Maynooth University
Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

Department of Sociology
Senior / or Post-Doctoral Researcher
(ADAPT Project)
(23-month contract)

The Role

Maynooth University is committed to a strategy in which the primary University goals of excellent research and scholarship and outstanding education are interlinked and equally valued.

We are recruiting a Postdoctoral researcher/Senior Postdoctoral researcher to work with Prof. Aphra Kerr of MUSSI and the Department of Sociology at Maynooth University.

The postdoc will develop research projects that examine ethics, principles, and values in AI systems, audit the impacts of automated decision-making systems in a particular domain and help to inform better data governance, responsibility, and public accountability. They will also contribute to ongoing research on multi-stakeholder processes, participatory design, and civic engagement to improve digital content technology design, use and literacy.

The primary focus of the role is on excellent and impactful research, dissemination through academic articles, writing funding proposals, and reporting to the funder. There is an expectation that the postdoc will participate in ongoing public education and engagement activities and co-develop industry or civil society projects.

The postdoc will work on projects that sit within the Transparent Digital Governance Research Strand of the SFI ADAPT research centre for Digital Content Technology. Current projects focus on entertainment media, smart cities and health applications.

The postdoc will be located alongside other postgraduate researchers and staff in the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI) at Maynooth University, but they will be collaborating with ADAPT academics across 8 Irish universities and including computer scientists, human computer interaction designers, philosophers, and legal scholars.

The successful candidate may also be offered the opportunity to contribute to the teaching activities of the Sociology department in line with their own interests, knowledge, and experience.

Principal Duties

The Post-doctoral Researcher will support the research agenda and work of the Transparent Digital Governance Strand in ADAPT.
Research, Administrative and other duties:

These will include:

- Conducting and coordinating a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary literature review on ethics and AI and public, user and multistakeholder engagements in the design and evaluation of AI systems
- Developing and evaluating multi-stakeholder engagements to inform the design and evaluation of AI systems
- Collaborating on novel design environments for ethical design practices
- Contributing to the development of new data governance frameworks and policies;
- Developing approaches for auditing automated decision-making systems in practice
- Working with ADAPT team members to complete project deliverables and reports;
- Disseminating research results to a range of audiences;
- Leading and contributing to the writing of high-level academic papers for publication;
- Leading development of new research proposals to relevant funding agencies.
- Participation in education and public engagement activities
- Collaborating on projects with academics, industry, civil society and other partners

The ideal candidate will have:

Mandatory:

- A PhD in Sociology, social science or a related interdisciplinary field
- Excellent knowledge of social and ethical issues relating to Artificial Intelligence, automated decision-making systems and data governance in digital content technologies.
- Demonstrable experience with digital and qualitative research methods and skills;
- Experience of public engagement activities
- A track record of high-quality publications in international journals
- A track record of funded research proposals.
- Excellent presentation skills – to both academic and non-academic audiences;
- Excellent research project management and administration skills (including finance);
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.
- Willingness to travel to conduct research, outreach and attend conferences;

Desirable:

- To be appointed at the grade of Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher suitable candidates must have a minimum of two-year post-doctoral research experience in a relevant field.
- Knowledge of living lab or similar participatory research environments.
- Good knowledge of AI related policies and regulations in Europe
- Knowledge of digital policy making procedures and institutions in Ireland and Europe;
- Experience of working across disciplines – especially with technical disciplines

Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI)

The postdoc will be based at Maynooth University and hosted at the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI). MUSSI consolidates and scales existing social scientific research expertise and research infrastructure at the university, including twelve Faculty of Social Sciences academic departments (Adult and Community Education; Anthropology; Applied Social Studies; Business; Design Innovation; Economics, Finance and Accounting; Froebel Department of
MUSSI’s current component research groups and centres include the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) and the National Centre for Geocomputation (NCG) and the Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention. The institute also consolidates, develops and supports a number of associated critical national data infrastructures including the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO), the Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA), ICLRD (Irish Centre for Local and Regional Development) and Digital Repository Ireland (DRI).

**Department of Sociology**

The **Department of Sociology** has 18 full time staff and offers undergraduate degrees in both sociology and politics as well as postgraduate degrees, based on its research strengths in political economy, work and inequality; technology, media and society; and political sociology, power and civil society. The department fosters a vibrant research and learning environment, is committed to public sociology and makes a significant contribution to public discourse in Ireland and internationally.

**ADAPT**

**ADAPT** is a world-leading SFI Research Centre for AI Driven Digital Content Technology. It brings leading academics, researchers and industry partners together to deliver excellent science, engage the public, develop novel solutions for business across all sectors and enhance Ireland’s international reputation. Hosted by Trinity College Dublin, ADAPT’s partner institutions include Dublin City University, University College Dublin, Technological University Dublin, Maynooth University, Munster Technological University, Athlone Institute of Technology, and the National University of Ireland Galway.

ADAPT’s research vision is to pioneer new forms of proactive, scalable, and integrated AI-driven Digital Media Technology that empower individuals and society to engage in digital experiences with control, inclusion, and accountability with the long-term goal of a balanced and inclusive digital society by 2030. ADAPT 2 was funded by Science Foundation Ireland in 2021 for a period of six years.

**The University**

Maynooth University is a very distinctive university, a collegial institution focused on science and engineering, humanities, and social sciences, and equally committed to research, teaching and community engagement. Located in Ireland’s only university town, its distinctive features and character owe much to its unique history and heritage. It provides a high-quality educational experience to over 13,500 students on a campus with 18th century roots and 21st century dynamism.

The strategic trajectory and accomplishments of Maynooth University, in the twenty years since its establishment as an autonomous public university, are exceptional, and a source of great pride to the university community, staff, students and alumni. Maynooth University is now acknowledged to be one of the leading young universities in the world, ranked 43rd in the latest Times Higher Education (THE) ‘Young Universities’ list. Maynooth University’s growing global reputation is based on the originality, quality, importance and impact of its research and scholarship, commitment to teaching and learning, the quality of academic programmes, and its leadership in widening participation in higher education. The sources of success are the dedication of its staff and the energy and engagement of its students.

Maynooth University is a place of lively contrasts – a modern institution, dynamic, rapidly-growing, research-led and engaged, yet grounded in historic academic strengths and scholarly traditions. With over 13,500 students Maynooth offers a range of programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and
doctoral level in the humanities, science and engineering and social sciences, including business, law and education. The University also offers a range of international programmes and partnerships.

Maynooth’s unique collegial culture fosters an interdisciplinary approach to research, which its world-class academics bring to bear in tackling some of the most fundamental challenges facing society today. The University’s research institutes and centres consolidate and deliver this impact as vibrant communities of learning, discovery and creation. Research at Maynooth also is very much central to its teaching and the University prides itself on placing equal value on its research and teaching missions.

Principles and Values

Maynooth University is committed to the following values:

- Scholarly rigour;
- Academic freedom;
- Integrity and ethical behaviour;
- Collegiality, transparency and trust;
- Equality, inclusiveness and social justice;
- Operational excellence, organisational flexibility and responsiveness;
- Dignity, respect and care for the individual.

Strategy 2018 - 2022

The University’s Strategic Plan 2018-22 builds from a position of confidence. Maynooth University is a University with ambition, vision and values, a clear identity and sense of purpose, a history of achievement, and a future of considerable promise. The Strategy builds on the University’s accomplishments and concentrates institutional energy and resources on further development of research and postgraduate education. For more information please visit http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/about-us/university-strategic-plan

Selection and Appointment

- Only shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview;
- Candidates invited for interview will be required to make a presentation;
- It is anticipated that interviews will be held during early April 2022;
- The appointment is expected to be effective from 1st May 2022 or as soon as the candidate is available.

Equality and Diversity

Maynooth University values the enrichment that comes from a diverse community and seeks to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of each individual. To learn more about our commitment to Equality and Diversity, please read the Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy. Additionally, as an Athena SWAN Bronze Award Institute, we are committed to advancing gender equality across the University.

We aim to reflect the diversity of the community we serve and welcome applications from all individuals, in particular from people underrepresented in our workforce.

Data Protection Law
Maynooth University will process any personal data provided by you in connection with an application for this role in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Acts 2018.

If your application is successful and you accept an offer of employment at Maynooth University, then your personal data will continue to be processed in accordance with Maynooth University’s Staff Data Privacy Notice.

Both the privacy notices and further information relating to data protection, including Maynooth University’s other data protection policies and processes, can be viewed at [https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection)

**Salary**

Post-Doctoral Researcher (2021): €39,132 – 45,157 per annum (6 points)
Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher (2021): €46,422 per annum (1 point)

Appointment will be made in accordance with the Department of Finance pay guidelines.

*New entrants to the public sector will be appointed on the first point of the above relevant pay scale.

**Application Procedure**

**Closing Date:**

23:30hrs (local Irish time) on **Sunday, 13th March 2022**

Please note all applications must be made via our [Online Recruitment Portal](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/vacancies) at the following link:

Applications must be submitted by the closing date and time specified above. Any applications which are still in progress at the closing time on the specified closing date will be cancelled automatically by the system.

Late applications will not be accepted.

*Maynooth University is an equal opportunities employer*

*The position is subject to the Statutes of the University*