

THAO LE

 Thao Le  t.p.t.le@vu.nl  thaoyuh

EDUCATION

PhD Candidate in Applied Mathematics

Sep 2024 - est. Aug 2028

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

- Topics/Interests: Stochastic Optimization, Network Analysis, Machine Learning, Agentic AI
- Supervisors: Prof. Bernd Heidergott, Dr. Ines Lindner

MRes Business Data Science at Tinbergen Institute

2022 - 2024

Joint degree University of Amsterdam, Erasmus University, and VU Amsterdam

- Valedictorian
- Selected coursework: Deep Learning, Natural Language Processing, Reinforcement Learning, Econometrics I-II-III, Bayesian Econometrics, Simulation Analysis & Optimization, Combinatorial Optimization

BSc University College Maastricht

2019 - 2022

Honours college of Maastricht University | Major: Data Science & Operations Research

- Valedictorian
- Selected coursework: Mathematical Modeling, Optimization, Recommender Systems, Simulation & Statistical Analysis, Operations Research, Computer Science, Data Analysis, Multivariable Calculus.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Random Walks with Traversal Costs: Variance-Aware Performance Analysis and Network Optimization

joint with Robbert van der Burg, Bernd Heidergott, Ines Lindner, Alessandro Zocca

Growth in Saturated Markets: A Markov-based Network Optimization Approach

joint with Gui Liberali, Bernd Heidergott, Ines Lindner

A Practical Guide to Interpretable Role-Based Clustering in Multi-Layer Financial Networks

joint with Christian Franssen, Iman van Lelyveld, Bernd Heidergott

Community Structures in Markov Influence Graphs with Heterogeneous Holding Times

joint with Bernd Heidergott, Ines Lindner

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS / INVITED TALKS

2026:

VU Operations Analytics Seminar

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2025:

RSM Brown Bag Seminar

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Peking University Internal Seminar

Beijing, China

INFORMS Marketing Science Conference (Best Flash Talk and Poster Presentation)

Washington D.C., US

Network Science Conference

Maastricht, The Netherlands

VU Economics Seminar

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- Excellence in Teaching Award - Department of Economics, VU Amsterdam** 2025
- For my role as the Lecturer of the course “Data Analytics for Economists”
- Best Flash Talk and Poster Presentation - INFORMS Marketing Science Conference** 2025
- Valedictorian - TI/BDS Class of 2024** 2024
- Amsterdam Merit Scholarship - University of Amsterdam** 2022 - 2024
- Awarded a scholarship of (\approx 31,800 EUR) for the full tuition fee of the 2-year Research Master in Business Data Science at Tinbergen Institute.
- Business Data Science Scholarship - Tinbergen Institute** 2022 - 2024
- Merit-based scholarship (\approx 30,000 EUR) covering full living expenses and insurance of 2 years Research Master.
- Valedictorian - UCM Class of 2022** 2022
- UCM Scholarship - Maastricht University** 2019 - 2022
- Full scholarship (\approx 78,000 EUR) by University College Maastricht, covering tuition fees, living expenses, housing, insurance, and visa fees. Awarded to a selected few non-EU students.
- Vietnam National Olympiad Team Member** 2018-2019

TEACHING

- Lecturer - VU Amsterdam** 2024-present
- Course: Data Analytics for Economists (Master level)*
- Lecturer and examiner in the VU’s Master in Economics
- Teaching Assistant - Tinbergen Institute** 2023-2024
- Course: Simulation Analysis & Optimization (PhD level)*
- Course: Machine Learning I (PhD level)*

RESEARCH POSITIONS

- Visiting Researcher - De Nederlandsche Bank** Oct 2025-present
- Visiting the Data Science Hub at the Dutch Central Bank
 - Conduct Network Analysis research on the European inter-bank money market
- Visiting Researcher - Rotterdam School of Management** Oct 2024-present
- Topics: Network Analysis, Quantitative Marketing
- Research Assistant - Maastricht University Institute of Data Science** 2021-2022
- Apply NLP techniques and Explainable AI on Dutch doctors’ notes to predict heart failure outcomes
- Undergraduate Researcher - United Nations University-MERIT** 2021-2022
- Build a Multi-objective Optimization model for humanitarian aid rescue and distribution.

VOLUNTEERING/ SERVICE

Educational Board Member

Sep 2022 - Jul 2024

Business Data Science - Tinbergen Institute

- Advise the Director of Graduate Studies on matters concerning the program, based on students' feedback.

Education and Awareness Officer

2019 - 2020

UNICEF Student Team Maastricht

- Host educational events such as movie screenings, lectures on UNICEF-related topics
- Write monthly blog-posts on Unicef Student Team Maastricht's social media and websites

LANGUAGES

Dutch (A2), English (C2), Vietnamese (native)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: Python, R, MATLAB, SQL, Java

Machine Learning: PyTorch, TensorFlow, scikit-learn, Hugging Face Transformers

Tools: Git, LaTeX, Jupyter, VSCode, Cloud Computing