Stefano Simonetto, 28 (PhD)

Who am I

I've built 10+ open-source projects at the intersection of AI and cybersecurity as part of my PhD. My research is product-oriented since Cisco funds it. Over the past 4 years, I've presented my work at 7+ international conferences spanning AI and cybersecurity, connecting with leading academics and industry experts across the field.

I've always been a builder. At 15, I built a line-following robot that ranked in the top 10 nationally. At 19, before even starting computer engineering, I designed and built the hardware + software for an automated medication dispenser. I later funded my Master's by working at a leading telecom company. Since then, my path has taken me across Italy, the Netherlands, and Singapore. Today, I'm pursuing a PhD focused on using AI to solve real cybersecurity problems, **THIS IS MY EDGE:** 4 years of deep, hands-on experience building AI systems that connect technical vulnerability data with real-world attack outcomes (helping organizations identify what matters, prioritize, and reduce risk).

What I've built

I built an AI-driven framework (comprising 10+ open source projects) that connects siloed cyber threat intelligence standards despite their different terminology, structures, and levels of abstraction. I built the full pipeline: gathering and structuring the data, creating data-augmentation methods, adapting state-of-the-art AI models, and designing the benchmarks used to evaluate them.

Why I'd be the best CTOs to build with

My PhD has required me to move across computer engineering, cybersecurity, and AI, learn new methods quickly, and adapt them to problems where the data, constraints, and evaluation criteria were not clearly defined. I have worked with and managed 12+ researchers and students across projects with different requirements and goals. This taught me how to break down complex work, give people ownership, and adapt my leadership to different skills and working styles.

What I want to build next

I want to build in cybersecurity, specifically around vulnerability prioritization. AI is becoming increasingly effective at discovering software vulnerabilities, which means companies will soon face an even larger volume of issues to assess and fix. The real challenge will not be finding vulnerabilities, but understanding which ones matter most. I want to build a platform that adapts generic vulnerability scores to the specific environment of each company. If you are excited about it, or related topics, come and have a chat.

Who I want to build with

I want to build with anyone who complements my cybersecurity expertise with strong commercial instincts and a close understanding of the market. I am looking for someone who is comfortable owning customer discovery, sales, partnerships, fundraising, and company building. I would bring the technical vision, cybersecurity expertise, and ability to build the product. I want a co-founder who challenges my assumptions, keeps us close to customers, and helps turn strong technology into a category-defining cybersecurity company.