WENZHI FANG

BHEE 051, Electrical Engineering Building, Northwestern Avenue, West Lafayette, IN

◇ fang375@purdue.edu ◇ Phone: (765)694-5334 ◇ https://wenzhifang.github.io

EDUCATION

Purdue University *West Lafayette, IN, US*
Elmore Family School of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Ph. D. Candidate in Electrical and Computer Engineering *Aug. 2023 – Present*

ShanghaiTech University *Shanghai, China*
School of Information and Science Technology
M.S. in Communication and Information Systems *Sept. 2020 – Jul. 2023*

Shanghai University *Shanghai, China*
School of Communication and Information Engineering
B.S. in Communication Engineering *Sept. 2016 – Jul. 2020*

MAJOR COURSE

- Convex Optimization, Matrix Computation
- Deep Learning, Reinforcement Learning, Bayesian Data Analysis

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Distributed Optimization
- Federated Learning
- Efficient Fine-Tuning of LLM

TECHNICAL STRENGTHS

Technical Skills Python, Torch, Git

SELECTED WORKS

[1] W. Fang, D-J. Han, L. Yuan, S. Hosseinalipour, and C. G. Brinton, Federated Sketching LoRA: On-Device Collaborative Fine-Tuning of Large Language Models, *Under Review* [Paper]

[2] W. Fang, D-J. Han, E, Chen, S. Wang, and C. G. Brinton, Hierarchical Federated Learning with Multi-Timescale Gradient Correction, *Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) 2024*. [Paper] [Code]

[3] W. Fang, D-J. Han, and C. G. Brinton, Federated Learning over Hierarchical Wireless Networks: Training Latency Minimization via Submodel Partitioning, *IEEE/ACM Transactions On Networking (ToN) 2025* [Paper] [Code]

[4] W. Fang, Z. Yu, Y. Jiang, Y. Shi, C. Jones, and Y. Zhou, Communication-Efficient Stochastic Zeroth-Order Optimization for Federated Learning, *IEEE Transactions on Signal Processing (TSP) 2022*. [Paper] [Code]

Highlight

- In [1], we propose federated sketching LoRA (FSLoRA), a theoretically-grounded methodology that retains LoRA's flexibility while adapting to the communication and computational capabilities of individual devices.

- In [2], we proposed an algorithm to address multi-level data heterogeneity in hierarchical federated learning (HFL), deriving strong theoretical results without relying on additional data heterogeneity assumptions. This work fills a critical gap in the existing HFL literature.
- In [3], we investigated the idea of model partitioning on some classical models, such as FCNs and CNNs, and on the modern transformer architecture, to reduce the training consumption.
- In [4], we proposed a federated zeroth-order algorithm (FedZO) with a convergence guarantee. This algorithm makes the training process forward-only, eliminating the memory overhead of backward propagation, which has since inspired numerous works in LLMs.

WORKING EXPERIENCE

Optimization for Machine Learning Lab *Aug., 2022 - Feb. 2023*

Summer Intern *Advisor: Prof. Peter Richtarik* KAUST

ION Lab *Aug., 2023 - Present*

Research Assistant *Advisor: Prof. Christopher G. Brinton* Purdue University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

SI263: Distributed Optimization *Spring, 2022, ShanghaiTech*

ACEDEMIC SERVICE

Reviewer of NeurIPS, ICML, ICLR, AISTAT, TMLR

CONTESTS AND AWARDS

China National Scholarship (Top 0.2% Nationwide), *2021*

First prize of China National Undergraduate Electronic Design Competition, *2019*

First prize of Chinese Mathematics Competitions, Shanghai, *2017*