Ph.D. Statement of purpose

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I want to become a teacher. My passion for learning & explaining continues to grow daily, as I keep hosting workshops[1] and make content for my youtube channels[2,3]. This commitment is what motivated local universities to invite me to teach their students[4], older than me, despite not having a degree yet. I love teaching, and I want to do it formally. For that, I need a Ph.D.

My journey in Machine Learning began 2 years ago, when I first started my Masters. Since my country has a weak currency, research budgets are tight and projects/funds are scarce. That is why I decided to gain experience from other sources, mainly from industry and community. My first ML internship was with Fabskill[5], and as their first ML talent, I was involved in the whole pipeline (design to deployment) and implemented Recommendation Systems, NLP models and CI/CD code on real user data and live AWS servers.
I then joined the R&D department of InstaDeep[6], one of Africa's most promising AI companies, through a recommendation. As a summer intern, I focused on Deep NLP with BERT, mainly in Text Summarization and Semantic Document Similarity. Satisfied with my work, they funded and co-supervised my Master thesis. When I graduated, they offered me a full-time job. I declined for the sake of pursuing a Phd, the one I'm applying to right now.

Concurrently, I co-founded and led the Research team of Data Co-Lab[7], where we trained Ph.D students and partnered with a Medical Imaging Research Lab[8] on three Medical AI projects. I was also leading Facebook DevC Tunis[9], volunteering in Research Conferences, supervising students, traveling to teach all over Tunisia, contributing to open source[10,11] etc. All of which was done in parallel with my work and studies, and was auto financed as my family could not financially support me. My efforts were noticed by a Google MENA Manager who invited me to host sessions[12], paid for my certification[13] and recommended me to the Google Developer Expert (GDE) program[14]. I am proud to say that I am currently the youngest ML GDE in the MENA region.

My experience in industry has made me interested in efficiency, robustness, fairness, bias and meta-learning. Academia offers solutions to a number of Industry problems,and the latter presents a number of interesting problems for the former. As a Data & AI consultant, I want to merge these two worlds by both providing use cases from industry and implementing research works into company projects. I really hope we can further discuss as I am excited to hear about the interesting projects you have in mind or that we can build upon this. I am aware that my Research experience needs polishing, but I make up for it with my autonomous behaviour and deep passion for the subject that hopefully was well-conveyed through this statement.

I omitted a lot of details to make it easier to read. I hope we can get to an interview so we can discuss in depth.

Thank you for taking the time to read my application.