

The Alan Turing Institute

Research Assistant, Women in Data Science and AI

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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 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 Women in Data Science and AI project sits within the Turing's Public Policy programme. It conducts data science and social science research, looking through an intersectional lens, to provide data-driven insights informing concrete policy measures aimed at increasing equality in the data science and AI fields in the UK and globally.

The under-representation of women and marginalised groups in data science and AI leads to the encoding and amplification of bias in technical products, creating a dangerous feedback loop that further discriminates against those not involved in the creation of the technology. The Women in Data Science and AI project engages both quantitative and qualitative research to inform our understanding of the gender gap in data science and AI, exploring the multifaceted ethical, economic and governance-related issues stemming from the under-representation of women in the fields, including gender data gaps, and generating actionable insights and recommendations to tackle it.

Project work to date has included a major collaboration with UN Women on the implications of digital technologies for gender equality and women's rights internationally, generating concrete policy recommendations; the creation of a 'Hub' website to connect women in the UK with resources, news and research in the data science and AI fields; the development of a 'Diversity Dashboard' tool to offer insights into gender inclusion within online workplaces; and the recent publication of the

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seminal policy report 'Where are the women? Mapping the gender job gap in AI'. Current work includes investigating diversity and inclusion in tech workplace cultures (both online and in organisations) across sectors.

ROLE PURPOSE

The Public Policy Programme is recruiting a Research Assistant to work on the Women in Data Science and AI project. The RA will provide crucial support for our ongoing work.

This two-year position will involve assisting the Women in Data Science and AI team in research, writing and administrative tasks, and supporting the project's engagements internally and with external partners. It is also expected that exploratory scoping and mapping work, of data, research and policies on gender and AI, will form a significant part of the role. The successful candidate will collaborate with the team, working across a variety of tasks as necessary.

The successful candidate will report to the Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr. Erin Young. They will collaborate with the wider Women in Data Science and AI team and Public Policy Programme, including Professor Judy Wajcman. The post-holder will work closely with academics, as well as government and industry stakeholders, in an interdisciplinary, dynamic, and collaborative environment.

DUTIES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The core responsibilities of the Research Assistant are as follows:

- Assist the Public Policy Programme's Women in Data Science and AI project in the development and delivery of research outputs. This work may include both desk and field research duties, with a view to creating actionable data-driven insights, policies and other recommendations;
- Support as well as lead on exploratory mapping and scoping work around data availability and access, relevant work and initiatives, as well as relevant industry policies and AI systems;
- Participate in knowledge exchange activities as appropriate, for example, assisting in the preparation of research outputs and resources tailored to different audiences, ranging from policy-makers to researchers, industry and the general public. This includes helping to write briefing papers, articles, websites, blog posts and other reports;
- Conduct a large-scale literature review, including synthesising efforts already undertaken by the project;
- Stay up-to-date with progress in related fields;
- Participate in internal meetings with relevant groups, including the Turing's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) stakeholders, as well as external meetings with representatives of government agencies, industry and potential partner organisations;
- Assist with website and mailing list maintenance, and other administrative tasks as necessary;
- Manage work-plans to ensure timely delivery of objectives;

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.

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| PERSON SPECIFICATION | | |
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| | Essential (E) | Tested at application(a) |
| Skills and Requirements | Desirable (D) | Tested at interview (i) |
| Post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following | | |
| Education/Qualification | | |
| A Master's degree awarded in a discipline with a specialism that provides suitable tools for understanding the issues raised by data science, AI, and related digital technologies, and their social implications, such as Science and Technology Studies (STS). Equivalent professional experience will also be considered. | E | A |
| Knowledge and Experience | | |
| Experience researching in an area related to the social science of technology (e.g. feminist technology studies), and within related organisational settings such as governmental agencies, industry or the third sector. | E | A I |
| Project management experience. | D | A I |
| A developing record of scientific publication (appropriate to stage of career development), which may include journal articles, book chapters, and policy reports/white papers. | D | A |
| Experience in a policy environment, such as an international organisation, government agency or think tank; or experience in a tech company, division or consultancy. | D | A I |
| Any one or more of the following: (1) Have worked on topics related to intersectional gender and racial biases in AI and machine learning (e.g. in recruitment software, facial detection systems and voice assistants); (2) have familiarity with topics related to critical data studies and data justice, such as data feminism; (3) have familiarity with the sociology of organisations; (4) understand social data science; (5) knowledge of critical algorithm studies; (6) knowledge of information sciences; (7) familiarity with fairness, accountability and transparency (FAT) in machine learning. | E | A I |
| Communication | | |
| Excellent communication skills in writing, speaking and distilling information. | E | A I |
| Initiative and Problem Solving | | |
| Interpersonal skills relevant to collaborating and working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and communicating with stakeholders in academia, the public sector, and industry. | E | A I |
| Highly motivated and committed to achieving the project goals. | E | A I |
| Ability to work flexibly, prioritising tasks to meet deadlines and maintaining a high standard of accuracy and attention to detail. | E | A I |

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| Analysis and Research | | |
| Experience supporting research including desk-based literature review, information retrieval, content analysis and summary, and compiling and formatting bibliographic and review material. | E | A I |
| Ability to disseminate research findings and engage with internal and external stakeholders in-person and via blogs, social media and other outlets. | D | A I |
| Decision Making | | |
| Independently makes decisions which are low risk and that mainly affect themselves or a small number of people and are guided by regulation and practice. | E | I |
| Project Delivery | | |
| Ability to keep accurate and up to date knowledge of services available in own and related areas of work. | E | A I |
| Ability to work across the Research Team/Programme, to contribute and assist in a number of research activities. | E | I |
| Demonstrable organisational skills. | E | A I |
| Other Requirements | | |
| Commitment to meeting deadlines | E | A I |
| Flexible attitude towards work | E | I |
| Commitment to EDI principles and to the Organisation values | E | I |

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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 [Rules of the Game](#)



Respect – We treat everyone with respect, dignity and kindness and acknowledge the experiences, skills and contributions of others.

Trust - We communicate openly and honestly to support an environment where we have trust in each other.

Transparency – We seek to ensure that everyone understands the how and the why of our decisions and actions. We take on board to feedback when those decisions are challenged.

Inclusivity – We are committed to continuously learning how to be more inclusive by listening to those facing barriers.

Leadership – We recognise creating an inclusive, diverse and equitable institute requires leadership from all. We stand up and speak out when change is needed.

Integrity – We recognise that how we work is as important as our outputs and seek to exemplify best practice in all our decisions.

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. 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.

If you are applying for more than one role at the Turing, please note that only one Cover Letter can be visible on your profile at one time. If you wish to apply for multiple roles and do not want to overwrite your existing Cover Letter, please apply for the role using the button below and forward your additional cover letter directly to recruitment@turing.ac.uk quoting the job title.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This is a full-time post on a 2-year fixed term contract length. The salary for this role is £34,500 plus excellent benefits, including flexible working and family friendly policies, <https://www.turing.ac.uk/work-turing/why-work-turing/employee-benefits>

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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.