Girish Gupta

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Girish is a San Francisco–based technology leader with a unique blend of startup agility, a deep theoretical grounding in AI, and a background in international investigative reporting.

As a hands-on software and AI engineer, Girish has built secure, SOC-2-compliant systems across the full stack—from cloud infrastructure to mobile apps—while also training, fine-tuning, and deploying AI models, RAG pipelines, and agentic systems. His AI research focuses on interpretability, hoping to better align models with humanity's ideals. He also mentors college students on their own research.

Girish spent nearly a decade as a foreign correspondent, investigative reporter, and photographer in Venezuela, covering the country's humanitarian crisis, as well as working across the Americas, Middle East, and Asia. His work has appeared in the New Yorker, the New York Times, and Reuters, where he was a Senior Correspondent. "Always Go" is Girish's memoir recounting his time as a reporter.

He built one of the first systems to automatically generate news stories from real-time data more than a decade ago, sparking his interest in NLP. Today—in addition to leading engineering at Riley, an AI-powered app empowering new parents—Girish bridges his engineering and journalistic experience to build AI tools that support human rights investigators, journalists, and analysts—most recently collaborating with Berkeley's Human Rights Center.

Girish holds a Master's in Physics, which he studied in Cambridge and Manchester, and has completed various graduate-level AI courses at Stanford, as well as one in General Relativity at Open University.

AI Research Mentor, *Algoverse*
July 2025 –
- Mentor and work with college and high school students on real-world AI research projects, hoping for publication at top conferences.

Head of Engineering, *Riley*
January 2025 –

Co-Founder and CTO, *Tellen*
June 2023 – January 2025
- Led technology at venture-backed startup providing an AI platform to audit, accounting, and financial services.
- Engineered a robust, full-stack SOC2-compliant AI application, including a comprehensive CI/CD pipeline, well-structured database, rigorous testing, and an efficient, secure cloud architecture. Connected to private Azure AI and Document Intelligence endpoints to create a sophisticated—and properly evaluated—RAG pipeline. Deployed to multiple paying clients in their own cloud environments. Led a team of half-a-dozen engineers working across the world. (Azure, BICEP, Twingate, Flask, React)
- Worked with co-founders in funding, product and business development, and partnering with customers.

Founding Full-Stack Software Engineer, *Subcity*
November 2021 – May 2023

Author, *Always Go*
March 2021 – October 2021
- Memoir about my time as an international journalist. I dig into my motivations, successes, and failures; expand on my reporting; and take a critical look at the journalism industry.

CTO, *Deepnews*
April 2020 – March 2021
- Trained and deployed recurrent-, convolutional-, and transformer-based models for NLP tasks.

- Built software to parse, score, and query hundreds of thousands of articles per day, a website to show scoring, and an API. (GCP, Python, Tensorflow, PyTorch, PHP, MySQL)

Head of Data Science, *IDFC Institute*
May 2019 – May 2020
- Created a data science unit at the Rockefeller-, Gates-, and Ford-funded public policy non-profit.
- Published research, built platforms, created interactives, and advised government on urban mobility, open-source mapping (GIS), privacy/data governance, and COVID-19.

Founder/CEO, *Data Drum, Inc.*
May 2018 – April 2020
- Startup providing automated, elegant economic data, in order to make public data more accessible.
- Led developers, economists and regional experts. Met with potential customers and investors.
- Built ETL pipeline (MySQL, PHP, Python) and website. Managed mobile apps (React Native), API (Node.js/Express.js), and Google Sheets and Microsoft Excel add-ins (JavaScript).

Senior Correspondent, *Reuters*
June 2015 – May 2018
- Produced major investigations, including showing that the results of a national Venezuelan election were fabricated; secrets about the country's military, including surface-to-air missile inventories and lists of soldiers arrested for treason and rebellion; that the country's Chief Justice was arrested on suspicion of murder; and multi-billion dollar corruption at Venezuela's state oil company.
- Produced text, photos and TV on Venezuela's hyperinflation, social decay, food riots and protests.
- Based in Venezuela; reported also in Iraq, Afghanistan, the United States, Colombia, and Ecuador.
- Wrote software to automate story-writing, data-gathering, and admin, as well as used OSINT techniques.
- Coordinated on-the-ground and digital security in an extremely hostile environment.

Creator, *Venezuela Econ* (absorbed into *Data Drum, Inc.)*
December 2014 – April 2018
- Created the go-to data platform on one of the world's most opaque countries.
- Wrote iOS/WatchOS (Swift), Android (Java), and web apps (PHP/MySQL), as well as an API (PHP).

Freelance foreign correspondent, *Reuters, New Yorker, New York Times, TIME, Financial Times, NPR, BBC…*
October 2010 – May 2015
- Produced text, photos, video and radio in Venezuela, as well as Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Guyana, Jordan, Lebanon, Peru, and Mexico, for some 50 news outlets.
- Covered the cancer, election and death of Venezuela's Hugo Chávez, the messy transition to Nicolás Maduro's rule and the crisis that followed, including daily violent unrest.
- Investigated diamond smuggling from illegal jungle mines in the Amazon, a Colombian paramilitary massacre, and the killing of wildcat gold miners there.

Artificial Intelligence at *Stanford University*
May 2024 – February 2025
- Graduate-level courses including a foundational, math-heavy course in **Machine Learning (XCS229)** as well as **Natural Language Processing (XCS224N)** and **Natural Language Understanding (XCS224U)**.

Theoretical Physics at *Open University*
September 2022 – June 2023
- **The Relativistic Universe (S383)**: General Relativity and Cosmology

Physics (Master's) at *University of Manchester*
September 2006 – June 2010
- Abstract to Master's thesis—an atrial fibrillation simulation—published in *Proceedings of The Physiological Society*. Bachelor's thesis on negative index of refraction. Essay on the physics of music.

Natural Sciences: Math, Physics, Chemistry, Geology at *King's College, Cambridge University*
September 2005 – June 2006

Courses: Computer Science and Machine Learning
                        Generative AI with Large Language Models 2023 *deeplearning.ai*
                        Introduction to Computer Science 2020 *Harvard*
                        Deep Learning Specialization 2020 *deeplearning.ai*

                Hostile Environment Training and First Aid
                        Hostile Environment Training 2015, 2017 *Reuters*
                        Surviving Hostile Regions 2012 *AKE/Rory Peck*
                        Military Training Qualification 1 2007 *Officers' Training Corp/British Army*

                Miscellaneous
                        Foundational Open Source Investigations 2023 *UC Berkeley Human Rights Center/IICI*
                        Introduction to Developmental Psychology 2022 *University of Queensland*
                        Fundamentals of Music Theory 2022 *University of Edinburgh*
                        Founder, First 50 and Writer fellowships 2020-1 *On Deck*

On the side: *Big Brother Volunteer* 2023-5 Mentor an eight-year-old boy in San Francisco.
                Freelance Photographer 2023-4 Photograph events, portraits, etc., in and around San Francisco.
                Venezuela Photography Book 2023-5 Art book featuring photography from Venezuela.
                Math for Journalists 2021 iOS app to help journalists with math.
                According to Documents 2020-1 Highlight document-based investigative reporting.
                Readwise2Roam 2020 Convert *Readwise* book and article highlights to *Roam* notes.
                GlobalOTP 2019- Forward text messages to email.
                Journalism Mentor 2013- Mentor young foreign correspondents, primarily in hostile environments.
                Music Goes On 2000-1 Music website listed by *MTV* as one of the web's top 20 sources.

Languages: **English**, **Spanish**, **Hindi/Urdu**, working on **French**, and basic **Arabic**.