The Alan Turing Institute

RESEARCH ASSISTANT, AI FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

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 purpose is to make great leaps in data science and AI research to change the world for the better. Its goals are to advance world-class research and apply it to national and global challenges, build skills for the future by contributing to training people across sectors and career stages, and drive an informed public conversation by providing balanced and evidence-based views on data science and AI.

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 PROGRAMME

The Public Policy Programme works alongside policymakers to explore how data-driven public service provision and policy innovation might help 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 works closely with the UK government, as well as international organisations like the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission.

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 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.

ROLE PURPOSE

The AI for Public Services team sits within the Turing's Public Policy Programme. The team's mission is to enable the improvement of public services and outcomes for citizens through supporting the responsible and effective adoption of AI by government. We conduct foundational research investigating the big picture of when and where AI can be applied in government and carry out technical projects with government on the adoption of AI in specific public sector use cases. As part of this work, we are seeking to appoint a part-time Research Assistant. This position is designed for recent masters-level graduates or candidates working on a PhD. The successful candidate will help push forward our programme of work, and further our understanding of the use of machine learning and artificial intelligence in government and public services.

The appointed research assistant will work on a variety of projects within the broad area of government AI, with a focus on a stream of work looking to assess the application of AI and specifically foundation model-based technologies to government processes and services. They will help to create a mapping of high-frequency processes within select government agencies, identifying opportunity areas for generative AI to be meaningfully and practically applied to these processes to streamline their completion. They will conduct mixed-methods survey and interview-based research with

senior stakeholders across the select government agencies to identify the various processes and methods of work to be mapped. Building on previous work conducted by the team, they will apply a methodology used to assess potential for automation across these processes and will contribute to the creation of a digital sandbox where different AI interventions will be trialled.

The appointed Research Assistant will work closely with government stakeholders to help map internal processes within organisations, and to identify areas where these processes can be streamlined using AI and machine learning. They will be expected to collaborate with other teams across the institute to ensure the project outputs are being clearly communicated to the relevant stakeholders. The outputs of their work will lead to both high impact journal publications in major outlets in political science and public administration and deep engagement with current government AI practitioners.

DUTIES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

General duties for Research Assistant posts:

- Contribute to report writing, academic and other publications, and presentations and support in writing other outputs such as blogs, explainers, academic outputs.
- Assist in communicating research outputs to diverse stakeholders, through conferences, events, meetings, and press opportunities as appropriate.
- Liaise with a network of internal and external contacts and key stakeholders to assist with the work of the research project as appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with academic experts and broader research partners from across the Turing and the wider Turing community.
- Contribute to the life of the Institute and support a diverse and inclusive community through embracing the Turing values.
- Undertake required administration tasks.
- Adhere to and promote principles of reproducible and ethical data science and ensure secure handling of data and health and safety in all aspects of work.

Specific to the project/programme/role

- Undertake high-quality research, under supervision, contributing to the broader research aims of the AI for Public Services team.
- Gather and analyse data on operational processes within government and map these to automation potential,
- Undertake desk-based research and literature reviews of the current state-of-play of government AI.
- Undertake interviews with senior stakeholders.
- Draft project reports and presentations to external stakeholders.
- Support the work of policymakers, regulators, and others by providing advice, attending workshops, and giving talks.

OTHER DUTIES

- Travel may be necessary to meet requirements of the role

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		
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		
Master's degree or equivalent in politics, government, policy, sociology, history, or a related discipline.	E	A
Undertaking a PhD in the broad area of government digitalisation or similar area.	D	A
Knowledge and Experience		
Demonstrable interest in government and public administration.	E	A/I
Demonstrable interest in artificial intelligence and technology.	E	A/I
Experience and/or interest in scientific communication.	E	A/I
Experience of conducting academic research.	E	A/I
A developing record of scientific publication, which may include journal articles, book chapters, and policy reports/white papers.	D	A/I
Experience in one of the following research methods (note that no candidate will be expected to cover all these methods and those with just one are still warmly encouraged to apply): interviews, case studies, survey research.	D	A/I
Experience in study of public services.	D	A
Communication		
Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to clearly communicate complex or specialist information/research findings clearly and concisely.	E	A/I
Ability to present and communicate complex information and conceptual ideas to diverse audiences.	E	I
Liaison and Networking		
Proven ability to collaborate successfully with others and engage effectively with colleagues and research partners.	E	I
Ability to work effectively as part of a team, providing support to others as required, with an approachable and flexible attitude towards work.	E	I
Participates in networks within the organisation or externally to share knowledge and information in order to develop practice or help others learn.	E	I
Decision-Making Processes and Outcomes		
Ability to organise working time, take initiative to focus on the delivery of work.	E	A/I
Ability to 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

The Alan Turing Institute

Analysis and Research		
Ability to adopt appropriate data analysis methods for the purpose and produce reports to present the findings.	**E**	**I**
Ability to use own judgement to analyse and solve problems.	**E**	**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.

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 3862 3536 or email recruitment@turing.ac.uk.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: SUNDAY 14 JULY at 23:59 (LONDON, UK BST)
We reserve the right to close this vacancy early or to interview suitable candidates before the closing date if enough applications are received.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This part-time (0.5 FTE) post is offered on a fixed term basis for 18 months from the start date. The annual full time equivalent salary is £41,352 per annum, which is £20,676 for 0.5 FTE 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 making sure our recruitment process is accessible and inclusive. This includes making reasonable adjustments for candidates who have a disability or long-term condition. Please contact us at adjustments@turing.ac.uk to find out how we can assist you.

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***.***