

The Alan Turing Institute

Casual Worker - Research Assistant, Data Sharing for Human Rights Applications

THE ALAN TURING INSTITUTE

There has never been a more significant time to work in data science and AI. There is recognition of the importance of these technologies to our economic and social future: the so-called fourth industrial revolution. The technical challenge of keeping our data secure and private has grown in its urgency and importance. At the same time, voices from academia, industry, and government are coming together to debate how these technologies should be governed and managed.

The Alan Turing Institute, as the UK's national institute for data science and artificial intelligence, plays an important part in driving forward advances in these technologies in order to change the world for the better.

The Institute is named in honour of Alan Turing, whose pioneering work in theoretical and applied mathematics, engineering and computing is considered to have laid the foundations for modern-day data science and artificial intelligence. The Institute's goals are to undertake world-class research, apply its research to real-world problems, driving economic impact and societal good, lead the training of a new generation of scientists, and shape the public conversation around data and algorithms.

After launching in 2015 with government funding from EPSRC and five founding universities, the Institute has grown an extensive network of university partners from across the UK and launched a number of major partnerships with industry, public and third sector. Today it is home to more than 500 researchers, a rapidly growing team of in house research software engineers and data scientists and a business team.

BACKGROUND

The Institute has a focused area of work on AI for Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion: One theme of AI for human rights considers and applies a range of participatory and principles of algorithmic accountability approaches, expanding the solution space to support equality and inclusion across the AI lifecycle including data collection and sharing, and in the design, development and deployment of data science and AI methods.

One of the application areas includes a programme of research activities in the development and application of data science and AI methods to assist modern day slavery challenges and related policy areas (including but not limited to migration, conflict, refugees, gender-based violence), informed by stakeholders. The modern slavery specific work is supported through a mixture of internal and external partnerships: The Institute is a partner in the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy Evidence Centre (herein Modern Slavery PEC) and also funded through and works with the Institute's AI for Science and Government (ASG) Programme, Defence & Security Programme and Finance Programme, collaborating with colleagues at other Universities (e.g. Cambridge Technology and Trust Initiative) and organisations ranging from the UN, NGOs, Global Partnership for AI, the private and public sector.

ROLE PURPOSE

The Alan Turing Institute is recruiting a casual research assistant to contribute to the expanding programme of work and mission of AI for Human Rights, Equality and Inclusion to support in the delivery of the project on "enabling responsible data flows for policy response to tackle modern slavery". The project involves a multi-disciplinary team and is led by The Alan Turing Institute. It includes leadership and contribution from Turing's community in this area of work including researchers at the University of Cambridge in Law and Computer Science, and Unseen – UK's modern slavery helpline, and the Modern Slavery PEC. Earlier work for the project involved collaborations with Oxford University's Bonavero Institute and the Open Data Institute.

The Alan Turing Institute

The goal of the project is to better understand the barriers, opportunities and needs to enable responsible data flows to support in addressing policy and practice challenges to tackle modern day slavery whilst respecting privacy, security and trust. This required work now involves editing reports, drafting briefs, further qualitative analysis, conducting focused literature reviews, bringing together threads, communicating findings for diverse platforms and audiences, building on existing work to identify opportunities for further development, and engaging with stakeholders to ensure that research needs are met.

Candidates should have experience with qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups, and analysing and communicating themes and nuanced issues. We are particularly interested in candidates with research experience on issues related to data sharing and privacy, human rights and emerging technologies, and how this related to marginalised and hidden communities e.g. modern slavery, refugees, LGBTQ+ and/or ethnic minorities. Candidates should bring a nuanced understanding of the distinctions between these themes and the wide range of perspectives and experiences represented within and among them. The post-holder will work closely with a multi-disciplinary team from a range of disciplines – Statistics, Computer Science, Law, Anthropology, etc. The post holder will report to the Theme Lead on AI and Justice and Human Rights.

DUTIES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- Contribute to the current understanding and research on data sharing issues (legally, ethically and technically) across sectors and with respect to modern slavery data & tech use context through primary and secondary research including:
 - Editing, drafting and updating reports or briefs on stakeholder interviews, surveys and activities
 - Conducting qualitative (and relevant quantitative) analysis from stakeholder interviews, surveys and other activities
 - Conducting desk research and literature review
 - Cataloguing relevant data sources and features, and narrative texts
 - Conducting/supporting in follow-up interviews and roundtable discussions
- Scope, identify and design examples or case studies to showcase and communicate to diverse audiences
 - Understand which data are, or might be, available; and potentially collect and manage this data.
 - Assist in stakeholder mapping, identifying and showcasing deeper understanding of typology of needs
 - Collaborate with stakeholders, partners and research team on research, identifying opportunities to take research, tools, frameworks and insights forward for wider use
- Respond to changing stakeholder, funder or research team enquiries
- Organise roundtables, workshops or meetings to learn and share
- Support in writing other outputs such as blogs, explainers, academic outputs and presentations

Other duties:

The successful candidate may be expected to:

- Travel as necessary to meet with internal and external collaborators.
- Present, disseminate and explain our work at internal and external events hosted by Turing and/or the partner.
- Contribute to the life of the Institute and support its community.

The Alan Turing Institute

Please note that job descriptions cannot be exhaustive, and the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties, which are broadly in line with the above key responsibilities. This job description is written at a specific time and is subject to changes as the demands of the Institute and the role develop.

REQUIREMENTS

- Masters Degree or equivalent experience in social science (e.g. human rights, anthropology, law, social science, science and technology studies) or other relevant domains.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills including the ability to present complex or technical information, and to communicate effectively with analysts and other stakeholders outside the research community, e.g. journalists and policymakers.
- Experience conducting qualitative research and analysis (and relevant quantitative/descriptive analysis) from interviews, surveys and literature.
- Experience or understanding of issues regarding data sharing/PETs and/or responsible data use and AI designed for social good/human rights challenges.
- A level of comprehension sufficient to conduct relevant literature reviews.
- Ability to critically evaluate findings and derive evidence-driven conclusions.
- Knowledge and interest in participatory methodologies/stakeholder engagement.
- Experience in working with or on issues related to marginalised communities (modern slavery, gender-based violence, targeted ethnic minorities and/or refugees – would be desirable).
- Experience working with a range of stakeholders or multi-disciplinary teams including data scientists, social scientists, community activities, non-profit and for profit organisations, police, policy experts.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

If you are interested in this opportunity, please click the apply button below. You will need to register on the applicant portal and complete the application form including your CV and covering letter including a statement of interest. If you have questions about the role or would like to apply using a different format, please contact us on 020 3862 3575 or 0203 862 3340, or email recruitment@turing.ac.uk.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This opportunity is offered on a zero hours contract for 3 months and ideally requires an immediate start. The successful candidate will be expected to work 20-36 hours per week. Following this 3 month contract, there is an opportunity to continue on a part-time basis of up to 10 hours per week until March 2023. The hourly rate for this casual position is £16.80. Specific working hours can be discussed at interview stage.

This contract is subject to there being no restriction by the Home Office or by the UK Border Agency to your entry and/or continued stay in the UK.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Alan Turing Institute is committed to creating an environment where diversity is valued and everyone is treated fairly. In accordance with the Equality Act, we welcome applications from anyone who meets the specific criteria of the post regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Reasonable adjustments to the interview process will be made for any candidates with a disability.