Two PhD studentships in AI and Argument Technology

The Centre for Argument Technology currently has vacancies for two fully funded PhD studentships.

The first is in the context of a project funded by the German charity Volkswagen Stiftung focusing on improving the quality of deliberation online. The Deliberation Laboratory aims to use deep learning and other AI techniques to identify patterns in debate and argumentation that hint at a discussion that is going off the rails – and then dynamically generate interventions that can help nudge the discussion back on track.

The second is in the context of a project funded by IARPA, the US intelligence research funding agency focusing on a new technique known as dialogical fingerprinting. The way in which we interact in dialogue is as unique to us as our fingerprint, and that fingerprint can be automatically identified. Such identification represents a significant risk to privacy online, and one goal of the research is to explore ways of preserving privacy despite such difficult-to-hide characteristics.

Both studentships are open to candidates from anywhere in the world, with fees fully covered and a tax-free stipend at UKRI rates (£17,668 in 2022/23). Candidates should have an excellent first degree in an appropriate subject and a keen interest in AI. English proficiency should be at IELTS 7.0 or equivalent. Starting date will be by negotiation.

Applicants should send CV and covering letter to jobs@arg.tech.
Closing date for both positions is 20 November 2022.

The Centre for Argument Technology is one of the world's leading research groups in the computational application of theories of argument. As an interdisciplinary team, we focus on developing foundational theory in philosophy, linguistics and cognitive science that facilitates the development of practical AI applications. The goal is to help improve, teach, track and navigate the discussions and debates that run our governments, structure scientific research, underpin the corporate boardroom, drive legal process and frame religious beliefs.

Our work is at the forefront of neurosymbolic techniques for the identification, recognition, generation and management of argumentation and debate. Our research has attracted funding of over £10m, and we have over 200 refereed papers in print. Our freely available software tools such as OVA (for performing argument analysis) have tens of thousands of users, we have pioneered robust new standards such as the AIF and we have the largest freely accessible corpus of analysed argumentation anywhere in the world in AIFdb. The group also hosted the editorial office for the journal Argument and Computation from its inception in 2010 until 2016.

Our collaborations and consultancy with commercial and government organisations including IBM, DSTL and the BBC have driven our focus on end-user impact, and our public communication in print and broadcast media has reached over 30 million people.