

The Alan Turing Institute

POLICY RESEARCH FELLOW

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 on a wide variety of topics, from identifying policy priorities using agent computing to tackling modern slavery and quantifying online hate speech. Our research projects rely entirely on public funds and their primary aim is to contribute to the Institute's mission of making great leaps in data science and artificial intelligence research in order to change the world for the better.

THE ROLE

The Public Policy programme is looking to recruit a Policy Research Fellow to help us advance our innovative and high-profile research. As a Policy Research Fellow, you report to the Policy Theme Lead, and work closely with the leadership of the Public Policy programme to (1) support the programme's important role as an advisor to public sector organisations on using data science and AI for their purposes, and (2) engage in original and cutting-edge academic research in the area of data science for policy-making and public service provision.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The core responsibilities of the Policy Research Fellow are as follows:

- Support the Policy Theme Lead in achieving the goals of the Public Policy programme and in advancing a forward-looking research agenda in the in the area of using data science and AI to improve public policy and the provision of public services.
 - Carrying out original and high-quality interdisciplinary research by contributing to existing funded projects and by pursuing your own research passions in this area.
 - Assisting the Public Policy programme in its public sector advisory capacity by forming strong relationships with government partners and by initiating conversations on policy direction and public sector innovation.
- Serve as a key link between the Turing's external partners in the public policy space and the Institute's academic community:
 - Externally, the Policy Research Fellow will build relationships with external stakeholders as part of the Public Policy programme's external engagement strategy. In particular, the Research Fellow will work with external partners to identify common areas of interest, to define the scope of research projects, to identify resources for projects, and to establish relevant timelines.
 - Internally, the Research Fellow will shape the intellectual direction of research projects, will identify relevant academics from the Turing community and will develop and manage work plans to ensure the timely delivery of objectives.
- Participate in knowledge exchange activities as appropriate. This may include:
 - Working with the Turing's communications team to ensure that the Turing's research in the public policy space is effectively promoted in the mainstream media.
 - Working in close coordination with other members of the Public Policy programme to maximise the programme's influence on ongoing policy debates.
 - Representing the Turing at external conferences and events.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will have:

ESSENTIAL

- A PhD or equivalent experience in a discipline that provides suitable theoretical and empirical foundations for the use of data science and AI in the contexts of policy-making and public service provision. This degree may either be in a discipline within the social sciences or in an academic field directly related to the technical aspects of digital innovation such as computer science, HCI, mathematics, or statistics;
- Demonstrable interest in data science, AI and digital technologies more broadly, and in their applications in the public sector;
- A record of scientific publication, which may include journal articles, book chapters, and policy reports/white papers, according to career stage;
- Proven ability to communicate research and advocate policy at multiple levels and to diverse audiences;
- Ability to collaborate successfully in a multidisciplinary environment and to manage the delivery of projects;
- Demonstrable interest in the mission of the Alan Turing Institute, and in exploring the real-world uses and impact of cutting-edge technology.

DESIRABLE

- 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 setting up research collaborations involving multiple stakeholders and in grant proposal writing;
- Knowledge/understanding of the UK government and policy-making landscape;
- Experience managing or mentoring people;

- Experience in understanding and communicating technical aspects of digital innovation such as the machine learning lifecycle, AI interpretability, agent computing, privacy-enhancing technologies, data supply chains, and other emerging digital technologies.

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; a list of publications as well as a sample piece of writing (a journal article, conference proceeding, book chapter, 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 0203 862 3357 or email recruitment@turing.ac.uk.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 2nd August 2020

TERMS & CONDITIONS

This full-time post is offered on a permanent basis. The annual salary for this post is £45,000 to £50,000 (dependent on skills and experience) 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.