

# The Alan Turing Institute

## Research Associate in Participatory AI and Data Justice

### 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, Human Rights and Inclusion which considers different dimensions to the intersection of AI and human rights including: how AI and related technologies can be applied to address global challenges of human rights; how diverse perspectives can inform in the AI lifecycle (including design, data curation and sharing) to safeguard human rights (e.g., privacy, non-discrimination); and how EDI can be improved across the AI lifecycle, ecosystem and environment to support equitable, just and inclusive societies.

One of the application areas includes a programme of research activities to understand and enable the data ecosystem and application of data science and AI technologies to address modern day slavery challenges for policy-makers and front-line agencies. The research activities have been and are informed by and in collaboration with stakeholders across public, private, non-profit and IGO sectors. The modern slavery specific work is cross-cutting supported through a mixture of internal and external partnerships and funding sources: The Institute is a partner in the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy Evidence Centre (herein Modern Slavery PEC) and the Institute's AI for Science and Government (ASG) Programme, Defence & Security Programme, and Finance Programme. The programme of research activities leverages expertise of Project leaders from across the Institute and its University partners. The project involves a multi-disciplinary team with Project Investigator team including: Anjali Mazumder, Jat Singh, Jennifer Cobbe, Carsten Maple, Mihai Cuccuringu.

### ROLE PURPOSE

We are seeking an early-career researcher with a background in social science and qualitative research to design and implement interview-based, participatory research with communities and stakeholders for a project investigating the design, use, and assessment of data, data sharing and AI tools for addressing modern slavery (and other vulnerable or marginalised populations) and considering other data and technology uses on racialised and marginalised communities. The post-holder will be responsible for designing and implementing community-engaged research. Responsibilities will include carrying out literature reviews, developing interview protocols, conducting interviews with individuals and groups, communicating findings to an interdisciplinary research team, and writing formal reports. The post-holder will work closely with a multi-disciplinary team of PIs and Co-Is from a range of disciplines – Statistics, Anthropology, Computer Science, Law, etc.

Candidates should have experience with qualitative methods and analyses regarding interviews, focus groups and survey techniques. The project utilises participatory methodologies and community engagement; experience with these

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approaches is highly desirable. We particularly encourage applications from those with research experience on themes of modern slavery, online exploitation, gender-based violence, and/or other hidden, racialised or marginalised communities. 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. Candidates with experience working with historically marginalised communities and/or on complex and sensitive social issues are encouraged to apply.

The post-doctoral research associate in Participatory Methods and Data Justice will bring an enthusiasm for learning, contributing to participatory AI approaches and data justice issues. This project investigates AI / algorithmic tools and systems. While technical knowledge of these systems is not required, candidates with an interest in data justice, issues at the intersection of AI and human rights, and how data and technology may be responsibly used to address modern slavery and broader societal challenges are encouraged to apply. We invite you to join us as we grow our research capability, supporting our goal to develop the next generation of data science researchers to push the boundaries of how we design and conduct data science and AI for human rights, trust and inclusion. The post-holder will initially report to the Theme Lead on AI and Justice and Human Rights.

## DUTIES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- Design, develop and undertake research methodologies including literature review, interview protocol, focus groups, surveys
- Assist in developing survey instrument, data labelling protocols and participate in training labellers
- Conduct, review and inform on participatory methods to address data justice issues
- Conduct stakeholder and community interviews, focus groups and surveys and desk-based research.
- Conduct different types of qualitative research and analysis
- Provide critical perspectives, identify issues and inform on mechanisms for data collection, sharing and use
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners on research and identifying opportunities to take developed methods, frameworks and insights towards wider use.
- Assist in the organisation of and participate in regular meetings and special workshops with the research team, designated members of staff, collaborators and stakeholders
- Write and publish articles in peer-reviewed journals/digests that highlight findings from research ensuring consistency with the highest standards of academic publication, and draft publications for other mediums such as blogs, briefs and explainers, showcasing the Institute's research leadership
- Present methods and results at conferences and workshops, and communicate results to a diverse audience
- Make original contributions to the research project to the success of the research goals, objectives and activities

## OTHER DUTIES

- Travel as necessary to meet with internal and external collaborators.
- Teaching may be required as part of collaboration work

If appointed at a Senior Research Associate level, the post-holder will have additional responsibilities, such as:

- Be a point of contact, supporting PIs in engaging with stakeholders regarding projects and deputising in meetings where necessary
- Supervise junior research team members
- Define the research direction in collaboration with Project Investigators
- Take the lead on writing up findings as they emerge, producing reports, and developing publications in peer reviewed journals, in collaboration with the research team.

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.

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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<b>Skills and Requirements</b> Post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following:	<b>Essential (E) Desirable (D)</b>	<b>Tested at application (a) Tested at interview (i)</b>
<b>Education/Qualification</b>		
PhD Degree or equivalent experience in social science (e.g. anthropology, science and technology studies, HCI, etc.) or equivalent level of professional experience.	E	A
<b>Knowledge and Experience</b>		
Good foundation and experience in qualitative research	E	A
Knowledge and interest in participatory methodologies	E	A
Experience in working with marginalised communities (modern slavery, sex work, gender-based violence, targeted ethnic minorities and/or refugees – would be desirable)	D	A/I
Experience working with a range of stakeholders including data scientists, community activities, non-profit organisations, police, policy experts and social scientists	D	A&I
Ability to coordinate and conduct in-depth research interviews with multiple stakeholders	E	A&I
Experience of developing and documenting analysis workflows for research projects.	E	A
A level of comprehension sufficient to conduct relevant literature reviews.	E	A
Ability to critically evaluate findings and derive evidence-driven conclusions.	D	A/I
Ability to critically assess risks or harms of data and technology use on marginalised communities	D	A/I
Experience or understanding of AI designed for social good/human rights challenges	E	A/I
Experience of working in multi-disciplinary teams	D	I
Ability to act as an ambassador for the development and implementation of new tools and protocols for policy and operational practice.	D	A
<b>Communication</b>		
Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to adapt to different audiences, as appropriate such as analysts and other stakeholders outside the research community, e.g. journalists and policymakers	E	A&I
Ability to negotiate and influence others.	D	A
<b>Liaison and Networking</b>		
Participate in networks within the organisation or externally to share knowledge and information in order develop practice or help others learn.	E	A
Network with others with shared interests, collaborating on projects and strengthening future relations.	D	A
<b>Project Management &amp; Project Delivery</b>		
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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Proactive approach to managing stakeholders and their requirements and identifying opportunities for collaboration.	D	A
Ability to design and implement all phases of a fast-moving research project	E	A/I
<b>Decision Making</b>		
Ability to lead own work Independently, and make independent decisions which are low risk and that mainly affect themselves or a small number of people and are guided by regulation and practice.	E	A/I
Recommend and advise on available options for decisions that affect operational processes, taking into account any risks.	E	A/I
Work with others to make collaborative decisions that may be operational or strategic which may impact the immediate team or work area.	E	A/I
<b>Initiative and Problem Solving</b>		
Uses judgement to analyse and solve problems, and take action to prevent recurrence of problems.	E	I
Ability to make recommendations offering wider benefits, using evidence to support	D	A
Ability to represent leadership and support programme portfolio at meetings.	D	A&I
<b>Analysis and Research</b>		
Experience supporting research including desk-based literature review, content analysis and summary, and compiling and formatting bibliographic material;	E	A
A demonstrated interest in the mission of the Alan Turing Institute, and in exploring the real-world impact of cutting-edge technology.	E	A/I
Ability to organise working time, take the initiative, and carry out research independently, under the guidance of the PI and Co-Is.	E	A
<b>Other Requirements</b>		
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 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. 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](mailto:recruitment@turing.ac.uk).

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This full-time post is offered on a fixed term basis for 2 years. The annual salary is £38,850 - £46,200 plus excellent benefits, including flexible working and family friendly policies, <https://www.turing.ac.uk/work-turing/why-work-turing/employee-benefits>

Senior Research Associates will be appointed at £49,025.

Candidates who have not yet been officially awarded their PhD will be appointed as Research Assistant at a salary of £36,236 per annum.

## 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.

***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](mailto:HR@turing.ac.uk).***