

Post Title: Post-doctoral researcher in auditing age verification

Post Duration: Specific Purpose full time 12 months contract

Salary Scale: Post-Doctoral Researcher, PD2 Point 1 – 4 (54,850 – 59,654)

Location: AI Accountability Lab, School of Computer Science & Statistics, Trinity College Dublin (in-person, full-time)

Reports to: Dr. Abeba Birhane

Closing Date: 16 / 01 / 2026

## About AIAL

The AI Accountability Lab (AIAL) is a research lab housed in the ADAPT Research Centre and the School of Computer Science and Statistics in Trinity College Dublin. We are driven by the urgent need to demystify, critically assess, and publicly communicate the operations and functionality of AI systems by looking under the hood as well as their downstream impact on the public with the aim of shaping public knowledge, shifting power, and reserving fundamental rights, freedoms, and autonomy. The AIAL is an innovative lab at the cutting-edge of AI dedicated to greater transparency on the use of AI systems in the public domain and concrete accountability for the downstream societal impact of these technologies.

The AIAL operates under the core principle that academic research, particularly research in AI, should be of a high-relevance and utility to the public. Thus, we actively engage and partner with local communities, civil society, and rights groups to ensure our work is grounded in real challenges and remains relevant and useful to these stakeholders. We are deeply committed to ensuring our work contributes to fostering transparency and driving a culture of AI accountability. Academic freedom and autonomy are of utmost importance to us and we take great care to ensure our lab is free from direct conflict of interest or implicit influence or pressure from the industry that we are studying. We are funded by philanthropic organisations such as the MacArthur foundation and government grants.

## About the role

Age verification systems are increasingly being deployed in ways that rely on inferring the age or age range of the user from data such as live selfies or conversational analysis. These systems pose challenges regarding accuracy, bias, privacy, and most importantly raise questions around the scientific legitimacy and methodological soundness underlying the very process. Furthermore, commercially deployed age-verification systems and processes operate in non-transparent ways with no recourse from errors and deficiencies. Currently, information on where, how, and when such technologies are being

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developed and deployed is extremely scarce, as well as which actors are becoming established as market leaders and key vendors. The AIAL seeks to understand this challenge better through high-quality, high-impact research that helps uphold the principles of scientific validity, methodological rigour, transparency, accountability, and equity.

To directly tackle this urgent problem, the AIAL is looking for a highly driven Post-Doctoral Researcher who can identify and map the current state of commercially used age verification systems, the techniques being used, and the key actors in the development and deployment pipeline. Based on publicly available information, the researcher will closely replicate the techniques used in commercial age-verification systems and undertake socio-technical audits with a focus on assessing the scientific legitimacy, epistemic and methodological validity of the overall approach as well as assessing the accuracy, discrimination, and privacy risks.

The output of this work is expected to contribute to advancing the state of the art in accountable governance and responsible practices, and will support the application of relevant laws such as the GDPR and the AI Act. Ultimately and in the best case scenario, insights from this work would feed legal or other mechanisms to gain access to real-world deployed age-verification systems.

### Responsibilities:

- Identify and map key age verification techniques and technologies, and major developers, vendors and deployers.
- Using publicly available information, reconstruct an open-source simulation that closely captures potential techniques, models, training data and evaluation benchmarks used in commercial age-verification systems
- Using the open-source simulation, undertake socio-technical audits with a focus on assessing the scientific legitimacy, epistemic and methodological validity of the overall approach as well as assessing the accuracy, discrimination, and privacy risks.
- Seek methods to gain information about contractual agreements and policies regarding the procurement and use of age verification systems to produce qualitative and quantitative insights into the responsibilities and liabilities of developer, vendor, and the deployer
- Grounded in key findings and insights from the work, drive concrete change on the ground, ideally gaining researcher and civil society access into real-world deployed age-verification systems.

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## Requirements:

- Hold a PhD in the following disciplines: computer science, machine learning, artificial intelligence, computer vision, information systems studies, science and technology studies or cognate disciplines
- In-depth experience and publication track-record examining facial recognition, age prediction, (or relevant computer vision methods) and NLP techniques to infer information
- In-depth knowledge and understanding required to detect and debunk AI pseudoscience, race “sciences”, and physiognomic methods and their resurgence in ML models
- Demonstrable experience in audits, assessments, or evaluations computer vision and NLP
- Comprehensive knowledge (with a publication track record) and hands on experience of black-box audits, particularly of CV and NLP
- Familiarity with regulations such as the GDPR, AI Act, DSA (Good to have)
- Self-driven, ambitious, passionate, and committed to transparency and accountability of age-verification technologies
- Good communicator who is well able to articulate transparency (lack thereof) and accountability in this domain, even when there is considerable pushback
- Experience working with litigators, civil society organisations, and relevant communities on AI transparency, accountability, equity and the rule of law (Good to have)

## Salary Scale:

Post-Doctoral Researcher, PD2 Point 1 €54,850 to Point 4 €59,654) as per the IUA paycales. Appointment will be commensurate with qualifications and experience and in line with current Government pay policy.

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## Application Process

Interested candidates can submit their application through the form linked [here](#) with CV and cover letter to be included or to the email [aial@tcd.ie](mailto:aial@tcd.ie) with the subject line “AIAL age verification postdoc – application” with CV and cover letter to be included. Late applications will not be accepted. Informal enquiries about the role can also be sent to the email [aial@tcd.ie](mailto:aial@tcd.ie) with the subject line “AIAL age verification postdoc – enquiry”. Late applications will not be accepted.

**If emailing, please ensure the subject line matches exactly as above. Emails without this subject line may not be considered.**

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