS library and promoted it with conference talks, blog posts and social media posts.

NLP Engineer

deepset GmbH - *Sep. 2021 to Feb. 2024* - *Remote*

Core maintainer of the Haystack framework (https://github.com/deepset-ai/haystack/). As the lead developer of their 2.0 version my tasks included designing the new architecture from the ground up, implementing and iterating over it, writing new code and plugins, coordinating the team's efforts, handling community over GitHub and Discord, collecting feedback from early adopters, promoting the new version by writing documentation, tutorials, Colab notebooks, social media posts and blog posts, and hosting office hours, webinars, meetup talks and conference talks. I was also heavily involved in the maintenance of the previous version by managing external PRs, writing bug fixes and managing the community.

Software Engineer

CERN - *Feb. 2018 to Aug. 2021* - *Geneva (CH)*

Python expert of the group, mentoring several colleagues. I led the renovation of a Python data pipeline for the accelerator's instrumentation, closely iterated with the PyQt GUIs team to develop a RAD framework for physicists, and developed a Java application for particle accelerator technicians to manage low-level applications.

Full Stack Developer

CAI (Italian Alpine Club) - *2015 to 2021* - *Remote*

Several contracts, mostly focusing on small web apps. Notable is the ZanzoCam Project (https://zanzocam.github.io/en), an autonomous webcam based on Raspberry Pi, in operation since 2021 in ~100 huts on the Italian Alps.

EDUCATION

Double MSc in Data Science
EIT Digital, POLIMI & UNS
2016 - 2018

BSc in Computer Engineering
POLIMI & Tongji
2013 - 2016