

DEEP IDEATION: DESIGNING LLM AGENTS TO GENERATE NOVEL RESEARCH IDEAS ON SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT NETWORK

Anonymous authors

Paper under double-blind review

ABSTRACT

Novel research ideas play a critical role in advancing scientific inquiries. Recent advancements in Large Language Models (LLMs) have demonstrated their potential to generate novel research ideas by leveraging large-scale scientific literature. However, previous work in research ideation has primarily relied on simplistic methods, such as keyword co-occurrence or semantic similarity. These approaches focus on identifying statistical associations in the literature but overlook the complex, contextual relationships between scientific concepts, which are essential to effectively leverage knowledge embedded in human literature. For instance, papers that simultaneously mention "keyword A" and "keyword B" often present research ideas that integrate both concepts. Additionally, some LLM-driven methods propose and iteratively enhance research ideas using the model's vast internal knowledge, but they fail to effectively leverage the valuable scientific concept network, limiting the grounding of these ideas in established research. To address these challenges, we propose the **Deep Ideation** framework, which integrates a scientific network that not only captures keyword co-occurrence but also incorporates contextual relationships between keywords, providing a richer scientific foundation for LLM-driven ideation. Our framework introduces an explore-expand-evolve workflow for Deep-Ideation which integrates several key components to iteratively refine research ideas. Throughout this workflow, we maintain an Idea Stack to track research progress across iterations. To guide this search and evolution process, we integrate a critic engine trained on real-world reviewer feedback, providing continuous signals on the novelty and feasibility of generated ideas. Experimental results across multiple AI domains show that our approach significantly improves the overall quality of generated ideas by **10.67%** compared to other methods, with the generated ideas exceeding the acceptance level of top conferences. Human evaluation highlights the practical value of the generated ideas in supporting scientific research while ablation studies further confirm the effectiveness of each component of the workflow.

1 INTRODUCTION

The emerging agentic power of Large Language Models (LLMs) Li et al. (2025); Wu et al. (2025); Zhao et al. (2025b) has inspired wide rang of researchers to design LLM agents to automate scientific discovery Wang et al. (2023); Lu et al. (2024); Peng et al. (2025), which is often known as AI scientist systems Yamada et al. (2025); Gottweis et al. (2025); Yu et al. (2024); Qi et al. (2024). Ideation, the ability to generate novel yet feasible research ideas, is arguably one of the most important capabilities, as it shapes the direction of scientific inquiry and influences the course of human progress Coccia (2019); Langley (1987). The ability to generate innovative research ideas has thus become a central focus, with Large Language Models (LLMs) emerging as powerful tools to enhance this process. Recent breakthroughs in LLMs in complex reasoning DeepSeek-AI et al. (2025); Muennighoff et al. (2025); Chen et al. (2025) and world knowledge Yang et al. (2025); Team et al. (2025) have significantly accelerated efforts to harness AI for advancing scientific ideation Si et al. (2024); Su et al. (2024); Pu et al. (2025).

054 Human scientists have long constructed meaningful relationships between scientific concepts
055 through literature, forming a rich scientific concept network. Previous methods have attempted
056 to capture these relationships using semantic embeddings, focusing on concept similarity. How-
057 ever, these approaches only learn a static representation of each concept, overlooking the nuanced,
058 co-occurrence-based relationships that human scientists build through research. More recent work
059 leveraging LLMs has demonstrated the potential for iterative optimization of scientific ideas by har-
060 nassing the vast world knowledge of these models Zheng et al. (2025b); Schmidgall et al.. Yet, these
061 methods fail to tap into the dynamic, evolving nature of the scientific concept network, missing
062 the opportunity to continuously retrieve and integrate the complex, context-dependent relationships
063 between concepts.

064 Although enabling LLMs to continuously interact with the scientific network is promising, it is non-
065 trivial to achieve this. On one hand, extracting meaningful concept relationships from scientific
066 literature is complex due to the nuanced, context-dependent nature of these connections. On the
067 other hand, enabling LLMs to dynamically interact with this network and incorporate new knowl-
068 edge throughout the ideation process poses significant difficulties

069 To construct the scientific concept network, we crawled approximately 100,000 PDFs from the past
070 decade’s top 10 AI conferences and analyzed various sections of these papers. Using LLMs, we
071 extracted keywords from the papers and captured the relationships between these keywords as con-
072 structed by scientists within each paper. To integrate this scientific keyword network with LLM
073 Agents for generating scientifically grounded ideas and allow LLM agents to optimize their ideas
074 through dynamic interaction with the knowledge base, we propose the **Deep Ideation Framework**.
075 The construction of the scientific network and the Deep Ideation process are shown in Figure 1.
076 First, we construct a scientific network based on keyword co-occurrence within scientific literature
077 and design three key components within the framework: relation analysis, keyword selection, and
078 idea formulation. Secondly, we design a dynamic workflow where the LLM iteratively explores
079 the relationships between existing keywords constructed by previous study within the scientific net-
080 work, expanding the current set of scientific keywords used to inform the generation of ideas. As the
081 keyword set evolves, the idea proposal is continuously refined and improved. Throughout this iter-
082 ative process, a idea stack is maintained, providing the LLM with a global perspective of the whole
083 research progress. Finally, we fine-tune the LLM using publicly available review data, enabling it to
084 provide feedback on the generated ideas through a scientifically grounded perspective.

085 We conducted extensive experiments across four AI research domains to evaluate the performance
086 of our proposed method. The results demonstrate a significant improvement in idea generation, with
087 our approach outperforming the best baseline by an average of 10.25% across four AI domains,
088 reaching the acceptance level of eight out of ten AI conferences. In addition, a human evaluation
089 was conducted to assess the practical impact of our approach, where the generated idea proposals
090 were found to provide genuine inspiration and value to researchers. Furthermore, we conducted
091 ablation studies and a case study, which validated the effectiveness of each module in the Deep
092 Ideation workflow and demonstrated the novelty of the generated ideas.

093 The key contributions of this work are as follows:

- 094
- 095 • We collect approximately 100,000 papers from ten major AI conferences over the past
096 decade, constructing a vast scientific concept network based on the co-occurrence and re-
097 lationships of keywords. This dataset will be made publicly available for the research
098 community to foster further collaboration and exploration.
- 099
- 100
- 101
- 102 • We propose the deep-ideation framework, which leverages the scientific concept network to
103 iteratively retrieve and incorporate scientific concept relationships, enabling the generation
104 of high-quality research ideas through an evolutionary search and refinement process.
- 105
- 106
- 107 • We create a review dataset derived from real-world reviewer feedback, and use this dataset
to train a critic model which guides the ideation process under expert-level evaluation.

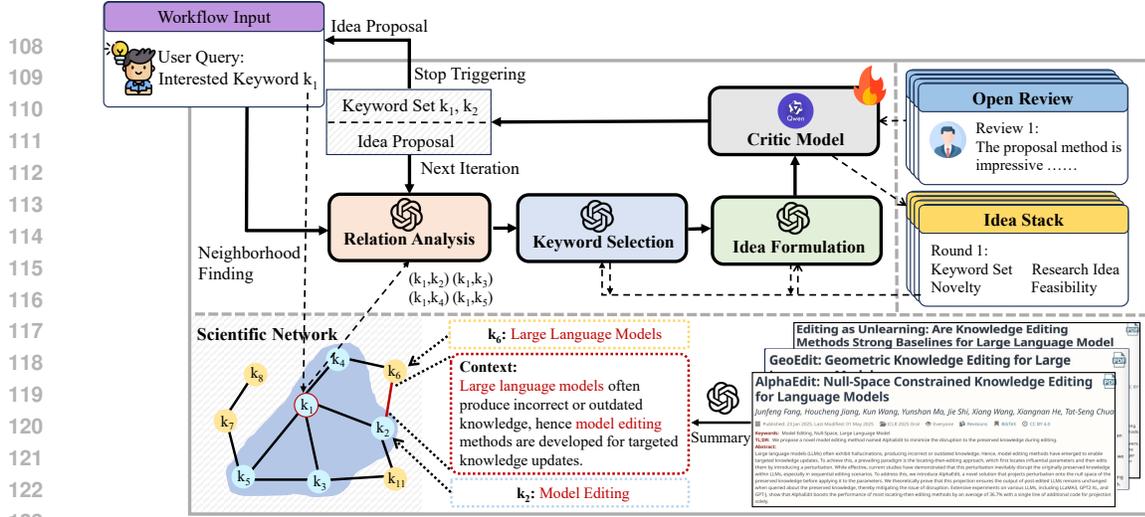


Figure 1: Illustration of the construction of the scientific network and the Deep Ideation process

2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

2.1 DEFINITION OF SCIENTIFIC NETWORK

Scientific literature forms a vast corpus of interconnected concepts, methodologies, and findings. Organizing this knowledge as a graph Badalyan et al. (2024) efficiently represents complex relationships between scientific ideas Wang et al. (2023); Sourati & Evans (2023), while facilitating easy retrieval and navigation. Keywords, which encapsulate the core themes of a paper, are essential carriers of scientific knowledge. The relationships between co-occurring keywords in individual papers help construct a scientific network, reflecting the interconnections between concepts across the literature.

Formally, let $G = (V, E)$ denote the scientific network, where $V = \{v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n\}$ represents the set of nodes corresponding to keywords, and $E \subseteq V \times V$ represents the edges between them. An edge $(v_i, v_j) \in E$ exists if keywords v_i and v_j co-occur in at least one paper. The feature F_{ij} of the edge (v_i, v_j) is defined as a function of the relationship between v_i and v_j across all papers in which they both appear. Specifically, let $P_{i,j}$ denote the set of papers in which both keywords v_i and v_j co-occur. Then, the feature F_{ij} of the edge (v_i, v_j) can be represented as:

$$F_{ij} = g(\{\text{relation}(v_i, v_j, p) \mid p \in P_{i,j}\}),$$

where $\text{relation}(v_i, v_j, p)$ captures the relationship between v_i and v_j in paper p , and g is a function that aggregates or processes these relationships to form a meaningful feature representing the connection between the keywords across multiple papers.

2.2 FORMULATING RESEARCH IDEATION PROBLEM

Research ideation is a crucial aspect of scientific research Wang et al. (2023); Reddy & Shojaee (2025); Zheng et al. (2025a), where researchers generate and refine novel ideas based on existing knowledge. The effectiveness of scientific ideation depends on how well it leverages prior knowledge to address gaps or challenges in the current research landscape. Therefore, in this paper, we define scientific ideation as the process through which an initial set of keywords, representing key concepts in the research domain, is transformed into an idea proposal that meaningfully synthesizes these concepts in an innovative way.

Formally, let $I = f(K, \Theta, \Psi)$ represent the idea proposal generated by the system, where $K = \{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_n\}$ is the set of input keywords, Θ represents the model parameters or system workflow of the ideation system, and Ψ denotes the external knowledge base that informs the ideation process. The idea proposal I is thus a function of the keywords, the system’s parameters, and the accessible

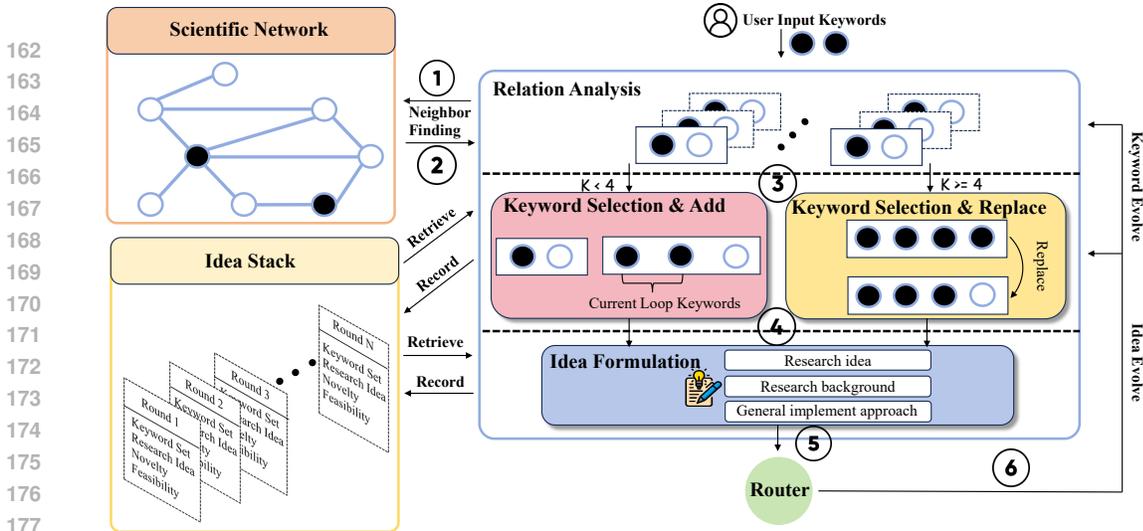


Figure 2: Overview of our Deep Ideation framework. In this figure, we set the maximum size of the keyword set to 4.

external knowledge base, i.e., $I = f(K, \Theta, \Psi)$. To capture the iterative nature of the ideation process, let:

$$I_{t+1} = f(K_t, \Theta_t, \Psi_t), \quad K_{t+1} = \phi(K_t, I_t, \Psi_t),$$

where I_t denotes the idea proposal at iteration t , K_t represents the set of keywords at iteration t , and Ψ_t represents the external knowledge base at iteration t . The function ϕ indicates the refinement of the keyword set based on the output of the previous idea proposal and external knowledge. This iterative cycle continues until the generated idea reaches a satisfactory level of novelty and feasibility, or until a stopping criterion is met.

3 METHODS

3.1 OVERVIEW

To generate scientifically grounded ideas, we propose the Deep Ideation Framework, which integrates a scientific network with LLM Agents for dynamic interaction. The framework operates iteratively, where the LLM queries a constructed scientific network based on keyword co-occurrence within scientific literature. In parallel, the Idea Stack tracks the progression of ideas, offering real-time feedback and guidance on the evolving research proposal, much like how human researchers refine their hypotheses over time through accumulated insights. During each iteration, the framework incorporates an evolving keyword management process Romera-Paredes et al. (2024); Ma et al. (2024), where the LLM is able to iteratively replace keywords within the scientific network. To further refine this process, we introduce a Review Model, trained on publicly available review data, which critically evaluates the novelty and feasibility of the generated ideas, guiding the LLM’s ideation process with evaluative feedback. The overall process is illustrated in Figure 2.

3.2 KEY COMPONENTS OF DEEP IDEATION FRAMEWORK

This section presents the construction of the scientific network and introduces four key components of the Deep Ideation Framework: the Scientific Network, the Relation Analysis Module, the Keyword Selection Module, and the Idea Formulation Module. We provide the detailed prompts used for the framework in Appendix A.1.

The Scientific Network is constructed based on the definition provided in Section 2.1. Initially, the article’s title, abstract, and introduction are input into the LLM. Using a ”select first, then supplement” approach, the LLM extracts relevant keywords from these sections. These keywords are

216 treated as nodes in the network. Subsequently, co-occurring keywords within the same paper are
 217 connected by edges. The content of each paper defines the relationship between the connected key-
 218 words, serving as the feature that characterizes these edges.

219 **Relation Analysis Module** is responsible for summarizing how the co-occurring papers construct
 220 connections between the keywords. Specifically, it analyzes the relationships between keywords and
 221 their neighboring terms as established in the literature, capturing the way these terms are linked in
 222 the context of scientific research.

223 **Keyword Selection Module** plays a crucial role in steering the ideation process by selecting the
 224 most significant and impactful keywords to expand the initial set. Beyond merely refining the key-
 225 word collection, this module actively shapes the direction of the evolving idea, ensuring that it
 226 remains focused on the most promising avenues for both novelty and feasibility.

227 **Idea Formulation Module** addresses a key gap in many existing approaches, which often focus
 228 solely on keyword combinations without providing a complete, structured idea proposal Sourati &
 229 Evans (2023). This module plays a critical role in synthesizing the selected keywords into a coher-
 230 ent and scientifically grounded idea proposal, transforming a set of keywords into a fully formed
 231 concept.
 232

233 3.3 DEEP IDEATION FRAMEWORK

234 3.3.1 EXPLORE

235 The process begins with an initial set of keywords $K_0 = \{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_n\}$, which are refined by
 236 identifying and analyzing their neighboring terms within the scientific network. To obtain the neigh-
 237 boring keywords, we define $N(K_0)$ as the set of neighboring keywords for all $k_i \in K_0$. Since the
 238 number of neighbors for each keyword may be large, we limit the selection to the m neighboring
 239 terms, where m is a predefined maximum number. This gives us a set of neighboring keywords for
 240 each k_i :
 241

$$242 N(K_0) = \{N(k_1), N(k_2), \dots, N(k_n)\}$$

243 Each $N(k_i)$ is limited to the m neighbors. The **Relation Analysis Module** then analyzes the rela-
 244 tionships between each pair of selected keywords (k_i, k_j) and their common co-occurrence across
 245 multiple papers. Given that multiple papers can share co-occurring keywords, the relationship
 246 $R(k_i, k_j)$ between two keywords is derived by considering all the papers where both k_i and k_j
 247 appear, represented by $\mathcal{P}(k_i, k_j)$:
 248

$$249 R(k_i, k_j) = g(k_i, k_j, \mathcal{P}(k_i, k_j))$$

250 where $\mathcal{P}(k_i, k_j) = \{p_1, p_2, \dots, p_t\}$ represents the set of papers p that both k_i and k_j co-occur in,
 251 and g is a function that aggregate the relationship together.
 252

253 3.3.2 EXPAND

254 Following the exploration and relation analysis, the **Keyword Selection Module** is tasked with
 255 selecting the most significant keyword k_{new} to add to the current set K_t , where $k_{\text{new}} \in N(K_0)$. The
 256 selection is based on a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the new keyword and the
 257 existing set of keywords. This new keyword is chosen by evaluating the relationships $R(k_{\text{new}}, k_i)$ for
 258 each $k_i \in K_t$, where the relationship between the newly selected keyword and an existing keyword
 259 is considered:
 260

$$261 R(k_{\text{new}}, k_i) = g(k_{\text{new}}, k_i, \mathcal{P}(k_{\text{new}}, k_i))$$

262 The Keyword Selection Module outputs the selected keyword k_{new} , the reason for the selection
 263 (based on its relationship to the current keyword set), and its connection to the existing keyword.
 264 The selected keyword is then added to the current keyword set:
 265

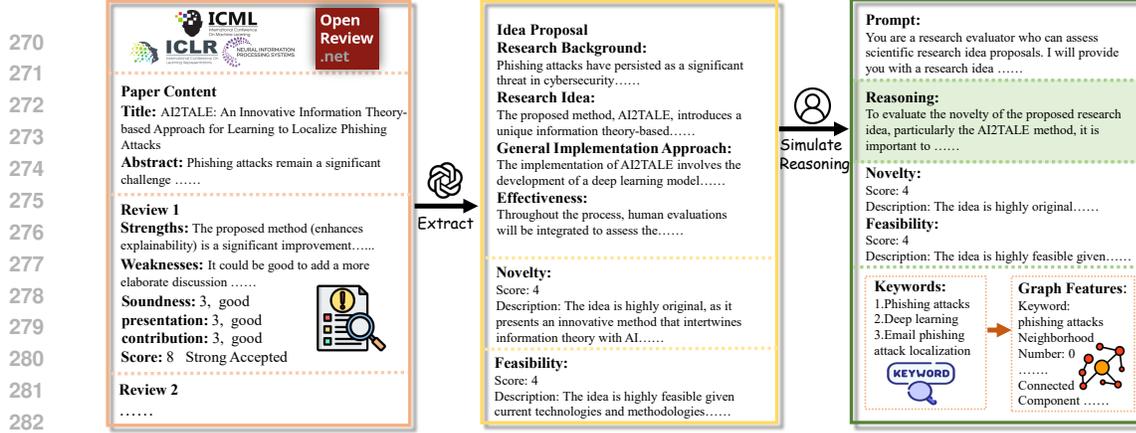


Figure 3: The construction process of the training data for the Review Model

$$K_{t+1} = K_t \cup \{k_{\text{new}}\}$$

Subsequently, this updated set of keywords K_{t+1} and the **Idea Stack**, which contains all previous research iterations (including keyword sets and idea proposals), are input into the **Idea Formulation Module**. The Idea Formulation Module synthesizes the selected keywords into a coherent idea proposal, which includes the research background, research idea, and a general implementation approach. The idea proposal at time t is generated as:

$$P_t = LLM(K_{t+1}, \text{prompt})$$

where the prompt represent the prompt template for idea formulation module. The Idea Stack records each round’s progress, tracking keyword evolution, idea development, and evaluations, thus mirroring the iterative nature of human research.

3.3.3 EVOLVE

The Evolve Mechanism triggers when the keyword set reaches a predefined length L_{max} . At this point, the focus shifts to evolving the keyword set or the idea proposal. The **Router** determines whether the focus should be on refining the keyword set or on adjusting the idea proposal. The Router decision is formalized as:

$$\text{Next Action} = \begin{cases} \text{Keywords Evolve} & \text{if Router} == \text{Evolve}(K_t) \\ \text{Idea Proposal Evolve} & \text{if Router} == \text{Evolve}(P_t) \end{cases}$$

During the evolution phase, the keywords in K_t are dynamically replaced based on insights from previous iterations. This evolution is represented by:

$$K_{t+1} = (K_t \setminus \{k_{\text{old}}\}) \cup \{k_{\text{new}}\} \quad \text{or} \quad P_{t+1} = LLM(K_{t+1}, \text{prompt})$$

The idea proposal is refined by incorporating new findings and emerging research trends, while the keyword set is updated iteratively to adapt to the evolving research context. This ensures that the generated ideas continue to evolve, progressively becoming more novel and feasible.

3.4 CRITIC MODEL

The Critic Model serves as the driving force behind the iterative refinement and evolution of ideas within the Deep Ideation framework. By providing evaluative feedback on the quality of generated idea proposals, it plays a central role in guiding the ideation process through continuous refinement.

This feedback loop ensures that each iteration of the framework is grounded in expert-level evaluation, enabling the system to evolve and generate progressively more innovative and scientifically valid ideas.

While direct use of an LLM for the review process is possible, it falls short in replicating the nuanced evaluative reasoning employed by expert reviewers, generating surface-level assessments but lack the deep, domain-specific understanding. To overcome this, we designed a "Scientific Reasoning Simulation" prompt to enable the LLM to provide review feedback aligned with human reviewers' scientific thinking Zhao et al. (2025a). In this prompt, the LLM is directed to simulate a reviewer's cognitive process, evaluating an idea's novelty and feasibility based on existing research. This simulated reasoning is structured into training data to fine-tune the LLM, aligning its evaluations with peer review standards. Consequently, the review engine provides contextually relevant, scientifically rigorous feedback consistent with expert practices. The process of constructing the training data is referred to in Figure 3

4 EXPERIMENTS

4.1 EXPERIMENTAL SETUP

Dataset. For the dataset, we curated a collection of about 100,000 research papers from major AI conferences over the past decade. These papers were grouped into four categories: DL, NLP, CV, and General AI. The dataset details are provided in the Appendix A.2.

Baselines. We compare our approach with several prominent methods in AI-driven scientific discovery, including Sci. Net. Emb. Sourati & Evans (2023), SciMON Wang et al. (2024a), SciAgents Ghafarollahi & Buehler (2025), MOOSE-Chem Yang et al. (2024), Zero-Shot Hypothesis Proposers Qi et al. (2023), ResearchAgent Baik et al. (2024) and papers accepted in the latest year from major AI conferences. More details are presented in Appendix A.3.

Implementation Details. In the Deep Ideation framework, we use GPT-4o-mini for all the components, while Qwen3-8B is used for Critic model. We evaluate the novelty and feasibility of the generated ideas using five advanced models: GPT-4o, Gemini-2.5-Flash, Grok-3, DeepSeek-V3.1, and Qwen3-235B-A22B. The final performance score is averaged across these models. More details on the model fine-tuning and evaluation process are provided in Appendix A.4.

4.2 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

4.2.1 LLM AS JUDGE EVALUATION RESULTS.

| Method | DL | | | NLP | | | CV | | | General AI | | | Overall | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. |
| Accepted Papers | <u>3.72</u> | <u>3.93</u> | <u>3.83</u> | <u>3.70</u> | <u>3.95</u> | <u>3.83</u> | <u>3.73</u> | <u>3.86</u> | <u>3.78</u> | <u>3.68</u> | <u>3.90</u> | <u>3.79</u> | <u>3.71</u> | <u>3.91</u> | <u>3.81</u> |
| Sci. Net. Emb. | 3.34 | 3.53 | <u>3.44</u> | 3.24 | 3.61 | <u>3.43</u> | 2.64 | 3.44 | 3.04 | 3.26 | <u>3.57</u> | 3.42 | 3.12 | 3.53 | 3.33 |
| Scimon | 3.19 | 3.48 | 3.34 | 3.31 | 3.65 | 3.24 | 2.50 | 3.02 | 3.76 | 3.44 | <u>3.52</u> | <u>3.48</u> | 3.11 | 3.42 | 3.27 |
| SciAgents | 2.93 | 3.63 | 3.28 | 2.86 | <u>3.69</u> | 3.28 | 2.73 | <u>3.65</u> | 3.19 | 2.75 | 3.27 | 3.01 | 2.82 | 3.46 | 3.14 |
| MOOSE-Chem | <u>3.53</u> | 3.33 | 3.43 | 3.43 | 3.22 | 3.33 | 3.34 | 3.21 | 3.28 | <u>3.46</u> | 3.07 | 3.27 | 3.44 | 3.21 | 3.33 |
| Zero-Shot HP | 2.80 | <u>3.65</u> | 3.23 | 2.73 | 3.46 | 3.10 | 2.78 | 3.61 | 3.20 | 2.81 | 3.51 | 3.16 | 2.78 | <u>3.57</u> | 3.18 |
| ResearchAgent | 3.38 | 3.22 | 3.30 | <u>3.54</u> | 3.33 | 3.44 | <u>3.48</u> | 3.28 | <u>3.38</u> | 3.43 | 3.25 | 3.34 | <u>3.46</u> | 3.47 | 3.47 |
| Deep Ideation | 3.79 | 3.86 | 3.83 | 3.70 | 3.92 | 3.81 | 3.81 | 3.89 | 3.85 | 3.73 | 3.90 | 3.82 | 3.76 | 3.88 | 3.82 |
| Improvement↑ | 7.37% | 5.75% | 10.92% | 4.52% | 6.23% | 9.48% | 9.48% | 6.58% | 13.91% | 7.80% | 9.24% | 9.48% | 8.67% | 8.68% | 10.25% |

Table 1: Performance of Deep Ideation with LLM as Judge compared to Baselines across Different AI Domains. Bold and underline indicate the best and second best performance(except Accepted Papers).

As shown in Table 1, Deep Ideation demonstrates a significant improvement across all domains. Specifically, Deep Ideation shows a substantial increase in the Avg. score: 10.92% in the DL domain, 9.48% in the NLP domain, 13.91% in the CV domain, and 9.48% in the General AI domain compared to the best-performing baseline. This performance is a direct result of our approach's ability to generate scientifically novel ideas that are both technically feasible and relevant to the research landscape. Additionally, Deep Ideation surpasses the level of many AI conference accepted papers in several domains, further highlighting the robustness and effectiveness of our approach.

The impact and analysis of different parameter settings on the final performance are presented in Appendix A.5.

4.2.2 HUMAN EVALUATION RESULT

To further evaluate the effectiveness of the Deep Ideation framework, a human evaluation is conducted involving 54 researchers, and details are provided in the Appendix A.6). The human evaluation results are presented in Table 2.

| Method | DL | | | NLP | | | CV | | | General AI | | | Overall | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. |
| Accepted Papers | <u>3.57</u> | <u>3.74</u> | <u>3.66</u> | <u>3.63</u> | <u>3.80</u> | <u>3.72</u> | <u>3.70</u> | <u>3.56</u> | <u>3.63</u> | <u>3.54</u> | <u>3.72</u> | <u>3.63</u> | <u>3.61</u> | <u>3.71</u> | <u>3.66</u> |
| Sci. Net. Emb. | 3.15 | 3.24 | 3.19 | 3.11 | 3.24 | 3.18 | 2.94 | 3.11 | 3.03 | 3.22 | 3.35 | 3.29 | 3.11 | 3.24 | 3.18 |
| Scimon | 2.94 | 2.85 | 2.90 | 2.96 | 2.91 | 2.94 | 3.15 | 3.17 | 3.16 | 2.89 | 3.24 | 3.07 | 2.99 | 3.04 | 3.02 |
| SciAgents | 2.87 | 3.20 | 3.04 | 3.11 | 3.15 | 3.13 | 3.24 | 3.26 | 3.25 | 2.72 | 3.09 | 2.91 | 2.99 | 3.18 | 3.09 |
| MOOSE-Chem | <u>3.43</u> | 3.20 | <u>3.32</u> | 3.07 | 3.19 | 3.13 | <u>3.35</u> | <u>3.38</u> | <u>3.37</u> | 3.35 | 3.48 | 3.39 | <u>3.30</u> | <u>3.31</u> | <u>3.31</u> |
| Zero-Shot HP | 2.72 | 2.93 | 2.83 | 2.64 | 3.22 | 2.93 | 3.22 | 3.31 | 3.27 | 2.76 | 3.11 | 2.94 | 2.84 | 3.14 | 2.99 |
| ResearchAgent | 3.22 | <u>3.26</u> | 3.24 | <u>3.24</u> | <u>3.41</u> | <u>3.33</u> | 3.11 | 3.19 | 3.15 | <u>3.43</u> | <u>3.63</u> | <u>3.53</u> | <u>3.25</u> | <u>3.37</u> | <u>3.31</u> |
| Deep Ideation | 3.65 | 3.72 | 3.69 | 3.61 | 3.76 | 3.69 | 3.74 | 3.57 | 3.66 | 3.61 | 3.81 | 3.71 | 3.65 | 3.72 | 3.69 |

Table 2: Performance of Deep Ideation with human evaluation compared to Baselines across Different AI Domains. Bold and underline indicate the best and second best performance(except Accepted Papers).

The results shows that our method consistently outperformed the best baseline, demonstrating Deep Ideation’s ability to generate more valuable, innovative, and well-structured ideas. One participant notes that the ideas generated by Deep Ideation are ”highly innovative and grounded in existing scientific knowledge, providing fresh perspectives on complex problems.”

4.3 ABLATION STUDY OF DEEP IDEATION

To validate the effectiveness of each module in Deep Ideation, we conducted an ablation study. The results of this experiment are presented in Table 3.

| Method | DL | | | NLP | | | CV | | | General AI | | | Overall | | |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------------|------|------|---------|------|------|
| | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. | Nov. | Fea. | Avg. |
| Deep Ideation(full) | 3.79 | 3.86 | 3.83 | 3.70 | 3.92 | 3.81 | 3.81 | 3.89 | 3.85 | 3.73 | 3.90 | 3.82 | 3.76 | 3.88 | 3.82 |
| w/o Evolve | 3.74 | 3.68 | 3.71 | 3.59 | 3.82 | 3.71 | 3.64 | 3.80 | 3.72 | 3.66 | 3.74 | 3.70 | 3.66 | 3.76 | 3.71 |
| w/o Critic Model. | 3.61 | 3.64 | 3.63 | 3.43 | 3.63 | 3.53 | 3.58 | 3.63 | 3.61 | 3.52 | 3.62 | 3.57 | 3.54 | 3.63 | 3.59 |

Table 3: Ablation study of Deep Ideation across different AI domains.

Effectiveness of Evolve Mechanism. As shown in Table 3, removing the evolve mechanism (w/o Evolve) results in a noticeable decline in performance across all domains. This degradation stems from the inability of the agent to adaptively replace unsuitable keywords based on review feedback. Without this iterative evolution, the generated ideas become static, failing to dynamically adjust to the shifting scientific context and explore deeper insights, leading to lower-quality proposals.

Effectiveness of Critic Model. Without the critic model, the idea generation process lacks evaluative guidance, causing the evolution of ideas to become directionless and blind. This absence of structured feedback leads the agent to explore ideas in an uncoordinated manner, without any clear alignment to scientific objectives or constraints. As a result, the generated ideas become disconnected from the underlying scientific context, which significantly undermines their novelty and feasibility.

4.4 CASE STUDY

These case studies in Figure 4 demonstrate Deep Ideation’s ability to generate novel solutions. In multi-face forgery detection and deepfake prevention, the dual-task model innovatively combines face detection and segmentation with reinforcement learning, dynamically selecting the best strategies in real-time. In adaptive self-evolution and preference alignment, incorporating Noise Contrastive Estimation (NCE) into reinforcement learning offers a novel approach to overcoming biases

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>432 Title: Enhancing Multi-Face Forgery Detection and 433 Deepfake Prevention through Reinforcement Learning</p> <p>434 Research Background: 435deepfake content becomes increasingly sophisticated, 436 particularly in scenarios involving multiple individuals, traditional 437 detection methods.....</p> <p>438 Research Idea: 439introduce a dual-task model capable of performing simultaneous 440 face detection and segmentation.....adaptability through RL 441 techniques..... select the most effective segmentation strategies 442 based on real-time input.....</p> <p>443 General Implementation Approach: 444Develop a dual-task CNN architecture that integrates both face 445 detection and segmentation tasks.....allow the model to dynamically 446 choose the most appropriate segmentation strategy</p> | <p>432 Title: Enhancing Adaptive Self-Evolution and 433 Preference Alignment with Reinforcement Learning 434 through Noise Contrastive Estimation</p> <p>435 Research Background: 436 depend on human-annotated data, which can suffer from bias, 437 limitations..... Noise Contrastive Estimation emerges as a 438 promising method.....as demonstrated in "Noise Contrastive 439 Alignment of Language Models with Explicit Rewards. ".....</p> <p>440 Research Idea: 441 incorporating a structured set of multimodal instructions to 442 serve as a foundation Implementing NCE to enhance the 443 robustness of preference alignment.....</p> <p>444 General Implementation Approach: 445 specifically employing MPO to aggregate diverse user 446 preferences Integrate NCE into the training process.....to 447 differentiate between relevant and irrelevant data points.....</p> |
|---|---|

443 Figure 4: A case study of idea proposal generated by Deep Ideation.

444 in human-annotated data, improving preference robustness. Additionally, in the right case, the idea
445 proposal cites a relevant paper, demonstrating how Deep Ideation effectively incorporates existing
446 research to refine and enhance its generated ideas.

447 5 RELATED WORKS

448 5.1 LLMs FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

449 In recent years, the application of LLMs to scientific research has garnered significant attention Ya-
450 mada et al. (2025); Swanson et al. (2025); Shi et al. (2023); Hsu et al. (2024) and a number of
451 task-specific systems have emerged. ResearchAgent Baek et al. (2024) combines LLMs with sym-
452 bolic knowledge graphs to iteratively propose, refine, and simulate experimental designs, while Au-
453 toSurvey Wang et al. (2024b) automates the generation of literature surveys by chaining retrieval,
454 clustering, and multi-agent writing modules. AlphaEvolve Novikov et al. (2025) takes a step further
455 by using an LLM-guided genetic algorithm to evolve code-level hypotheses and make new discov-
456 eries in computational research.

457 5.2 LLMs FOR SCIENTIFIC IDEATION

458 Recent advancements in LLM-based scientific ideation have focused on utilizing the powerful ca-
459 pabilities of LLMs to autonomously iterate and generate new scientific research ideas. Approaches
460 like SciMON Wang et al. (2024a) and ResearchAgent Baek et al. (2024) have utilized iterative
461 processes, where LLMs refine hypotheses by continuously incorporating new literature, improving
462 novelty and relevance through real-time retrieval and semantic novelty maximization. Multi-agent
463 systems, such as SciAgents Ghafarollahi & Buehler (2025), further advanced this by automating
464 hypothesis validation and refinement, showing improvements in both novelty and feasibility. Ad-
465 ditionally, MOOSE-Chem Yang et al. (2024) demonstrated LLMs' potential to rediscover hidden
466 knowledge by mining knowledge graphs of patents, while Qi et al. Qi et al. (2023) showcased the
467 zero-shot capability of LLMs in generating valid hypotheses without the need for explicit exam-
468 ples. CycleResearcher Weng et al. (2024) introduced a self-supervised feedback loop, incorporating
469 automated reviews to iteratively enhance the quality of generated hypotheses.

470 6 CONCLUSION

471 We presented the Deep-Ideation framework, which integrates LLMs with scientific networks to
472 generate novel and scientifically grounded research ideas. By leveraging the relationships between
473 keywords in scientific literature, our method ensures that generated ideas are both innovative and an-
474 chored in existing knowledge. The iterative workflow, enhanced by the Idea Stack, enables contin-
475 uous idea refinement, mirroring the cognitive process of human researchers. Additionally, the review
476 model, trained on real-world feedback, provides critical evaluative input to ensure that the ideas are
477 novel and feasible. Our experiments across various AI research domains demonstrate significant
478 improvements in both novelty and feasibility, highlighting the effectiveness of our approach.

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702 A APPENDIX

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705 A.1 PROMPT FOR DEEP IDEATION

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707 A.1.1 PROMPT OF RELATION ANALYSIS

708

709 **Prompt:**

710 You are a research assistant tasked with analyzing academic papers.

711

712 I will provide you with two keywords and a paper in which both keywords appear. Your task is
713 to carefully read the paper and explain how the paper constructs the connection between these two
714 keywords.

715 Here are the inputs:

716 - Keyword 1: {keyword1}

717

718 - Keyword 2: {keyword2}

719 Paper:

720 Title: title

721

722 Abstract: abstract

723 Introduction: introduction

724

725 Please explain how this paper constructs the connection between the two keywords, limited to 2-4
726 sentences.

727

728 A.1.2 PROMPT OF KEYWORD SELECTION

729

730 **Prompt:**

731 You are a research assistant who can help expand the current set of research keywords.

732

733 I will provide you with:

734

735 1. A "Idea Stack" that records the entire research progress across all previous rounds. Each round
736 in the Idea Stack contains:

737 - The current set of keywords for each round.

738

739 - The current research idea for each round.

740 - Novelty and feasibility scores and their descriptions of current research idea proposal for each
741 round.

742 - The addition(or replacement) of new keywords in this round, including which keyword was
743 added(or replaced) and the reason for its addition(or replacement).

744

745 - The refined idea after the addition of the new keyword, guided by the research progress recorded
746 in the Idea Stack.

747 The Full Idea Stack represents an iterative process of refining the research idea. Each round in the
748 Idea Stack represents a research part of the research journey, reflecting the evolution of the research
749 direction, where new keywords and concepts are integrated based on the previous evaluations. Use
750 the full Idea Stack to:

751 - Understand the evolution of the research direction across rounds, and how past additions and
752 adjustments of keywords set has influenced the current idea.

753

754 - Avoid selecting keywords that are redundant or overly similar to past directions.

755 - Ensure that the selected new keyword logically builds upon the research progress recorded in the
Idea Stack and contributes to the overall improvement of the research idea.

756 2. A list of new candidate keywords. Each of them has a relationship with one keyword from the
757 current keywords set; through this relationship, the new keyword becomes connected to the whole
758 current keyword set.

759 - Additionally, each candidate keyword may have an associated shortest path length to the other
760 existing keywords (different of the keyword they have a relationship with) in the current set if they
761 are connected to each other. The shortest path indicates how distant the new keyword is from the
762 current keyword set in the scientific network. The shorter the path, the closer the keyword is related
763 to the existing keywords.

764 Your task:

765 - Carefully analyze the entire Idea Stack, taking into account novelty, feasibility, and past keyword
766 selections and reasons.

767 - If the novelty of the current research idea is insufficient, prefer new keywords that could improve
768 novelty of the latest research idea. You may consider new keywords with a longer shortest path
769 as a potential way to introduce more diverse concepts and increase novelty. However, novelty im-
770 provement should not rely solely on the shortest path—ensure the new keyword also aligns with the
771 relevance and focus of the current research.

772 - If the feasibility is weak, prefer new keywords that could improve feasibility of the latest re-
773 search idea. You may consider new keywords with a shorter shortest path to ensure the idea re-
774 mains grounded in existing knowledge and is practical to implement. Again, feasibility improve-
775 ment should not rely solely on the shortest path—balance it with other considerations to ensure the
776 keyword strengthens the idea’s feasibility.

777 - Avoid choosing keywords that would make the research direction redundant with previous selec-
778 tions.

779 - Select ONE NEW keyword that has the highest potential to enhance the research idea in light of
780 the Idea Stack.

781 - When you output the result, specify which existing keyword the new keyword is connected to.

782 - Additionally, briefly explain the reason for choosing this keyword, emphasizing how it will help
783 improve the current research idea and how it builds on the historical progress in the Idea Stack.

784 The Idea Stack(contains full history of research progress): {idea_stack}

785 The following are new candidate keywords and their relationships to specific keywords in the current
786 set, including the shortest path between the candidate keywords and existing keywords:

787 {candidate_keywords_and_relationships}

788 Please output your choice in the following format:

789 NEW_KEYWORD: (the new keyword you selected)

790 CONNECTED_TO: (the specific keyword in the current set that relates to the new keyword)

791 REASON_FOR_SELECTION: (a brief explanation for why this keyword was selected, considering
792 the improvement it will bring to current research idea and how it builds on the historical progress in
793 the Idea Stack)

800 A.1.3 PROMPT OF KEYWORD REPLACEMENT

801 **Prompt:**

802 You are a research assistant who helps refine the current set of research keywords by replacing
803 certain existing keywords.

804 I will provide you with:

805 1. The whole keywords set in the current round.

806 2. The flexible keywords set, which is a subset of the whole keywords set. These flexible keywords
807 can be replaced with new candidate keywords.

810 3. A "Idea Stack" that records the entire research progress across all previous rounds. Each round
811 in the Idea Stack contains:

- 812 - The current set of keywords for each round.
- 813
- 814 - The current research idea for each round.
- 815
- 816 - Novelty and feasibility scores and their descriptions of the current research idea proposal for each
817 round.
- 818 - The addition(or replacement) of new keywords in this round, including which keyword was
819 added(or replaced) and the reason for its addition(or replacement).
- 820 - The refined idea after replacing the keyword, guided by the research progress recorded in the Idea
821 Stack.

822 The Full Idea Stack represents an iterative process of refining the research idea. Each round in the
823 Idea Stack reflects a research part of the journey, showing how the research direction evolves with
824 the integration of new and refined keywords. Use the full Idea Stack to:

- 825 - Understand the evolution of the research direction across rounds, and how previous keyword re-
826 placements have influenced the current idea.
- 827
- 828 - Avoid replacing keywords that make the research direction redundant or overly similar to past
829 directions.
- 830 - Ensure that the selected replacement keyword logically builds upon the research progress recorded
831 in the Idea Stack and improves the overall research idea.
- 832

833 4. A list of candidate replacement keywords. Each of them has a relationship with one keyword
834 from the current keywords set; through this relationship, the new replacement keyword becomes
835 connected to the whole current keyword set. Each candidate replacement keyword can only replace
836 one of the flexible keywords set.

- 837 - Additionally, each candidate replacement keyword has an associated shortest path length to the
838 other existing keywords in the whole keywords set (different of the keyword they have a relationship
839 with) if they are connected to each other. The shortest path indicates how closely the replacement
840 keyword is related to the existing keyword set. The shorter the path, the more relevant the keyword
841 is to the existing ideas.

842 Your task:

- 843 - Carefully analyze the entire Idea Stack, taking into account the novelty, feasibility, and past key-
844 word replacements and reasons.
- 845
- 846 - If the novelty of the current research idea is insufficient, prefer replacing a flexible keyword with
847 one that could improve novelty. You may consider keywords with a longer shortest path to introduce
848 more diverse concepts and improve novelty, but novelty improvement should not rely solely on path
849 length—ensure that the replacement keyword aligns with the research focus.
- 850 - If the feasibility is weak, replace a flexible keyword with one that could enhance feasibility. Key-
851 words with a shorter shortest path to existing keywords could be preferred to ensure the idea is
852 grounded in practical, existing knowledge.
- 853 - Avoid replacing a keyword with one that makes the research direction redundant or conflicts with
854 past research directions.
- 855
- 856 - Select ONE flexible keyword to replace with a new replacement keyword that holds the highest
857 potential to improve the research idea based on the Idea Stack.
- 858 - When you output the result, specify which existing keyword the replacement keyword is con-
859 nected to, which flexible keyword was replaced and the reason for its replacement, ensuring that the
860 replacement strengthens the research idea and builds upon the historical progress.

861 The whole keywords set in the current round is:

862 {keywords}
863

864 The flexible keywords set of which keywords can be replaced is: {flexible_keywords}
865
866 The Idea Stack (contains full history of research progress): {idea_stack}
867
868 The following are new candidate replacement keywords and their relationships to specific keywords
869 in the current set, including the shortest path between the candidate replacement keywords and
870 existing keywords:
871 {candidate_keywords_and_relationships}
872
873 Please output your choice in the following format:
874
875 REPLACEMENT_KEYWORD: (the new keyword you selected)
876
877 CONNECTED_TO: (the specific keyword in the current set that relates to the replacement keyword)
878
879 REPLACED_KEYWORD: (the flexible existing keyword that you replaced)
880
881 REASON_FOR_REPLACEMENT: (a brief explanation of why this keyword was replaced, how it
882 improves the research idea, and how it builds upon the research progress in the Idea Stack)
883

881 A.1.4 PROMPT OF IDEA FORMULATION

882 **Prompt:**

883 You are a research assistant tasked with generating a novel scientific research idea proposal.

884 I will provide you with:

885 1. A "Idea Stack" that records the entire research progress across all previous rounds. Each round
886 in the Idea Stack contains:

- 887 - The current set of keywords for each round.
- 888 - The current research idea for each round.
- 889 - Novelty and feasibility scores and their descriptions of current research idea proposal for each
890 round.
- 891 - The addition of new keywords in this round, including which keyword was added and the reason
892 for its addition.
- 893 - The refined idea after the addition of the new keyword, guided by the research progress recorded
894 in the Idea Stack.

895 The Full Idea Stack represents an iterative process of refining the research idea. Each round in the
896 Idea Stack represents a research part of the research journey, reflecting the evolution of the research
897 direction, where new keywords and concepts are integrated based on the previous evaluations. Use
898 the full Idea Stack to:

- 899 - Understand the evolution of the research direction across rounds, and how previous additions and
900 adjustments have influenced the current idea.
- 901 - Ensure that the new research idea proposal builds upon this iterative process and integrates the new
902 keywords in a coherent way.
- 903 - Avoid selecting ideas that are redundant or overly similar to past directions and make sure to
904 contribute something novel.

905 2. A set of keywords. Your task is to:

- 906 - Combine these keywords into a coherent and innovative scientific research idea, using the guidance
907 of the Idea Stack to ensure that the new idea builds logically upon the research progress recorded in
908 the Idea Stack.
- 909 - Develop this idea into a research idea proposal that includes:
 - 910 - The research background: An overview of the research context and importance.
 - 911 - The research idea: A clear description of the novel idea.

918 - A general implementation approach: A brief explanation of how the idea can be practically imple-
919 mented.

920 Here are the keywords: {keywords}

921 The Idea Stack (contains the history of all rounds' research progress): {status_bar}

922 Please output your idea proposal, which should include the research background, research idea, and
923 a general implementation approach. Ensure that the proposal is aligned with the overall research
924 progress recorded in the Idea Stack and effectively integrates the new keywords.
925
926

927

928 A.1.5 PROMPT OF REVIEW MODEL

929

930 **Prompt:**

931 You are a research evaluator who can assess scientific research idea proposals.

932 I will provide you with an idea proposal, the keywords associated with the proposal, the graph
933 features that emerge when these keywords are considered as nodes in a scientific network

934 - The scientific network is constructed based on the co-occurrence of keywords in scientific papers.
935 Each keyword is represented as a node, and an edge exists between two nodes if the corresponding
936 keywords have appeared together in the same paper.

937 - The graph features include the following information .

938 - Neighbor count: Indicates how many other keywords each keyword is directly connected to.

939 - Connectivity: Indicates whether the keywords of this idea proposal are connected on the graph.

940 - Shortest paths: Represents the shortest paths of each pair of keywords in this idea proposal on the
941 scientific network.

942 Your task is to evaluate the research idea proposal along two dimensions:

943 1. Novelty (1–5): How original and innovative the idea is compared to existing research.

944 - 5: Extremely novel and groundbreaking. The idea introduces new, unexplored concepts or radically
945 shifts the direction of the field.

946 - 4: Highly original. The idea is new and innovative but may still be building upon existing concepts
947 or research.

948 - 3: Moderately original. The idea brings some new insights but is similar to existing work or follows
949 well-established concepts.

950 - 2: Slightly original. The idea offers minor variations or incremental improvements to existing
951 research but lacks substantial novelty.

952 - 1: Not original. The idea closely resembles existing research with little to no innovation.

953 2. Feasibility (1–5): How realistic and practical the idea is to implement in current scientific and
954 technological conditions.

955 - 5: Fully feasible. The idea can be realistically executed with existing methods, data, and resources,
956 and the plan for implementation is clear and practical.

957 - 4: Highly feasible. The idea is feasible with current technologies but may require some advance-
958 ments or additional resources.

959 - 3: Moderately feasible. The idea faces significant practical challenges, requiring considerable
960 advancements in technology or data.

961 - 2: Slightly feasible. The idea is difficult to implement with current resources and would need
962 significant breakthroughs.

963 - 1: Not feasible. The idea is impractical and unlikely to be implemented with current technologies
964 or methods.
965
966
967
968
969
970
971

972 Please consider the keyword network features (neighbor count, connectivity, shortest paths) in your
973 evaluation to understand the research idea’s potential impact, relevance, and connectivity within the
974 scientific field.

975 The research idea proposal is: {research_idea}

976 The keywords in this idea proposal are: {keywords}

977 The graph-based features of these keywords: {graph_features}

978 Please output your evaluation strictly in the following format:

979 Novelty Score and Description: (give a score from 1–5 and a short description of novelty)

980 Feasibility Score and Description: (give a score from 1–5 and a short description of feasibility)

981 A.1.6 PROMPT OF ROUTER

982 **Prompt:**

983 You are a decision-making assistant helping to determine the next step in the research workflow. You
984 need to choose whether the next step should be ”keyword replacement” or ”idea proposal rewriting”.

985 Here is the information provided:

- 986 1. Research Idea: The current research idea proposal.
- 987 2. Keywords: The current set of research keywords.
- 988 3. Novelty Score and Description: The novelty score and its corresponding description of the current
989 research idea.
- 990 4. Feasibility Score and Description: The feasibility score and its corresponding description of the
991 current research idea.

992 Decision Logic: - Perform keyword replacement if:

993 - The novelty and/or feasibility of the current research idea are insufficient, but the current set of
994 keywords is of high quality. In this case, the problem likely lies with the research idea proposal
995 itself, which can be improved by refining the keywords.

996 - Rewrite the idea proposal if:

997 - The keywords set are of high quality, but the idea proposal itself is poorly written. This sug-
998 gests that the research idea proposal needs improvement to better reflect the potential of the current
999 keywords.

1000 Instructions:

- 1001 - Review the novelty and feasibility scores to assess the quality of the current research idea.
- 1002 - If the keywords are strong but the idea proposal is weak, then consider idea proposal rewriting.
- 1003 - If the novelty or feasibility scores are low, and improving the keywords is necessary, then choose
1004 keyword replacement.

1005 Output Format:

1006 Please output your decision as one of the following actions:

- 1007 1. Keyword_Replacement: If you think the next step should focus on refining the keywords for
1008 improving novelty or feasibility.
- 1009 2. Idea_Rewrite: If you think the next step should focus on reworking the research idea itself to
1010 enhance its overall quality.

1011 Current Data:

1012 - Research Idea: {research_idea}

1013 - Keywords: {keywords}

- 1026 - Novelty Score and Description: {novelty_score_desc}
1027
1028 - Feasibility Score and Description: {feasibility_score_desc}
1029 Please output your choice and briefly explain why you think this is the best next step for improving
1030 the research process. Your output should strictly follow this format:
1031 ACTION: (either "Keyword_Replacement" or "Idea_Rewrite") REASON: (a brief explanation of
1032 why you chose this action based on the provided data)
1033

1034
1035 A.1.7 PROMPT OF KEYWORD REPLACE
1036

1037 **Prompt:**

1038 You are a research assistant who helps refine the current set of research keywords by replacing
1039 certain existing keywords.

1040 I will provide you with:

- 1041
1042 1. The whole keywords set in the current round.
1043
1044 2. The flexible keywords set, which is a subset of the whole keywords set. These flexible keywords
1045 can be replaced with new candidate keywords.
1046
1047 3. A "Idea Stack" that records the entire research progress across all previous rounds. Each round
1048 in the Idea Stack contains:
1049 - The current set of keywords for each round.
1050 - The current research idea for each round.
1051 - Novelty and feasibility scores and their descriptions of the current research idea proposal for each
1052 round.
1053 - The addition(or replacement) of new keywords in this round, including which keyword was
1054 added(or replaced) and the reason for its addition(or replacement).
1055 - The refined idea after replacing the keyword, guided by the research progress recorded in the Idea
1056 Stack.
1057

1058 The Full Idea Stack represents an iterative process of refining the research idea. Each round in the
1059 Idea Stack reflects a research part of the journey, showing how the research direction evolves with
1060 the integration of new and refined keywords. Use the full Idea Stack to:

- 1061 - Understand the evolution of the research direction across rounds, and how previous keyword re-
1062 placements have influenced the current idea.
1063 - Avoid replacing keywords that make the research direction redundant or overly similar to past
1064 directions.
1065 - Ensure that the selected replacement keyword logically builds upon the research progress recorded
1066 in the Idea Stack and improves the overall research idea.
1067

1068 4. A list of candidate replacement keywords. Each of them has a relationship with one keyword
1069 from the current keywords set; through this relationship, the new replacement keyword becomes
1070 connected to the whole current keyword set. Each candidate replacement keyword can only replace
1071 one of the flexible keywords set.

- 1072 - Additionally, each candidate replacement keyword has an associated shortest path length to the
1073 other existing keywords in the whole keywords set (different of the keyword they have a relationship
1074 with) if they are connected to each other. The shortest path indicates how closely the replacement
1075 keyword is related to the existing keyword set. The shorter the path, the more relevant the keyword
1076 is to the existing ideas.

1077 Your task:

- 1078 - Carefully analyze the entire Idea Stack, taking into account the novelty, feasibility, and past key-
1079 word replacements and reasons.

1080 - If the novelty of the current research idea is insufficient, prefer replacing a flexible keyword with
1081 one that could improve novelty. You may consider keywords with a longer shortest path to introduce
1082 more diverse concepts and improve novelty, but novelty improvement should not rely solely on path
1083 length—ensure that the replacement keyword aligns with the research focus.

1084 - If the feasibility is weak, replace a flexible keyword with one that could enhance feasibility. Key-
1085 words with a shorter shortest path to existing keywords could be preferred to ensure the idea is
1086 grounded in practical, existing knowledge.

1087 - Avoid replacing a keyword with one that makes the research direction redundant or conflicts with
1088 past research directions.

1089 - Select ONE flexible keyword to replace with a new replacement keyword that holds the highest
1090 potential to improve the research idea based on the Idea Stack.

1091 - When you output the result, specify which existing keyword the replacement keyword is con-
1092 nected to, which flexible keyword was replaced and the reason for its replacement, ensuring that the
1093 replacement strengthens the research idea and builds upon the historical progress.

1094 The whole keywords set in the current round is:

1095 {keywords}

1096 The flexible keywords set of which keywords can be replaced is:

1097 {flexible_keywords}

1100 The Idea Stack (contains full history of research progress):

1101 {status_bar}

1102 The following are new candidate replacement keywords and their relationships to specific keywords
1103 in the current set, including the shortest path between the candidate replacement keywords and
1104 existing keywords:

1105 {candidate_keywords_and_relationships}

1106 Please output your choice in the following format:

1107 REPLACEMENT_KEYWORD: (the new keyword you selected)

1108 CONNECTED_TO: (the specific keyword in the current set that relates to the replacement keyword)

1109 REPLACED_KEYWORD: (the flexible existing keyword that you replaced)

1110 REASON_FOR_REPLACEMENT: (a brief explanation of why this keyword was replaced, how it
1111 improves the research idea, and how it builds upon the research progress in the Idea Stack)

1112

1113 A.2 DATASET DETAILS

1114

1115 The dataset consists of 107,443 research papers sourced from major AI conferences over the past
1116 decade, including ICLR, NeurIPS, ICML, ACL, NAACL, CVPR, ICCV, AAI, and IJCAI. These
1117 papers were grouped into four categories:

1118

1119 • DL (short for Deep Learning): ICLR, NeurIPS, ICML

1120

1121 • NLP (short for Natural Language Process): ACL, NAACL

1122

1123 • CV (Computer Vision): CVPR, ICCV

1124

1125 • General AI: AAI, IJCAI

1126

1127 From each paper, 3-4 keywords were extracted, forming the basis of a scientific network constructed
1128 from keyword co-occurrence. During the idea proposal generation process, an initial keyword was
1129 selected from a specific domain. The resulting idea proposal was then classified according to the
1130 domain from which the initial keyword was drawn.

1131

1132

1133

A.3 BASELINE METHODS

We benchmark our approach against several prominent methods in AI-driven scientific discovery:

- **Sci. Net. Emb.:** Sourati & Evans (2023) This method integrates human expertise into AI models to enhance predictions of future scientific breakthroughs, particularly in data-scarce contexts. By considering the distribution of human expertise, it improves AI-driven predictions beyond traditional research content.
- **SciMON:** Wang et al. (2024a) SciMON focuses on optimizing neural language models for novelty. It iteratively refines generated hypotheses by comparing them with existing literature, aiming to improve both the technical depth and originality of the generated ideas.
- **SciAgents:** Ghafarollahi & Buehler (2025) This method employs ontological knowledge graphs and multi-agent systems to autonomously generate and refine hypotheses. By uncovering interdisciplinary connections, it accelerates material discovery and fosters new research avenues.
- **MOOSE-Chem:** Yang et al. (2024) MOOSE-Chem applies a structured framework to generate hypotheses in chemistry. It demonstrates the potential of LLMs in rediscovering scientifically valuable insights and advancing the hypothesis generation process in the field of chemistry.
- **Zero-Shot Hypothesis Proposers:** Qi et al. (2023) This method explores the ability of LLMs to propose valid hypotheses without prior fine-tuning. It showcases the capability of LLMs to generate novel scientific ideas from unseen literature, pushing the boundaries of zero-shot hypothesis generation.
- **ResearchAgent:** Baek et al. (2024) ResearchAgent combines iterative idea generation with LLM-based review agents to refine scientific proposals. It represents a comprehensive approach to supporting researchers in the ideation process, enhancing both the creativity and rigor of generated ideas.
- **Accepted Papers:** We also include the latest accepted papers from major AI conferences as baselines. Here, we input the title, abstract, and introduction of each paper into the model and asked it to organize the content into an idea proposal format.

A.4 EVALUATION DETAILS AND MODEL FINE-TUNING

In the Deep-Ideation workflow, GPT-4o-mini is used as the backbone model for the modules of Relation Summary, Keyword Selection, Keyword Replace, and Idea Writing. For the Idea Reviewing module, Qwen3-8B is used, which is fine-tuned with Low-Rank Adaptation (LoRA) on a training dataset of 4278 examples. This fine-tuning process enhances the model’s ability to evaluate the novelty and feasibility of the generated ideas.

To assess the quality of the generated ideas, five advanced large language models are used for evaluation: GPT-4o, Gemini-2.5-Flash, Grok-3, DeepSeek-V3.1, and Qwen3-235B-A22B. The final performance scores are derived by averaging the results across these models, ensuring a robust and comprehensive evaluation of the ideas’ quality.

A.5 ANALYSIS

In this section, we analyzed key elements of the Deep Ideation framework. Max neighborhood size controls the breadth of knowledge sampled for each keyword, while max keyword set size defines the number of keywords used to generate the idea proposal. The results are shown in Figure A.5.

A.5.1 EFFECT OF MAX NEIGHBORHOOD SIZE.

As shown in Figure A.5 (left), Deep Ideation performs best when the maximum neighborhood size is set to 12. When smaller, the limited scientific knowledge surrounding each keyword restricts the agent’s ability to capture comprehensive insights, diminishing the quality and depth of the final idea proposals. Conversely, increasing the neighborhood size beyond 12 expands the agent’s knowledge boundary, but may lead to information overload, making it difficult for the agent to prioritize the most valuable insights and causing the focus of the generated ideas to become diluted.

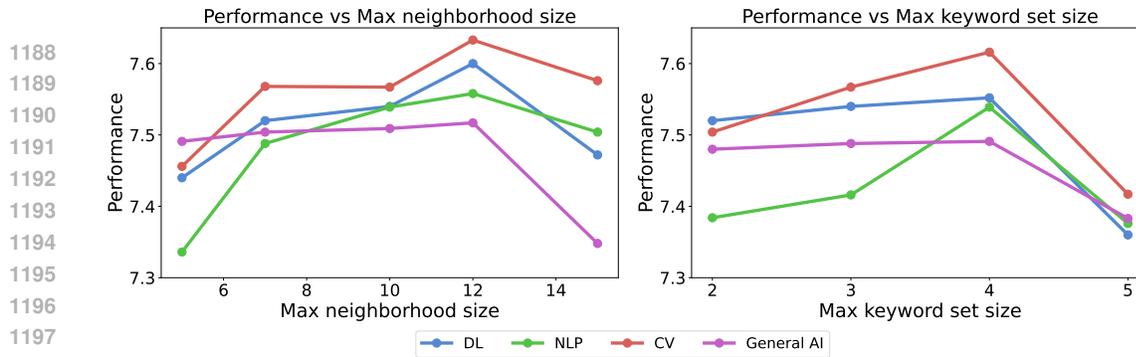


Figure A.5: Effect of max neighborhood size and max keyword set size, where performance is the sum of novelty and feasibility.

A.5.2 EFFECT OF MAX KEYWORD SET SIZE

Figure A.5 (right) illustrates that, when the keyword set size is small, the knowledge breadth and diversity of the final idea proposal are limited, which results in ideas that lack innovation and depth, often failing to address the complexities of scientific problems. In contrast, increasing the keyword set size too much leads to overly complex relationships between the keywords, causing the ideas to become disjointed or unnatural, with forced connections that undermine clarity. However, when the keyword set size is set to 4, the performance improves significantly, indicating that a balanced set allows the agent to capture sufficient diversity and depth while keeping the generated ideas focused and logically connected.

A.6 HUMAN EVALUATION DETAILS

Human evaluation is essential for assessing the real-world applicability and impact of generated ideas, ensuring that they meet the expectations of domain experts. In this study, participants were asked to assess each idea proposal across two dimensions: novelty and feasibility. Additionally, they were required to write a brief description for a select number of idea proposals that particularly caught their interest.

A.7 THE USE OF LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS

In this work, only the grammar correction and sentence-level refinement of the manuscript were carried out using a large language model (LLM).