Research Assistant, AI Standards

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 AI STANDARDS HUB AND THE PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMME

Standards, specifications, and related documents produced by international standards development organisations (SDOs) such as ISO, IEC, IEEE, CEN-CENELC, or ETSI are set to play an increasingly significant role as governance and innovation mechanisms for AI technologies. Recent years have seen the emergence of a dynamic and complex landscape of AI standards development initiatives, accompanied by legislative and regulatory proposals that rely on standards as a mechanism for achieving their objectives.

The AI Standards Hub is a new and high profile UK initiative dedicated to this rapidly evolving space. The Hub's mission is to pursue strategic research and to engage stakeholders across industry, government, regulators, civil society, and academia with a view to shaping the direction of AI standardisation, increasing participation, and enabling the informed use of standards. Led by the Turing, in partnership with the British Standards Institution (BSI) and the National Physical Laboratory (NPL), and supported by the UK Government, the AI Standards Hub is based on objectives set out in the National AI Strategy.

The AI Standards Hub team sits within the Public Policy Programme at The Alan Turing Institute. The Public Policy Programme works alongside policymakers, regulators, and international organisations to explore how data-driven public service provision and policy innovation might help solve long-running societal problems. The Programme carries out interdisciplinary academic research on a wide variety of topics, from identifying policy priorities using agent computing to quantifying online hate speech.

ROLE PURPOSE

We are recruiting a Research Assistant to join the AI Standards Hub team. The successful candidate will report to the Head of AI Governance and Regulatory Innovation and provide assistance in delivering the Hub's work. The post holder will join the team at an exciting time, helping to build this new, high profile initiative and set it up for success. We aim to become a point of reference in the global conversation around AI standards. The post holder will not only help us lay the foundations to ensure that we will reach our goals, but also have opportunities to grow alongside the initiative.

Depending on the candidate's background and area of expertise, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to get involved in the following fields of activity:

- Assisting with interdisciplinary research and thought leadership on AI standardisation that combines technical and non-technical approaches to integrate questions of safety and interoperability with broader considerations of ethics, trustworthiness, and responsible innovation.
- Supporting stakeholder engagement, community building, and collaborative knowledge production focused on the ethical and societal challenges brought about by AI and the role that standards can play in addressing these challenges.
- Examining the relationship between standards and regulation in the context of evolving AI governance frameworks in the UK and internationally.
- Developing resources, tools, and training materials to equip diverse stakeholders with the knowledge they need not only to contribute to standards development, but also to assess and use published standards.

DUTIES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The core responsibility of this role is to assist the Head of AI Governance and Regulatory Innovation and other team members in conducting research, producing deliverables, and coordinating work for the AI Standards Hub. This will entail:

- Assisting with background research and helping prepare publications on trends, gaps, and best practices concerning the development of standards for AI technologies.
- Helping deliver and write up reports on workshops, roundtables, and conferences for the AI Standards Hub community.
- Keeping track of AI standardisation initiatives and relevant legislative and policy developments.
- Coordinating and co-managing the development and maintenance of innovative online resources and platforms.
- Keeping up-to-date, managing, and improving databases of standards and other documents.
- Writing blog posts and helping prepare reports for the AI Standards Hub website.
- Overseeing and actively contributing to discussion forum activity on the AI Standard Hub website and helping curate website content.
- Helping design educational materials and assisting in the delivery of training activities for the AI Standards Hub community.
- Supporting with building and managing strategic relationships across different communities, including academic collaborators, policymakers, regulators, industry, and standards development organisations.
- Contributing to project management and programme development activities.

Please note that job descriptions cannot be exhaustive, and the postholder 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.

The Alan Turing Institute

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Skills and Requirements Post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following	**Essential (E)** **Desirable (D)**	**Tested at application (A)** **Tested at interview (I)**
Education/Qualification		
A Master's degree, or equivalent that provides suitable foundations for understanding technical as well as governance-related aspects of AI technologies. This may be a degree in the social sciences, law, fields concerned with technical aspects of AI and digital innovation, or other relevant disciplines.	E	A
Knowledge and Experience		
A solid understanding of technical as well as governance-related aspects concerning the design, development, and use of AI technologies.	E	A, I
A proven interest in data science, AI, and digital technologies more broadly, including questions of standardisation, regulation, and governance	E	A, I
Familiarity with national and international legislative and regulatory developments related to AI technologies	D	A, I
An interest in and a general understanding of the role of international standards as a technology governance tool.	D	A, I
Experience in a relevant non-academic environment, such as a standards development organisation, regulatory agency, technology company, think tank, or multi-stakeholder initiative	D	A, I
Technical skills in areas related to digital innovation, such as machine learning or data management	D	A, I
Communication		
Excellent written and verbal communication skills	E	A, I
Ability to communicate research outputs clearly and persuasively to diverse audiences	E	A, I
Experience with disseminating research findings and engaging with external stakeholders via blogs and social media	D	A, I
Teamwork and Motivation		
Ability to collaborate successfully in a multidisciplinary environment across different levels of seniority	E	A, I
Liaison and Networking		
Experience in building professional relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders	D	A, I
Planning and Organising		

Ability to work flexibly, prioritising tasks to meet deadlines and maintaining a high standard and attention to detail	E	A, I
Analysis and Research		
Demonstrated ability to carry out supervised research	E	A, I
Experience in supporting research through literature review, content analysis and summary, managing bibliographic information, and related tasks	D	A, I
Other Requirements		
Commitment to EDI principles and to the Organisation values	E	I

OUR VALUES

The Alan Turing Institute is committed to equality diversity and inclusion and to eliminating discrimination. All employees are expected to embrace, follow and promote our EDI Principles and Our Values.

Our values

Trust
We create an environment where we have trust and can be trusted

Inclusivity
We expect our Turing community to contribute to a culture that is inclusive and free of barriers

Respect
We all have different roles, priorities and challenges but our shared purpose is the same

Leadership
Leadership is everyone's business; Turing leaders set the right tone and lead by example

Transparency
Everyone should understand the how and the why of our decisions and actions

Integrity
We are all ambassadors for the Turing's mission of changing the world for the better

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. Please include a sample piece of writing (a journal article, conference paper, book chapter, or similar research piece) and a list of publications. If you have questions about the role or would like to apply using a different format, please contact us on 020 3970 2148 or 0203 862 3340, or email recruitment@turing.ac.uk.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 05 September 2022 at 23:59

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This full time post is offered on a fixed term basis for 2 years. The annual salary is £36,236 plus excellent benefits, including flexible working and family friendly policies, https://www.turing.ac.uk/work-turing/why-work-turing/employee-benefits

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.

We are committed to building a diverse community and would like our leadership team to reflect this. We therefore welcome applications from the broadest spectrum of backgrounds.

Reasonable adjustments to the interview process will be made for any candidates with a disability.

Please note all offers of employment are subject to obtaining and retaining the right 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***.***