

BJARKI SIGURJÓNSSON THORARENSEN

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Co-founder of Vestra AI and Slapp, an Icelandic social app where every user is verified with electronic ID. 22,000+ users (over 5% of Iceland) with no paid marketing, and monthly revenue from subscriptions and ads. Full-stack and machine learning engineer; MSc Machine Learning student at KTH.

EXPERIENCE

VESTRA AI EHF. • Slapp

Reykjavík / Stockholm • 2025 – Present

Co-founder & Co-owner (with Kristján Leó Guðmundsson)

- Co-founded Slapp, a social app where every user signs in with Icelandic electronic ID. Grew to 22,000+ verified users (over 5% of Iceland's population) with no paid marketing since launch in early 2026.
- Built the whole product with one co-founder: iOS and Android app (Expo/React Native), website, admin tools, advertiser portal and shop on a shared Convex backend. About 530,000 lines of TypeScript and 2,700+ commits in ten months.
- Launched Slapp+, a paid subscription with growing monthly revenue. Built a self-service ad platform (tilbod.slapp.is) and signed Nova and Domino's as the first major advertisers through direct sales.
- Built the feed recommendation system in-house: user and post embeddings (item2vec, Node2Vec) and a ranking model that is retrained every night and only deployed if it beats the current one.
- Built machine learning for user retention: a model that decides which push notifications to send (half as many notifications, 87.6% of opens kept) and a model that predicts which users are about to leave, tested against a control group.
- Led partnership talks with Síminn (Iceland's largest telecom). Before Slapp, built and tested about 30 product ideas across 58 repositories in 2025.
- In 2026 also built Melven, a football picks site with a published, checkable record, and the prediction models behind it, and, with Kristján, MCP servers and a chat widget delivered to Tixly.

JUNI DIGITAL

Reykjavík • Jan 2023 – Aug 2025

Web Developer

- Built websites and apps for companies and public institutions at one of Iceland's leading digital agencies, using Next.js, TypeScript, GraphQL and headless CMS (Contentful, Prismic).
- Clients included Vegir okkar allra, Harpa (harpa.is), Ljósleiðarinn, Apótekarinn (mobile app), Nemendagrunnur and Bananar.

EDUCATION

KTH ROYAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Stockholm · Aug 2025 – Dec 2027

MSc Machine Learning · expected to graduate December 2027

- Took one semester off in spring 2026 to focus on Slapp; back since autumn 2026.

UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Reykjavík · 2020 – 2023

BSc Software Engineering · GPA 8.66 / 10

- Exchange semester at George Washington University, USA (spring 2022). Teaching assistant in Calculus I, autumn 2021 and autumn 2022.

THE COMMERCIAL COLLEGE OF ICELAND

Reykjavík · 2017 – 2020

Physics track · Mathematics award (9.7 / 10 average) and finalist in the national mathematics competition

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Machine learning	Python, PyTorch, NumPy, Pandas; recommendation and ranking models in production, embeddings (item2vec, Node2Vec), vector search, A/B testing
Product engineering	TypeScript, React, Next.js, React Native / Expo, Node.js, Convex, GraphQL, PostgreSQL, Better Auth / OIDC, RevenueCat
Infrastructure	Git, Turborepo monorepos, Expo EAS builds and over-the-air updates, App Store and Google Play releases, Cloudflare R2 and Stream, Google Cloud KMS, Vercel, Docker
Languages	Icelandic (native), English (fluent), Swedish (A2, currently studying)

AWARDS

HUAWEI SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE · Top 7 in Europe

Sep – Dec 2022

Pitched a startup idea for better training data in breast-cancer screening AI; presented at the finals in Greece and Austria.

WRITING

VÍSIR · Opinion column (Iceland's largest news site)

3 Sep 2026

“Veist þú í raun hvernig gervigreind virkar?” (Do you really know how AI works?). An explainer for a general audience on how large language models work, where they fail, and what a new Statistics Iceland survey shows about AI use in Icelandic companies. [Read it](#)