

# Seven Years of Data Science at Airbnb

Elena Grewal

Airbnb

[elena.grewal@gmail.com](mailto:elena.grewal@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

In this talk I will share my experience at the start of “Data Science” in 2012, joining one of the fastest growing early stage unicorns and then building data science over 7 years. What we think of when we think of data science has evolved rapidly during this time. At Airbnb we now use data across product and operations, and for decisions by humans and machines. I will share my predictions for the future and where I believe data science can make the biggest impact in the years to come.

## BIOGRAPHY

Elena Grewal is an executive at Airbnb who has built one of the most diverse and highest performing data science functions in the industry. She started as data scientist #5, and has overseen growth of the function to over 200 across the globe, with 42% women and 12% under-represented minorities. The company valuation grew from 1.5B to 38B during this time. Elena graduated from Yale University with a degree in Ethics, Politics, and Economics, and

received a Ph.D. from Stanford University in the Economics of Education. In her free time she enjoys playing the card game bridge, and has created a set of “How to” videos for YouTube with the brand Bridge BFF.



Permission to make digital or hard copies of part or all of this work for personal or classroom use is granted without fee provided that copies are not made or distributed for profit or commercial advantage and that copies bear this notice and the full citation on the first page. Copyrights for third-party components of this work must be honored. For all other uses, contact the Owner/Author.

*KDD '19, August 4–8, 2019, Anchorage, AK, USA.*

© 2019 Copyright is held by the owner/author(s).

ACM ISBN 978-1-4503-6201-6/19/08.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3292500.3340401>