Nissim Lebovits

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LinkedIn | GitHub | Portfolio

Education

Master of City Planning, University of Pennsylvania — August 2022 - May 2024

Bachelor of Arts in History, Vanderbilt University — August 2016 - May 2020

Research and Professional Experience

Fulbright Research Fellow — March 2025 – Present

Universidad Nacional de La Plata — La Plata, Argentina

- Developing accessible workflows for sustainable urban planning using open-source geospatial data and cloud computing, focusing on reducing technical barriers for resource-constrained cities in the Global South.
- Building flood risk assessment tools using satellite imagery and Earth Engine for the greater La Plata region as a proof-of-concept for scalable climate adaptation planning.

Founder and Project Lead — July 2023 – July 2025

Clean & Green Philly — Philadelphia, PA

- Founded an open source, nonprofit tech platform that promotes data-driven interventions in vacant properties to improve quality of life in Philadelphia.
- Built full-stack platform from prototype to production with NextJS frontend and Dockerized Python geospatial pipeline, coordinating 200+ Code for Philly volunteers across development, UX, data analysis, and domain expertise.
- Redesigned data architecture using cloud-based GeoParquet warehouse, achieving 13x storage increase while eliminating container overhead.

Research Associate for Professor Allison Lassiter — March 2023 – March 2025

University of Pennsylvania — Philadelphia, PA

- Applied clustering algorithms (k-means, DBSCAN, GMM) with PCA to quantify climate risk across 4,500+ water suppliers in 11 states, designing analysis to balance statistical rigor with interpretability for publication.
- Developed multi-agent system model to simulate saltwater intrusion impacts on public water supplier networks across 3 coastal regions, combining climate projections with supplier financial data and network topology.
- Built reproducible analytical workflows using Python, R, GDAL, ArcGIS, and QGIS with comprehensive documentation.

Research Associate for Professor Matthijs Bouw — November 2023 – May 2024

University of Pennsylvania — Philadelphia, PA

- Developed scalable ML pipelines using Python, Docker, Google Earth Engine, and Google Cloud to process open-source remote sensing data for national-scale flood and heat risk assessment, enabling climate risk analysis for entire countries via a single CLI command.

- Integrated environmental risk models with population, vulnerability, and biodiversity data for a UN-Habitat initiative helping urban planners mitigate biodiversity loss and climate risk due to urban expansion.

Data and Evaluation VISTA July 2021 – July 2022

Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity, City of Philadelphia Philadelphia, PA

- Developed data collection tools for the federally designated West Philadelphia Promise Zone, creating analysis pipelines in R and ArcGIS to provide dashboards and automated reports for non-technical stakeholders.
- Established regular data coordination meetings with City agencies, HUD, and Drexel University to support Promise Zone initiatives.

Honors & Awards

Fulbright Research Grant, U.S. Department of State (2025)
Gaia Award for Excellence in Environmental Planning, University of Pennsylvania (2024)
Witte-Sakamoto Family Prize in City Planning, University of Pennsylvania (2023)
Chancellor's Scholarship, Vanderbilt University (2016)

Publications

Forthcoming, “Compounding vulnerability and climate hazard exposure creates widespread risk in United States community water supply systems,” Allison Lassiter, Nissim Lebovits, Zoe Kerrich, Henry Feinstein, Evan Kodra, and Lauren Patterson.

October 22, 2024, “Clean and Green Philly Where It’s Most Needed,” The Philadelphia Citizen, Nissim Lebovits and Amanda Soskin.

Public Speaking

"Datos abiertos para ciudades sustentables," Universidad de Buenos Aires, March 2025

"Google Earth Engine for Urban Planning," University of Pennsylvania, March 2024

"Remote Sensing for Urban Planning," University of Pennsylvania, January 2024

Languages

English (native)

Spanish (full professional proficiency)