

Ashenafi Teressa

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EDUCATION

- B.S. Computer Science — Data Science Minor** Expected May 2028
Arizona State University
- Coursework: Statistical Modeling, Machine Learning, Design & Analysis of Algorithms, Theoretical Computer Science, AI & NLP, Ethics for the Information Age
- M.A., Comparative Local Development** 2018
Corvinus University of Budapest
- B.A., Public Administration — with Great Distinction** 2008
Addis Ababa University

EXPERIENCE

- AI Prompt Engineer and Code Reviewer — DataAnnotation** Apr 2024 – Present
- Write and evaluate prompts, review AI-generated code, and provide structured feedback used to improve model training data quality.
- Relationship Banker — Bank of America** Feb 2019 – Mar 2024
- Built and maintained client relationships, advising individuals and small businesses on banking products, credit, and financial planning while balancing service quality with sales goals.
- Mentor for Orphans — Stichting Encouraging Initiatives** Jul 2014 – Jul 2016
- Provided mentorship and educational support to orphaned children as part of the organization's community initiatives.
- Entrepreneurship Trainer — Entrepreneurship Development Center, Addis Ababa** May 2012 – Jul 2016
- Designed and delivered training on business planning, financing, and entrepreneurship for aspiring small-business owners.
- Assistant Lecturer — Dire Dawa University** Sep 2008 – Jul 2016
- Taught undergraduate courses and supported curriculum development, mentoring students through coursework and early research.

PROJECTS

- TakeMeter — NLP Text Classification**
github.com/ateressa
- Fine-tuned a DistilBERT classifier on hand-annotated Reddit posts (r/TrueFilm); built and debugged the full training pipeline end to end.
 - Documented that the fine-tuned model underperformed a zero-shot baseline, identifying annotation quality — not model architecture — as the core bottleneck.
- Play My Music (Car DJ) — Full-Stack Personal Tool**
github.com/ateressa/play_my_music
- Built a native iOS driver display paired with a web-based passenger app; riders scan a QR code to join a live session and queue songs from their own phone.
 - In active daily use during rides, not just a portfolio exercise.
- Self-Hosted Ad Blocking — Systems / Networking**
- Deployed a Pi-hole DNS sinkhole on a repurposed HP EliteDesk 800 G4 behind an Arris SURFboard gateway, with DHCP static reservation and Cloudflare upstream DNS.
 - Layered multiple blocklists (Hagezi Pro, community YouTube-ad lists) and resolved recurring configuration conflicts.
- RAG Chunking Strategies — NLP / Retrieval**
- Explored tokenization and hybrid sparse + dense retrieval for RAG pipelines; implemented both recursive and semantic chunking approaches in Python.

SKILLS

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| Languages | Python, JavaScript, TypeScript, C#, Java, R, SQL, Bash |
| ML / NLP | PyTorch, Hugging Face Transformers, DistilBERT fine-tuning, scikit-learn, Pandas, tokenization & chunking |
| Systems & Tools | Linux, Git, Networking / DNS |