Wenhao Zhang

PhD student at National University of Singapore

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Research Interests	Reinforcement learning; Energy efficient control; Indoor thermal comfort

Education

National University of Singapore — Singapore
PhD in Built Environment — *Jan 2024 – Present*
Supervisors: Prof Clayton Miller, Prof Stefano Schiavon.

University College London — London, UK
MSc Smart Buildings and Digital Engineering — *Sep 2022 – Sep 2023*
Supervisor: Dr Rui Tang. *Degree: Distinction (Rank: 1/44).*

University of Nottingham — China & UK
BEng Hons Architectural Environment Engineering — *Sep 2017 – Jul 2021*
Supervisor: Dr Zhiang Zhang. *Degree: First-Class Honours (Rank: 3/67).*

Honors and Scholarships

NUS Research Scholarship (National University of Singapore)	2024
UCL Best Overall Degree Mark Award (University College London)	2023
DesignBuilder Award (DesignBuilder Software Ltd.)	2023
Dean's Scholarship (University of Nottingham)	2021
Head's Scholarship (University of Nottingham)	2020

Publications

Reinforcement Learning in Building Controls: a Comparative Study of Algorithms Considering Model Availability and Policy Representation
Ziyan Wu, **Wenhao Zhang**, Rui Tang, Huilong Wang, and Ivan Korolija.
Journal of Building Engineering, 2024. (Link)

Energy Efficient Operation Optimization of Building Air-conditioners via Simulator-assisted Asynchronous Reinforcement Learning
Wenhao Zhang, and Zhiang Zhang.
IOP Conference Series Earth and Environmental Science, 2022. (Link)

Research Experience

HEATS: Heat Exposure, AcTivity, and Sleep Field Study
Mentors: Prof Stefano Schiavon (UC Berkeley) — *Jan 2024 – Present*
   Prof Clayton Miller (National University of Singapore)
   Dr Thomas Parkinson (The University of Sydney)

This field study aims to investigate the effects of cumulative heat exposure on sleep and physical activity among a cohort of working-age Singaporeans. In this research, the preparatory tasks for the field study were managed. Moving forward, the collected data will be analyzed, and reinforcement learning-based Just-in-Time Adaptive Intervention (JITAI) models will be developed to enhance sleep quality in response to heat exposure.

Comparative Study of Model-Based and Model-Free Reinforcement Learning Control Performance in HVAC Systems: A Case Study

Mentor: Dr Rui Tang (University College London)   May 2023 – Jan 2024

This research conducts the comparison of model-based and model-free reinforcement learning control strategies in HVAC systems. It focuses on analyzing their performance in terms of energy efficiency and indoor comfort. Results indicate both strategies significantly outperform traditional controls, with model-free showing greater resilience to disturbances.

Deep Reinforcement Learning for Energy-Efficient Control of Variable Refrigerant Flow HVAC Systems

Mentor: Dr Zhiang Zhang (University of Nottingham)   Sep 2019 – Jun 2020

Developed an energy efficient operation strategy for VRF system during the cooling season for a case office and achieved energy savings of up to 16.1% as well as improved thermal comfort compared to a rule-based control strategy.

Employment	**DesignBuilder Software Ltd.** London, UK

Technical Writer (Contrator)   Aug 2023 – Jan 2024

Develop DesignBuilder Scripting Basics training content covering EMS and Python Scripting for runtime, pre and postprocessing of simulations along with DesignBuilder API.

China Academy of Building Research   Shanghai, China

Energy Consultant (Full-time)   Oct 2021 – Aug 2022

Participated in developing building energy simulation software (PKPM), and the design of ultra-low energy buildings with information technology.

Skills

Programming

Proficient in: Python (scikit-learn, Gym, TensorFlow, Word2Vec, NLTK).
Familiar with: C#, MATLAB, Modelica.

Languages

Chinese (Native), English (Proficient).