PhD Position

Ethics and Trustworthiness of Algorithmic Decision-making Systems in the Public Sector

PhD Title: Ethics and Trustworthiness of Algorithmic Decision-making Systems in the Public Sector
Research Centre: Lero, the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Software
Location:, Dublin City University Business School, Dublin, Ireland
Duration: 4 years
Keywords: Trust, Ethics, Artificial Intelligence, Algorithmic Decision-Making systems, Public Sector

Background:

Lero, the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Software, brings together expert software teams from universities and institutes of technology across Ireland in a co-ordinated centre of research excellence with a strong industry focus. Lero's research spans a wide range of application domains from driverless cars to artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, fintech, govtech, smart communities, agtech and healthtech. Lero's overall vision is to establish Ireland as a location synonymous with high-quality software research and development, to the extent that 'Irish software' can enter the lexicon in the same way as 'German automotive' or 'Scandinavian design'. Since it was founded in 2005, Lero has become one of the best-known, and most highly regarded, software research centres in the world.

Research Context:

Algorithmic Decision-making Systems (ADS) are increasingly pervasive and are revolutionising services across different industries and the public sector. The challenges and issues associated with ADS deployment in high stake contexts are increasingly discussed in scholarly outlets. These include the need to increase efficiency, reduce potential harm, as well as promote fairness, equity, accountability and transparency in decision making. Understanding how trust in ADS can be generated so as to increase more broad-based adoption is an issue of interest to scholars and practitioners alike. It is particularly important in relation to the public sector, as ADS may actually entrench, amplify and even obscure human bias and discrimination in decision processes -something that underpins public concerns and reduces trust.

PhD Objective:

The goal of this PhD thesis is to investigate the trust-related factors that influence acceptance and adoption of ADS within different public sector situational contexts. It will provide important insights into the dynamics of trust generation in ADS and will contribute theoretical and conceptual foundations that support development of ethical ADS in public sector contexts.

Eligibility:

- First-class or upper second-class honours degree in Business, Information Systems, Ethics or related fields
- EU national
- English Language Requirement:
    - e.g., IELTS average score of 6.5
    - See link for full list of acceptable proofs https://www.dcu.ie/registry/english-language-requirements-non-native-speakers-english-registry

Essential Skills:

- Ability to write to a high standard
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Problem solving and critical thinking ability
- Interest in ethics, trust and AI

Benefits:

The PhD position covers the payment of PhD registration fees. The position also comes with a tax-free scholarship of €18,500 per year, resource and conference travel expenses. The candidate will gain access to DCU student facilities and services (such as, clubs, concerts, sports centre, campus pubs, etc.).

Starting Date:

The PhD thesis will commence as soon as possible (preferably January 2022).

Supervisor:

Prof. Regina Connolly

Informal Enquiries:

Get in touch by email with Prof. Regina Connolly (Regina.Connolly@dcu.ie)

Application:

Send application by email to Prof. Regina Connolly (regina.connolly@dcu.ie).

All applications to include:

- CV
- Cover Letter
- Recent Examination Transcripts

- Contact details of 2 referees

Application End Date:

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.
Interviews will be carried out as soon as a suitable candidate is identified.