

S E M I N A R

Hadley Wickham
(Posit PBC, USA)**Date:**

Thursday, 20 November 2025

Time:

16h00-17h00 SAST

Venues:

- Room 2054, 2nd floor
Van der Sterr Building,
cnr Victoria & Bosman Streets
Stellenbosch
- Online

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All are welcome.

ENQUIRIES:

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A no-bullshit guide to programming with LLMs in R

ABSTRACT:

Large Language Models (LLMs) are taking over the world, but they are surrounded by a nearly impenetrable wall of jargon, flimflammy, breathless hype, and good old-fashioned snake oil. Despite the noise, LLMs have some genuinely cool and useful features, and seem likely to radically change how we do data science.

In this no-nonsense talk, I'll discuss three genuinely useful techniques that you can use today: structured data, coding, and tool calling. I'll interact with LLMs exclusively from R, using `ellmer` (<https://ellmer.tidyverse.org>). As well as giving you some useful R programming skills, you will see how programming with LLMs makes it much easier to understand some of the abstruse jargon that tends to grow around LLMs.

Hadley Wickham is Chief Scientist at Posit PBC, winner of the 2019 COPSS award, and a member of the R Foundation. He builds tools (both computational and cognitive) to make data science easier, faster, and more fun. His work includes creating packages for data science, such as the tidyverse (which includes ggplot2, dplyr, and tidyr) and for principled software development (e.g. roxygen2, testthat, and pkgdown). He is also a writer, educator, and speaker who champions the use of R for data science. Learn more at <https://hadley.nz/>

REGISTER TO ATTEND ONLINE: <https://bit.ly/3LswinA>To attend in person, please **RSVP** to krugere@sun.ac.za by 14 November 2025