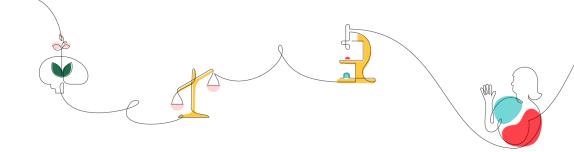# Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

Interview Guide | Data Science

Welcome

Thank you for your continued interest in the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. This document provides an overview of your next day of interviews. We appreciate the time you've invested in our interview process and are excited to have you meet the team!

Please review our **Candidate Journey** to learn more about CZI, our culture, and **how to prepare for a Zoom interview**. If you require additional accommodations, have questions, or need support on the day of your interviews, please contact your Recruiter or Recruiting Coordinator. Someone from the team will ensure you are taken care of and that your experience is smooth.

1:1 Interviews

You will meet with 4-5 of our interviewers - some potential teammates and some cross-functional team members, for approximately 45- 60 minutes each. You will mostly meet with one interviewer at a time, but there may, on occasion, be an additional team member observing the interview, we use interviews to help calibrate our interviewing team. At some point during your visit, your Recruiter will meet with you to touch base.

Ask Me Anything (AMA)

There will also be a 30-minute "ask me anything" interview, where a member of the team will meet with you to answer any questions you might have and have the opportunity to learn about us and our work.

Lunch & Breaks

Breaks will be scheduled after 2-3 interviews, and if you're interviewing with us during the hours of 11:30am through 1:30pm PT we will schedule a lunch break. This will be your opportunity to take a break, stretch, use the bathroom, grab a snack, etc. Of course, if you need anything at any point during your interview, please let your interviewer know. Your comfort is important to us throughout your interview experience.

You are likely to encounter the following interview types:

1. Technical Skills - Coding Ability

2. Domain-Specific Analytics

3. Generalized Analytics

4. Leadership and Cross-functional Partnerships

Technical Skills - Coding Ability

During this style of interview you will have the option to solve a coding problem on a laptop. You'll be able to code in the language (SQL, R, Python) of your choice to solve technical data questions. However, if the role is for the Product Analytics track we do prefer SQL. Please come prepared with your own environment that will allow you to ingest and analyze CSV files. If you do not come with your own environment, we will provide you with details to get set up on Snowflake.

Domain Specific Analytics

This interview will be around data explorations, statistical hypothesis testing and applications of findings to the product. You may be given problems to understand a student's life in a classroom, for example, predict a student's performance on projects, based on subject and grade; and what you can recommend to the product based on the analytics findings. The interviewer will assess your technical knowledge and presentation skills to a broader audience/leadership as well as your product sense.

We have a handful of questions designed to explore how you think through. While you won't be coding, you will be expected to discuss how and why you might implement a certain design. These questions don't have a correct answer or a definitive endpoint. Rather, they give you the chance to demonstrate how you handle complexity and make decisions factoring in a variety of requirements and stakeholders.

Generalized Analytics

This interview will be focused on your intuition and skills regarding what measures and metrics you should define to capture an objective and how you will communicate that to cross-functional partners. For example, we have just rolled out a new feature. The main objective you and PM laid out for this feature is that the new feature captures how frequently students are working on their projects. As the lead data scientist, what will you measure, track as metrics, and communicate to the rest of the team?

Leadership and Cross-functional Partnerships

This interview gives candidates an opportunity to highlight their experiences and perspectives through behavioral-style interviewing. We believe that teams composed of people with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints will allow us to create better solutions and relationships with the communities in which we serve and help us advance our goals under each initiative. This interview will be with our awesome cross-functional (non-Data Science) partners, typically from PM, Engineering, User research, or Design! They want to gather signals on how great it will be to work with you, as well as if they can rely on you with respect to data accuracy and insights, so the organization can make data-driven decisions!

General Tips for Interviewing

Think out loud
It's not just about the end solution. What we care about is how you are thinking about a problem and the approach you are taking to get to a destination. Bounce ideas off of your interviewer. Break down the problem out loud. Share what parts of the problem you're struggling with. By communicating your thought process, you are also giving the interviewer the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings and provide high-level guidance.

Understand the problem
If you don't fully understand the question, ask! Take the time to fully understand what is being asked before jumping in.

*Take a moment to consider **alternative approaches*** - It can be helpful to consider multiple approaches and then choose one. You could choose based on time/space complexity, ease of implementation, extendability, or something else! That said, sharing how you're thinking about these trade-offs with the interviewer is really helpful.

Do your research and bring your questions
Do your research on us and think about what motivated you to engage with CZI. This is your opportunity to interview us as well. We value curiosity and want to answer your questions.

Be yourself
Tell us what you're passionate about and what drives you. We want to learn about you and the perspective you bring to CZI. The best tools are built by teams with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints, so we want you to bring your authentic self to the interview.

Stay focused and positive
Don't worry if your solution is not perfect on the first try. Don't let that throw you off your game during the interview. We hit roadblocks everyday - it's about how you navigate them that makes the work fun.

*Don't forget about **edge cases*** - Once you have a solution, make sure it can handle most, if not all, edge cases!

We Are Not Looking For.....

Coding language minutiae
While we are looking for general fluency in the language of your choice, don't worry if you forget the exact API of a library function or can't remember the exact syntax of something. Using the internet resourcefully is an expected part of the job, so in an interview context, just make up something reasonable and move on.

Ability to respond to stress
We recognize that interviewing can make someone nervous and not able to perform to their full ability. We are not trying to trick you, intimidate you, or otherwise place even more stress on you just to see how you respond.

The perfect solution
Our questions are designed to be complex. We don't expect you to come up with a brilliant, optimal solution in 45 minutes. Rather, we look for how you develop and communicate your approach, how you turn your approach into code and how you iterate and improve the code you've already written. At the same time, ***don't rush into the first brute force solution that comes to mind; we do like to see that you can develop multiple approaches and compare them to choose the best one.***