

Call for Turing Fellowships and Turing-sponsored Pilot Projects 2018

Overview

We are seeking applications for Alan Turing Institute's Turing Fellowships and Turing-sponsored Pilot Projects.

The University of Southampton has become a member of the Alan Turing Institute. Turing-related activities will be coordinated by the [Web Science Institute \(WSI\)](#). Prof Elena Simperl and Prof Peter W. F. Smith will be the Turing University Leads (TULs). Prof Dame Wendy Hall will be the University representative on the Turing University Partners' Board. The Turing team visited Southampton on 15 June and the slides detailing our partnership are available [here](#) for internal use.

The [Alan Turing Institute](#) is the UK's national Institute for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Institute aims to continuously grow its research activities. To this end, it is inviting applications for Turing Fellowships and sponsored Pilot Projects from member Universities to further develop and expand on the Institute's scientific objectives.

The two schemes are related. Applicants may choose to apply for a Turing Fellowship, or for a sponsored Pilot Project. PIs (and, if deemed appropriate, CoIs) on Pilot Projects will automatically become Turing Fellows. In some cases, unsuccessful applicants for Pilot Projects may be considered for a 0% 'buy-out' Turing Fellowship. More details about the two schemes and how they differ are available below.

The University submitted an [Expression of Interest](#) and a [Research Roadmap](#) to become a member of the Alan Turing Institute. Candidates for both schemes are encouraged to use these documents as a starting point to develop their proposals and describe how their ideas and plans fit with this vision. However, we are also open to novel projects that advance other areas not covered by these documents, as long as they are within the [remit of the Turing](#). We would welcome applications with a strong interdisciplinary focus and, in particular, linked to Web Science.

In the 2018 Call, we are looking to fund around 20 Fellows (5% 'buy-out') and 5-6 Pilots Projects. These may be complemented by a set of unfunded (0% 'buy-out') Fellowships; more details below.

Going forward, it is anticipated that additional calls for Turing Fellows will be issued up to twice a year, in line with the Turing's priority areas. It is also foreseen to maintain a level of support for Pilot Projects; similar Calls are likely to be issued in the future.

Process and important dates

The Call will be forwarded to the Deans of all Faculties at Southampton.

Faculties will be invited to put forward a ranked list of applications for Fellowships (funded and unfunded), as well as Pilots Projects (funded) by 19 October. Details about the documents required for each application, including finances and how to submit them, are provided below.

A panel consisting of the TULs and the Turing University Partners' Board representative will convene to put together a University-wide shortlist, which will be forwarded to the Turing for the final decision. The criteria for shortlisting are specific to each scheme and are described below.

Important dates

- 5 October 2018: Applicants submit applications for Fellowships and Pilot Projects to Faculties
- 19 October 2018: Faculties submit ranked lists of Fellowship and Pilot Project candidates
- End October 2018: Panel produces shortlist and communicates internal decisions to Faculties
- End October 2018: University Leads submit shortlist to the Turing Institute
- End November 2018: Turing Institute decides on new Fellowships and Pilot Projects
- January 2019: Fellows start at the Turing Institute

Turing Fellowships

Overview

Turing Fellows are academics with a proven track record in scholarly research in fields that are in the remit of the Turing Institute and whose development would be significantly enhanced through stronger ties to the Turing network.

They will be invited to contribute to research, training and outreach activities that are aligned with the Turing's mission through their research and involvement. They are expected to bring to the Turing ideas and concrete proposals for new collaborative projects, with the potential to secure external funding, or research expertise which complements existing Turing initiatives.

It is expected that all Turing Fellows will initiate and contribute to local Turing-related activities at Southampton, for example, by speaking at the quarterly Turing meetup (to be launched in Q1 2019), or by taking part in workshops, datathons, and other events, in order to strengthen the local Data Science community and its interdisciplinary fabric.

Turing Fellows are commonly appointed for one to two years; individuals may apply for renewal.

Fellowships supported through this scheme receive access to the Turing, its facilities and resources, and support for return travel to the Institute and (where appropriate) subsistence costs to spend time at the Institute. Applicants may request a 5% FTE 'buy-out' to allow them to participate in Turing-related activities, including PhD supervision, performing advisory roles, and setting the research agenda. We are also accepting unfunded (0% 'buy-out') Fellowship applications.

The scheme offers a multitude of benefits:

- The opportunity to collaborate with researchers from several disciplines and join Turing's interest groups;
- The opportunity to engage with industry, government and the third sector, leveraging Turing's position as a national institute;
- Access to a team of software engineers and data scientists (there is a cost associated with this);
- Access to computer resources including cloud credits, GPU cluster, high-performance computing and local IT services;
- Access to seed funding and workshop funding;
- Support from the Institute's research facilitation team with bids for externally funded Turing collaborative projects;
- A physical collaborative space in central London with no disciplinary boundaries; and
- Limited funded support, especially for PIs who become Fellows on Turing Pilot Projects.

Eligibility

- Applicants must already hold contracts of employment with the University of Southampton, which covers the duration of their Fellowship.
- If applying for a 5% time 'buy-out', they must ensure that this is compliant with the conditions of their research grants.
- Complete documentation, as described below.

Selection criteria

Applicants are selected on the basis of their ability to contribute outstanding research and to establish impactful, sustainable research activities as a result of their Fellowship.

Successful applicants will have:

- A strong record of excellent research,
- An innovative, clearly articulated research plan, which contributes to the Turing's activities in substantial and sustainable ways,
- Concrete plans to engage with the national Turing network.

Candidates will be put forward by each Faculty. An internal panel will put together a shortlist based on available funding and ensuring a balance between Faculties and disciplines. The shortlist will be forwarded to the Turing Institute, who will make their final decisions by early November.

Application documents

Proposals will be put forward at Faculty level and must be discussed and approved at that level. We will not be able to consider applications that are sent to us through other means.

Each application (in one PDF document) must include:

- Applicant name, position, faculty, school/department
- Indication as to whether the applicant seeks a 'buy-out' of time (5%). If this is the case, the application must provide a FEC costing per year (salary plus on-costs) for the entire duration of the Fellowship. However, the funding cannot cover overheads
- A short current CV (max. 2 A4 pages)
- A short proposal (max. 2 A4 pages), including
 - An **outline of the proposed research**. Applicants should use the Expression of Interest and Research Roadmap that were part of Southampton's application to enter the Turing as a starting point in developing their proposals and explain how their research fits with that vision. New areas not mentioned in those documents are welcomed, but they need to be aligned with Turing priorities. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Turing Programme Directors and the Turing team at Southampton for advice on alignment with Turing priorities.
 - A short description of how the envisioned **research would benefit from involvement with the Turing**
 - A short description of the **applicant's plans to engage with the Turing** during their Fellowship, including intentions for collaboration with specific **researchers, industry partners, government** etc.

- A short description of the **applicant's plans to contribute to Turing-related activities at Southampton**

Submitting your applications

Applications will be submitted via the Faculties. Each Faculty is invited put forward ranked lists of Fellowship and Pilot Project candidates.

Turing Fellowship with a sponsored pilot project

Overview

This is an opportunity for academics to develop new research ideas aligned with the Turing priorities. As above, applicants are encouraged to use Southampton's Expression of Interest and Research Roadmap as a starting point. The expectation is that successful, novel Pilot Projects will pave the way to substantial, inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional programmes at the Turing.

Pilot Projects can have a duration of between three and twelve months and should not exceed £100k. Successful PIs (and, if deemed appropriate, CoIs) will be automatically named Turing Fellows. PIs can apply for one Pilot Project only and may not be a CoI on another.

Note that this is not a scheme to fund large bodies of work that are in the remit of UKRI. Instead, the aim is to give applicants the means to develop Pilot Projects that will lead to proposals for external funding.

The Turing Programme Directors and the Turing University Leads will work with successful applicants to identify synergies with programmes and projects at the Institute, potential areas for collaboration (including industry and public sector), and opportunities for external funding.

Eligibility

- PI (and if applicable CoIs) must already hold contracts of employment with the University of Southampton, which covers the duration of their Fellowship.
- If applying for a time 'buy-out', they must ensure that this is compliant with the conditions of their research grants.
- Complete documentation, as described below.

Selection criteria

The following criteria will be considered in reviewing applications:

- Scholarly importance, originality and impact of proposed research
- Compatibility with the Institute's strategy and ability to help the Turing Institute fulfil its mission
- Past research record of the applicant(s) and promise of future scholarly contribution
- Clarity of justification for resources that describes the impact of the seed corn funding
- Future sustainability of the project via external funding from industry, research council and/or other third parties
- Interdisciplinarity; and the potential for collaboration across partner universities

Upon shortlisting at Southampton, applications will be reviewed at the Turing Institute by a panel that includes the Turing Programme Directors. Awards will be determined by merit, considering the criteria listed above and ensuring a balance across member Universities.

Application documents

Proposals will be put forward at Faculty level and must be discussed and approved at that level. We will not be able to consider applications that are sent to us through other means.

Project applications (in one PDF document) must include:

- PI's name, position, faculty, school/department
- Name of Cols (if applicable)
- Title of the project
- Project proposal (no longer than 4 A4 pages), including
 - scientific background and motivation, and fit to Turing's research challenge areas for research in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence
 - anticipated outputs and impact of this work as they relate to the University, the Turing, and the wider Data Science and AI research landscape
 - evidence of core expertise required to support the programme
 - intentions for collaborating with others outside of the University; for example, Turing researchers, industry partners, government, etc.
 - prospects for continuation of the project beyond initial funded period
- Short CVs of the applicants (max. 2 A4 pages each)
- Justification of resources, including FEC costing for the entire duration of the Pilot Project. However, the funding cannot cover overheads.

Submitting your applications

Applications will be submitted via the Faculties. Each Faculty is invited to put forward a ranked list of Fellowship and Pilot Project candidates.

Further information

The [Alan Turing Institute at Southampton SharePoint site](#) has additional information and resources.