Maynooth University
Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

ADAPT/Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI)
Postdoctoral Researcher/Senior Postdoctoral Researcher in
AI Governance, Trust and Responsibility
(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 with a background in the social sciences to work on AI Governance, Trust and Responsibility with Prof. Aphra Kerr of MUSSI at Maynooth University.

AI policies are proliferating in Europe and a range of multi-stakeholder initiatives are currently shaping a shared set of ethical principles, values and limitations on use. These policies and principles aim to guide the development and application of AI based applications and services. But how do these policies translate into practice in diverse organisations and contexts. How can we trust AI systems and those organisations and people who deploy them? These questions motivate this research position. This postdoc will focus on approaches, methods and tools for evaluating the social impacts of AI in particular contexts and help to develop strategies to support transparency and responsibility.

The postdoc will conduct original research that contributes to at least two of the following streams of work 1) conduct case studies to examine the efficacy of AI policies and frameworks in practice in particular organisations and/or on platforms, 2) audit the social impacts of an AI system in a particular domain 3) develop strategies, tools and events to support public trust, transparency and responsibility around the application of AI systems.

The primary focus of the role is on conducting excellent research and on disseminating this research through academic journal articles, international conferences, and public engagement activities. There will be opportunities to develop new research projects in collaboration with other researchers and/or external parties.

This postdoc will contribute to the research agenda of the Transparent Digital Governance (TDG) research team within the Science Foundation Ireland funded ADAPT research centre. TDG is one of three strands of research within the ADAPT research centre whose goal is to develop trustworthy and human Centric AI informed by ethical principles, fundamental rights and social values. The centre includes graduate and postgraduate researchers from across 8 Irish universities in computer science,
HCI, design, social science, philosophy and law. The centre is funded by the Irish government through Science Foundation Ireland.

The postdoc will be located with other postgraduate researchers and staff working on externally funded research projects in the Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI) at Maynooth University in Ireland.

**Principal Duties**

The Postdoc will have the following duties.

**Research, Administrative and other duties:**

These will include the following:

- Conducting a state-of-the-art review on current best practice in AI governance and social and ethical issues resulting from the application of AI in particular domains
- Evaluating methodological approaches for auditing AI in practice
- Applying and conducting an AI audit in a chosen domain;
- Collaborating with other postdocs to develop the centre’s knowledge and expertise of European and national policies and emerging regulations pertaining to AI.
- Dissemination of literature reviews and research findings through academic (e.g. peer reviewed journal articles, presentations at peer reviewed international conferences) and non-academic means (e.g. blogs, podcasts, exhibitions other);
- Developing new research projects with other academics, the public sector, industry and/or civil society
- Helping to organise group meetings, workshops and seminars.
- Participating in ADAPT Education and public engagement activities with the general public (e.g. citizen think ins, talks, workshops);

**The ideal candidate will have:**

**Essential**

- A PhD in Sociology, Science and Technology Studies, Media & Communication, or related social science discipline including critical data studies and human geography.
- To be appointed at the Grade of Senior Post Doctoral Researcher a minimum of 2 years post-doctoral research experience is required
- Knowledge of emerging academic and policy debates relating to social and ethical issues relating to Artificial Intelligence and automated decision-making systems
- Knowledge of platform governance debates in digital content technologies
- Demonstrable experience of qualitative social science research methods including primary and secondary data analysis;
- Willingness to learn new skills and to conduct an AI audit.
- A record of high-quality publications in international journals appropriate to career stage
- A record of applying for funded research proposals appropriate to career stage
- Excellent writing and presentation skills in English.
- Excellent presentation skills – to both academic and non-academic audiences;
- Good research management and administration skills
- Willingness to travel in Ireland to conduct research and public outreach
- Willingness to travel to attend national and international conferences;

**Desirable**
• Post-doctoral research experience/ relevant other experience
• Knowledge of emerging European policies related to Digital Services and Platforms.
• Knowledge of digital policy making procedures and institutions in Ireland and Europe;
• Knowledge of living lab or similar experimental research environments.
• Experience of public engagement and public communication activities
• Interdisciplinary research collaboration experience, especially with computer scientists.

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 Childhood and Primary Education, Education; Geography; International Development; Law; Psychology and Sociology).

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 and public policy in Ireland and internationally.

ADAPT

ADAPT is an SFI Research Centre focussed on Human Centric AI and Digital Content Technologies. 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 University of Galway.

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;
- Appointments will be approved by the President based on the report of the selection board;
- It is anticipated that interviews will be held late January / Early February.
- The appointment is expected to be effective from April 1st 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.
# Terms and Conditions

## Tenure
This is a full time, fixed-term contract post for 23 months.

## Location
The place of work is the campus of Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

## Salary
- **Post-Doctoral Researcher (2022):** €41,209 to €47,477 p.a. (6 Points)
- **Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher (2022):** €48,813 to €50,189 p.a. (1 point with increment)

Appointments will be made in accordance with public sector pay provisions.

## Hours of work
A 37-hour working week is in operation in respect of full-time positions (pro-rated for part-time positions).

This can be reviewed or adjusted from time to time through national agreements.

## Annual Leave
Annual leave and public holidays are provided for in the University policy: [https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/annual-leave-policy](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies/annual-leave-policy)

Annual leave will be allocated on a pro-rata basis for part-time and temporary positions.

## University policies and schemes
Employees of the University will be subject to the terms of the University policies and schemes, available on the University website at:

- [https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies)
- [https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/policies)

## Pension
This is a pensionable post. Employees of the University will enter into a public sector pension scheme, details of the schemes are available at:

[https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/pension-information](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/human-resources/pension-information)

## Eligibility
Applications from **non-EEA citizens** are welcomed, applicants should note that eligibility is determined by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Further information regarding eligibility is available at:


Non-EEA applicants are responsible for ensuring they can secure a visa to travel to Ireland. Any offer of employment is conditional on applicants securing the appropriate employment permissions.

### Former Irish Public Service employees - Certain Restrictions on Eligibility

Eligibility of applicants formerly employed by an Irish Public Sector body, and who availed of an Irish Public Service Redundancy or Incentivised Retirement Scheme under the Schemes below, may be affected:


### 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).

### Application Procedure

**Closing Date:**

23:30hrs (local Irish time) on **Sunday, 8th January, 2022**.

Please note all applications must be made via our **Online Recruitment Portal** 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*