

# hendrik baier

artificial intelligence researcher

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## research interests

I am fascinated by *artificial intelligence* and *games*.

Decision making is a basic activity in our lives, and an essential feature of intelligent autonomous agents. I am interested in creating agents that are able to succeed in a wide range of complex decision-making tasks, in order to help human users solve real-world problems. To achieve this, my research focuses on *planning*, required for acting towards long-term goals; on *learning*, required for acting in unknown environments; and on the *explainability* of planning and learning, required for successful human-AI collaboration.

In order to tackle these challenges, I use the unifying framework of reinforcement learning - of learning by trial and error - and aim at pushing its boundaries in a variety of traditional and digital games as testbeds. I then transfer game AI technology to non-game domains in collaborative projects with industry, in sectors such as logistics and transportation, smart manufacturing, and sustainable energy.

## research experience

- |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2022 – present                    | <b>Eindhoven University of Technology</b><br><i>Assistant Professor</i><br>Information Systems Group<br>Developing learning, planning, and explainable AI techniques in collaboration with industry partners from sectors such as logistics, energy, and manufacturing                                                                                                                                       | Eindhoven, The Netherlands  |
| 2018 – 2021<br>and 2023 – present | <b>Centrum Wiskunde &amp; Informatica</b><br><i>Researcher</i><br>Intelligent and Autonomous Systems Group<br>In collaboration with industry, took a leading role in applying AI and machine learning to the optimal management of energy producers and consumers on future energy markets with an increasing share of renewable energy; developed a related research vision for explainable search-based AI | Amsterdam, The Netherlands  |
| 2016 – 2018                       | <b>University of York</b><br><i>Research associate in artificial intelligence and data analytics</i><br>Digital Creativity Labs<br>Explored the integration of search algorithms and machine learning in increasingly complex commercial video games; explored ethical and societal issues around AI in interdisciplinary workshops                                                                          | York, United Kingdom        |
| 2015 – 2016                       | <b>European Space Agency</b><br><i>Research fellow in artificial intelligence</i><br>Advanced Concepts Team<br>Worked on “blue sky” research with potential future impact for the space sector, as well as serving as an internal science consultant for the European Space Research and Technology Centre                                                                                                   | Noordwijk, The Netherlands  |
| 2010 – 2015                       | <b>Maastricht University</b><br><i>PhD researcher</i><br>Department of Knowledge Engineering<br>Improved sequential decision making based on Monte Carlo Tree Search both in adversarial as well as single-agent environments                                                                                                                                                                                | Maastricht, The Netherlands |

## education

2007 – 2010	<b>M.Sc. Cognitive Science</b> Grade: “excellent with distinction” Specialization: artificial intelligence and linguistics Thesis title: “Adaptive Payout Policies for Monte-Carlo Go”	Universität Osnabrück, Germany
2006 – 2007	<b>Linguistics</b>	Universität Leipzig, Germany
2001 – 2006	<b>B.Sc. Computer Science</b> Grade: “very good”, ranked top 2% Thesis title: “Der Alpha-Beta-Algorithmus und Erweiterungen bei Vier Gewinnt”	Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany

## teaching experience

2022 – present	<b>Eindhoven University of Technology</b> <i>Lecturer</i> MSc course “Decision making with artificial and computational intelligence” My course redesign in 2023, part of my Dutch University Teaching Qualification, led to this course achieving the highest student evaluation in the study program.	Eindhoven, The Netherlands
2022 – present	<b>Jheronimus Academy of Data Science</b> <i>Lecturer</i> MSc course “Prescriptive Algorithms”	Tilburg, The Netherlands
2021	<b>Utrecht University</b> <i>Guest lecturer</i> Introductory class on reinforcement learning in games	Utrecht, The Netherlands
2013 – 2014	<b>Maastricht University</b> <i>Teaching assistant in computer science</i> Taught “skills class LaTeX” for undergraduates	Maastricht, The Netherlands
2011 – 2013	<b>Maastricht University</b> <i>Teaching assistant in computer science</i> Introduction to data structures and algorithms for undergraduates	Maastricht, The Netherlands
2009 – 2010	<b>IDF Language School</b> <i>English teacher</i> Grammar and conversational courses for individuals and groups	Osnabrück, Germany
2004 – 2005	<b>Technische Universität Darmstadt</b> <i>Teaching assistant in mathematics and computer science</i> Introduction to logic for second-year students, and programming for first-year students	Darmstadt, Germany

## project management

2023 – present	<b>Project “PEER”</b> Work package leader of WP3: “Human-AI collaboration on sequential decision-making tasks” (229 person-months total)	Horizon Europe project no. 101120406
2022 – present	<b>Project “ALIGN4Energy”</b> Work package co-leader of WP3: “Aligning human preferences, choices and technical systems” (132 person-months total)	Dutch Research Agenda, NWO-ORC project NWA.1389.20.251

## supervision experience

### phd students

2024 – present	<b>Chengpeng Hu</b> “Explainable sequential decision-making”; role: <i>supervisor</i>	Eindhoven University of Technology
2023 – present	<b>Bart von Meijefeldt</b> “Human-centric, collaborative sequential decision-making”; role: <i>supervisor</i>	Eindhoven University of Technology
2023 – present	<b>Gao Peng</b> “Sequential Decision-making for Multi-Agent Interest Alignment in Sustainable Energy Investments”; role: <i>co-supervisor</i>	Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica
2022 – 2024	<b>Tim de Boer</b> “Preference Elicitation for Multi-Agent Interest Alignment in Sustainable Energy Investments”; role: <i>co-supervisor</i>	Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica
2022 – present	<b>Luca Begnardi</b> “Integration of Planning and Learning: from Online Combinatorial Optimization to Real-World Applications”; role: <i>co-supervisor</i>	Eindhoven University of Technology
2017 – 2018	<b>Daniel Hernandez</b> “Multi-Agent Reinforcement Learning for Game AI and Robotic Control”; role: <i>supervision team member</i>	University of York
2017 – 2018	<b>Peter York</b> “Applying Tree Search and Reinforcement Learning to Competitive and Human-Like MOBA AI”; role: <i>supervision team member</i>	University of York
2016 – 2018	<b>Adam Sattaur</b> “The Use of Gameplay Data to Inform High-level AI Decision Making”; role: <i>supervision team member</i>	University of York

### engineering doctorate, master, and bachelor students; interns

List available on request.

### admin experience

2024 – present	<b>Jheronimus Academy of Data Science</b> <i>Member of exam committee</i>	Tilburg, The Netherlands
2013 – 2015	<b>Department of Knowledge Engineering</b> <i>PhD coordinator</i> Supported and represented PhD students at the department level	Maastricht, The Netherlands
2011 – 2015	<b>PhD Academy of Maastricht University</b> <i>Member, from 2013 board member, in 2014 chair of PhD Academy</i> Organized social, cultural and academic events for PhD students; funded by Maastricht University	Maastricht, The Netherlands
2013 – 2014	<b>University Council</b> <i>Co-founder of a group representing PhD researchers</i> Elected as one of six representatives of scientific staff in the University Council of Maastricht University	Maastricht, The Netherlands

## invited talks and research visits

2023	<b>University of Alberta</b> Talk at the Workshop on Neurosymbolic Programming	Edmonton, Canada
2022	<b>Leiden University</b> Talk at the Belgium-Netherlands workshop on Reinforcement Learning (BeNeRL)	Leiden, The Netherlands
2022	<b>Dutch Institute for Emergent Phenomena (DIEP)</b> Talk at the DIEP seminar	Amsterdam, The Netherlands
2019	<b>Queen Mary University of London</b> Talk at the game AI group seminar	London, United Kingdom
2017	<b>Lancaster University</b> Talk at the PACTMAN workshop on Trust, Identity, Privacy and Security in the Digital Economy	Lancaster, United Kingdom
2017	<b>University of York</b> Talk at the GamesLab Emerging Tech workshop (industry audience)	York, United Kingdom
2017	<b>University of York</b> Talk at the AI group seminar	York, United Kingdom
2017	<b>University of Essex</b> Talk at the School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering seminar	Colchester, United Kingdom
2016	<b>New York University Tandon School of Engineering</b> Talk at the NYU Game Innovation Lab seminar	New York City, NY, USA
2013	<b>University of Alberta</b> Talk at the AI group seminar	Edmonton, Canada
2012	<b>Reykjavik University</b> Research visit to the Center for Analysis and Design of Intelligent Agents; funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)	Reykjavik, Iceland

## impact and engagement

2023	<b>Vanderlande Tech Day</b> Guest talk for industry audience about human-centered, collaborative learning and planning	Veghel, The Netherlands
2018	<b>Pint of Science Festival</b> Talk about artificial intelligence and games at the “To the future... and beyond” session	York, United Kingdom
2017	<b>Yorkshire Games Festival</b> Talk about artificial intelligence and games at the “Lates: Gaming” session at the National Science and Media Museum	Bradford, United Kingdom
2017	<b>Science out of the Lab</b> Organized the activities of the Digital Creativity Labs at a science outreach event as part of the “York Festival of Ideas”; reached about 2000 people	York, United Kingdom
2016	<b>ESTEC Open Day</b> Co-organized the activities of the Advanced Concepts Team at the open day of the European Space Research and Technology Centre; reached about 9000 people	Noordwijk, The Netherlands

2013	<b>Career Day</b> Informed students on academic careers at the Department of Knowledge Engineering's career information day, Maastricht University	Maastricht, The Netherlands
2012	<b>DKE Open Day</b> Represented the game AI group at the Department of Knowledge Engineering's open day, Maastricht University	Maastricht, The Netherlands

## other activities

2023, 2024	<b>International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI)</b> <i>Co-Chair</i> of Workshop on Explainable Artificial Intelligence	
2024	<b>European Conference on Artificial Intelligence (ECAI)</b> <i>Co-Organizer</i> Workshop "Trustworthy Sequential Decision-Making and Optim."	
2023	<b>17th Learning and Intelligent Optimization conference (LION)</b> <i>Co-Organizer</i> of Special Session "Responsible AI in Practice"	Nice, France
2017-2018	<b>IEEE Conference on Computational Intelligence in Games 2017 and 2018</b> <i>Co-Organizer</i> of Text-Based Adventure AI Competition	New York, NY, USA / Maastricht, The Netherlands
2017	<b>CHERISH-DE initiative of the EPSRC</b> <i>Participant</i> of Digital Economy Crucible, a seven-day development program for young academics	Swansea/Edinburgh/London, United Kingdom
2013	<b>Artificial Intelligence and Interactive Digital Entertainment Conference 2012</b> <i>Participant</i> of AIIDE Doctoral Consortium	Stanford, CA, USA
2011 – present	<b>Professional Service</b> <i>Program committee member, senior program committee member and/or reviewer</i> for conferences and workshops in the fields of game AI, general AI and related fields, such as the International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence, the European Conference on Artificial Intelligence, the International Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems, the IEEE Conference on Computational Intelligence and Games, the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Interactive Digital Entertainment, the International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games, and the International Conference on Advances in Computer Games; as well as for journals such as the Journal of Autonomous Agents and Multi-Agent Systems, Theoretical Computer Science, Engineering Optimization, the IEEE Transactions on Games, and the ICGA Journal.	

## awards and funding

2023	<b>Horizon Europe call HORIZON-CL4-2022-HUMAN-02-01 — "AI for human empowerment (AI, Data and Robotics Partnership)"</b> <i>Co-Investigator and work package leader</i> Project title: "PEER – hyPER Expert"	total €7,737,900; work package €637,450
2023	<b>EWUU Alliance call "AI for Preventive Health and a Circular Society"</b> <i>Co-Investigator</i> Project title: "TakePart: An AI-driven Game in Digital Twin Platforms for Circular Green"	€40,000
2017	<b>Digital Economy Crucible "Research Priming" Award</b> <i>Co-Investigator and workshop organizer</i> Project title: "Building Trust in AI – Designing for Consent"	£5000

## publications

### journal articles

#### Value Targets in Off-policy AlphaZero: A New Greedy Backup

D. Willemsen, H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*Neural Computing and Applications* 34.3. Pp. 1801–1814. 2022

#### The Text-Based Adventure AI Competition

T. Atkinson, H. Baier, T. Coppleson, S. Devlin, J. Swan

*IEEE Transactions on Games* 11.3. Pp. 260–266. 2019

#### Emulating Human Play in a Leading Mobile Card Game

H. Baier, A. Sattaur, E. J. Powley, S. Devlin, P. I. Cowling, J. Rollason

*IEEE Transactions on Games* 11.4. Pp. 386–395. 2019

#### MCTS-Minimax Hybrids with State Evaluations

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research* 62. Pp. 193–231. 2018

#### Time Management for Monte Carlo Tree Search

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*IEEE Transactions on Computational Intelligence and AI in Games* 8.3. Pp. 301–314. 2016

#### MCTS-Minimax Hybrids

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*IEEE Transactions on Computational Intelligence and AI in Games* 7.2. Pp. 167–179. 2015

#### The Power of Forgetting: Improving the Last-Good-Reply Policy in Monte Carlo Go

H. Baier, P. Drake

*IEEE Transactions on Computational Intelligence and AI in Games* 2.4. Pp. 303–309. 2010

### conference articles

#### Enabling MCTS Explainability for Sequential Planning Through Computation Tree Logic

Z. An, H. Baier, A. Dubey, A. Mukhopadhyay, M. Ma

*27th European Conference on Artificial Intelligence (ECAI 2024)*. Accepted.

#### Deep Reinforcement Learning for Two-sided Online Bipartite Matching in Collaborative Order Picking

L. Begnardi, H. Baier, W. Jaarsveld, Y. Zhang

*Asian Conference on Machine Learning 2023 (ACML 2023)*, pp. 121–136. 2023

#### BRExit: On Opponent Modelling in Expert Iteration

D. Hernandez, H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*32th International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2023)*, pp. 3795–3802. 2023

#### Online Planning in POMDPs with Self-Improving Simulators

J. He, M. Suau, H. Baier, M. Kaisers, F. A. Oliehoek

*31st International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2022)*, pp. 4628–4634. 2022

#### ME-MCTS: Online Generalization by Combining Multiple Value Estimators

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*30th International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2021)*, pp. 4032–4038. 2021

#### Guiding Multiplayer MCTS by Focusing on Yourself [nominated for best paper]

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*2020 IEEE Conference on Games (CoG 2020)*, pp. 550–557. 2020

### Opponent-Pruning Paranoid Search [exceptional paper award]

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*2020 International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games (FDG 2020)*, 10:1–10:7. 2020

### Evolutionary MCTS for Multi-Action Adversarial Games [nominated for best paper]

H. Baier, P. I. Cowling

*2018 IEEE Conference on Computational Intelligence and Games (CIG 2018)*, pp. 1–8. 2018

### Evolutionary MCTS with Flexible Search Horizon

H. Baier, P. I. Cowling

*14th AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Interactive Digital Entertainment (AIIDE 2018)*, pp. 2–8. 2018

### Decentralized Online Planning for Multi-Robot Warehouse Commissioning [nominated for best paper]

D. Claes, F. Oliehoek, H. Baier, K. Tuyls

*16th International Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems (AAMAS 2017)*, pp. 492–500. 2017

### Monte-Carlo Tree Search and Minimax Hybrids

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*2013 IEEE Conference on Computational Intelligence and Games (CIG 2013)*, pp. 129–136. 2013

### Beam Monte-Carlo Tree Search

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*2012 IEEE Conference on Computational Intelligence and Games (CIG 2012)*, pp. 227–233. 2012

### Nested Monte-Carlo Tree Search for Online Planning in Large MDPs

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*20th European Conference on Artificial Intelligence (ECAI 2012)*, pp. 109–114. 2012

### Time Management for Monte-Carlo Tree Search in Go

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*13th International Conference on Advances in Computer Games (ACG 2011)*, pp. 39–51. 2012

### Active Opening Book Application for Monte-Carlo Tree Search in 19x19 Go

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*23rd Benelux Conference on Artificial Intelligence (BNAIC 2011)*, pp. 3–10. 2011

## workshop articles and extended abstracts

### Decision Making in Non-Stationary Environments with Policy-Augmented Search (Extended Abstract)

A. Pettet, Y. Zhang, B. Luo, K. Wray, H. Baier, A. Laszka, A. Dubey, A. Mukhopadhyay

*23rd International Conference on Autonomous Agents and Multiagent Systems (AAMAS 2024)*. 2024

### Novelty and MCTS

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*1st Evolutionary Reinforcement Learning Workshop at GECCO (EVORL 2021)*, pp. 1483–1487. 2021

### Towards Explainable MCTS

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*AAAI 2021 Workshop on Explainable Agency in AI*. 2021

### Explainable Search

H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*2020 IJCAI-PRICAI Workshop on Explainable Artificial Intelligence*. 2020

### Value Targets in Off-policy AlphaZero: A New Greedy Backup

D. Willemsen, H. Baier, M. Kaisers

*2020 Adaptive and Learning Agents Workshop at AAMAS (ALA 2020)*. 2020

### MCTS-Minimax Hybrids with State Evaluations (Extended Abstract)

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*27th International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI 2018)*, pp. 5548–5552. 2018

### **A Rollout-Based Hybrid Unifying MCTS and Alpha-Beta**

H. Baier

*Computer Games: Fifth Workshop on Computer Games (CGW 2016)*, pp. 57–70. 2017

### **Monte-Carlo Tree Search and Minimax Hybrids with Heuristic Evaluation Functions**

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*Computer Games: Third Workshop on Computer Games (CGW 2014)*, pp. 45–63. 2014

### **Nested Monte-Carlo Tree Search for Online Planning in Large MDPs (Extended Abstract)**

H. Baier, M. H. M. Winands

*24th Benelux Conference on Artificial Intelligence (BNAIC 2012)*, pp. 273–274. 2012

## **theses**

### **Monte-Carlo Tree Search Enhancements for One-Player and Two-Player Domains**

H. Baier

*Ph.D. thesis. Department of Knowledge Engineering, Maastricht University, Maastricht, The Netherlands.* 2015

### **Adaptive Playout Policies for Monte Carlo Go**

H. Baier

*Master's thesis. Institute of Cognitive Science, Osnabrück University, Osnabrück, Germany.* 2010

### **Der Alpha-Beta-Algorithmus und Erweiterungen bei Vier Gewinn**

H. Baier

*Bachelor's thesis. Department of Computer Science, Technische Universität Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany.* 2006