

The Alan Turing Institute

ETHICS RESEARCH ASSISTANT

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.

THE PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMME

The Public Policy research programme works alongside policy makers to explore how data-driven public service provision and policy innovation might help to solve long running societal problems. We also work hand-in-hand with public sector organisations and citizens to develop practice-based ethical standards for the responsible development and use of data science and AI. Our dynamic group has co-produced—with the Office for AI and the Government Digital Service—the UK Government's official public sector guide for designing and implementing ethical and safe AI. We have also co-authored—with the Information Commissioner's Office—the first guidance ever released by a UK regulator on explaining AI-assisted decisions.

In addition to our work with government and regulators, we carry out interdisciplinary academic research in the area of AI ethics and governance as well as AI and society. Our research projects rely entirely on public funding, and they include a review of the ethics of machine learning (ML) in children's social care; an exploration of the relationship of notions of AI, human agency, privacy and trust in intercultural and global contexts; an investigation into how to build grassroots data rights charters through deliberative democracy; an examination of the role of responsible data management in criminal justice applications of AI; and an analysis of the interpretability needs of AI systems in the financial services sector.

THE ROLE

The Public Policy programme is looking to recruit an Ethics Research Assistant to provide crucial support for the Turing's ethics research and to facilitate the Turing's engagement with external partners in this area. The successful candidate will report to the Ethics Theme Lead and will provide research assistance to the Institute's Ethics Fellows. The post holder will work closely with academics and policy makers in an interdisciplinary, dynamic, and collaborative environment.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The core responsibilities of the Ethics Research Assistant are as follows:

- Assist the Public Policy programme's Ethics Theme Lead and Ethics Fellows in the development and delivery of an innovative research strategy and help on a variety of projects centred around the ethical issues posed by data science, AI, and other digital technologies. This work may include both desk and field research duties with a view to creating actionable policies, best practices and other recommendations.
- Help the Public Policy programme organise workshops, events, and public engagement exercises.
- Coordinate funding applications for the programme's Ethics workstream.
- Facilitate the functioning of the Institute's Data Ethics Group (DEG), including coordinating meetings, organising workshops and seminars, and collaborating on related research. This work will be directed by the Chair of the DEG.
- Liaise with the Turing's Ethics Advisory Group (EAG), which exists to ensure that the research conducted at the Institute is ethically sound.
- Participate in internal seminar of relevant research interest groups, as well as external meetings with representatives of government agencies, third sector organisations, and the media.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will have:

ESSENTIAL

- A Master's degree awarded in a discipline with a specialism that provides suitable theoretical tools for understanding the ethical issues raised by data science, AI, and related digital technologies, and their social implications;
- Excellent communication skills in writing and speaking;
- Interpersonal skills relevant to working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and communicating with stakeholders in academia, the public sector, and industry;
- Ability to work flexibly, prioritising tasks to meet deadlines and maintaining a high standard of accuracy and attention to detail;
- Experience supporting research including desk-based literature review, content analysis and summary, and compiling and formatting bibliographic material;
- Demonstrable organisational skills;
- Strong interest in digital technologies, and in related ethical debates;
- A demonstrated interest in the mission of the Alan Turing Institute, and in exploring the real-world impact of cutting-edge technology.

DESIRABLE

- A developing record of scientific publication, which may include journal articles, book chapters, and policy reports/white papers;
- Experience in a policy environment, such as an international organisation, government agency, think tank, or learned society; or experience in a tech company or consultancy.
- Experience in applied ethics research, e.g. computing ethics, business ethics, medical ethics, environmental ethics, and within organisational settings such as ethics committees, ethics review boards, governmental agencies, the third sector, or private organisations;
- Project management experience;
- An ability to disseminate research findings and engage with external stakeholders via blogs and social media.

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, covering letter that outlines

how you meet the job specifications; sample piece of writing (an academic paper, journal article, blog post, conference proceeding, or equivalent); and contact details for two referees.

If you have questions about the role or would like to apply using a different format, please contact them on 020 3862 3575 or email recruitment@turing.ac.uk.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 19 July 2020

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This full-time post is offered on a fixed-term basis for a period of two years. The annual salary for this post is £34,000 plus excellent benefits, including flexible working and family friendly policies, <https://www.turing.ac.uk/work-turing/why-work-turing/employee-benefits>

This job description is written at a specific time and is subject to change as the demands of the Institute and the role develop. The role requires flexibility and adaptability and the post holder needs to be aware that they may be asked to perform tasks and be given responsibilities not detailed in this job description.

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, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership status, pregnancy, religion or belief or sexual orientation. Reasonable adjustments to the interview process can also be made for any candidates with a disability.

Please note all offers of employment are subject to continuous eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory pre-employment security screening which includes a DBS Check.

Full details on the pre-employment screening process can be requested from HR@turing.ac.uk.