RESEARCH ASSISTANT
SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND COMPUTING SCIENCES/NATIONAL DECOMMISSIONING CENTRE

Closing date: 21 July 2023
Interview date: To be confirmed
Reference number: NCS212R
INTRODUCTION

The National Decommissioning Centre (NDC) and The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) have established a research partnership to undertake a series of cross industry projects. One of these focus areas is the digital fluidity across the energy sector. This project will study and coordinate the main areas of commonalities in digital fluidity across sectors: identifying an organisation’s digital needs; obtaining, maintaining, and demonstrating a digital competence workforce; and enabling the movement of digitally skilled people across industries.

Digital fluidity describes the base digital competence and capability required by anyone working in a modern economy to perform their role efficiently and effectively, whether it be in the use of digital tools and devices in a day-to-day work, setting digital strategy, or working a fully digital role.

It is envisaged that this project will:

- Carry out the independent look at the “As is” position with regard to other digital groups (Literature review).
- Act as the secretariat to coordinate and link the different groups of the Digital Fluidity Community of Practice (CoP).

The Research Assistant working on the project will be supervised by Dr Yaji Sripada (School of Computing Science) and Professor Georgios Leontidis (Director of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Data & Artificial Intelligence). The NDC-NDA partnership will provide the links to OEUK, NDA, etc.

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Carrying out systematic literature review of both academic research and industrial practices into the topic of digital fluidity across fields related to NDA and NDC.
- Creating a report summarising the literature review to make recommendations to NDA and NDC about their Digital Fluidity Community of Practice.
- Participate in NDA and NDC internal workshops to explain the main concepts and ideas from the literature review report.
- The scheduling and effective delivery of quarterly meetings, and other ad-hoc meetings and workshops as required.
- Timely preparation / collation and provision of all supporting meeting papers that include (but not limited to) performance data around membership, portal usage, projects status and finances, meeting agenda, minutes, and actions.

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- Tracking agreed actions across the secretariat function: monitoring progress, closing out and escalating delays to OEUK/NDA (tbd) as necessary.
- The provision of monthly updates on activity with formats and content appropriate to the receiving audience.
- Receiving and effectively managing all new enquiries for membership.
- Working with the marketing teams in OEUK/NDA to ensure there is sufficient comms.
- Managing and maintaining membership records including: updating to include new members, updating with membership changes and provision of member status information to NDA/OEUK colleagues as required.
- Working with NDA/OEUK to track funding as required.
- The development and administration of agile and adaptable operational processes that deliver consistency in secretariat functions.
- Developing relevant external relationships which contribute to the effective working of the CoP with members, related stakeholders and other appropriate parties.

**CANDIDATE BACKGROUND**

You should have an undergraduate degree in computing science, engineering, or other related discipline, and some experience in writing academic papers or other scientific reports.

A very good understanding of digital technologies, software systems, databases, data mining, machine learning/AI would be required in order to explore and evaluate the digital fluidity of the energy sector.

As part of the role, you will draw comparisons and contrast the digital readiness of the energy sector and identify areas of improvement in the short-/mid-/long-term, with some recommendations, therefore some work experience related to the energy sector would be advantageous.
Salary will be at the appropriate point on the Grade 5, Point 24 – 26, salary £30,619 - £32,411 per annum, pro rata and negotiable with placement according to qualifications and experience.

**This post is 50% FTE for the first 3 months. Then goes down to 25% FTE for the final 6 months.**

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit [www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here)

This role is based in the UK and as such the successful candidate will be required to live and work in the UK.

This post does not meet the minimum requirements for visa sponsorship under the Skilled Worker Route. We are therefore unable to consider applicants for this post that require sponsorship to work in the UK.

The candidate appointed to this post may be eligible for homeworking on an occasional or regular basis. For more information, please refer to our [Homeworking Policy](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here).

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**AT A GLANCE**

**SALARY:**
Grade 5
£30,619 - £32,411

**HOURS OF WORK:**
50% FTE: 20 hours per week for 3 months.
Then 25% FTE for next 6 months.

**CONTRACT TYPE:**
Funding limited: 12 months

**LOCATION:**
Aberdeen
## Person Specification

### Education/Qualifications

**Academic, technical and professional education and training**

- Undergraduate degree in physical sciences, e.g., computer science, engineering, maths, etc.
- MSc in related area.

### Work and Other relevant experience (including training)

**e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research**

- Experience in writing scientific papers and/or reports.
- Technical understanding of digital technologies.
- Understanding of energy systems.

### Personal qualities and abilities

**e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills**

- Ability to work on own and with others.
- Enthusiasm for innovation relevant to society and economy.
- Excellent organisational and written and oral communication skills, including electronic communication.
- Flexible approach.
- Team player.

### Other

**e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc.**

- Limited traveling between NDC and Old Aberdeen might be required.

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open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others

The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The University continues to uphold the principals of the foundational purpose. We remain committed to delivering positive change both locally and globally. We work together and with our partners in an interdisciplinary way, catalysing world-leading research in our areas of strength: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing. We are investing in our future and have committed £100m to upgrading our campus, including the new fully digitised Science Teaching Hub, the regeneration of the historic King’s Quarter and a new Business School building. Our commitment to our students, campus and community has led to us being named a Top 20 UK institution in two major league tables\(^1\) and 4\(^{th}\) in the UK for overall student satisfaction\(^2\).

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\(^1\) The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 and the Guardian University Guide 2023

\(^2\) National Student Survey (NSS) 2022
ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched Aberdeen 2040, our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**
  We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.

- **Interdisciplinary**
  We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.

- **International**
  We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.

- **Sustainable**
  We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances.
  We work responsibly.

OUR EDUCATION

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

OUR RESEARCH

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen’s Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

INTERNATIONAL

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships around the world, including Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students.

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3 Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021

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IMPACT

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2022 we were listed in the global Top 100 for 8 of these goals.\(^4\)

Our highly cited work in zero-carbon technology and global outlooks makes us Scotland’s best institution for environmental research.\(^5\)
The School of Natural and Computing Sciences is a vibrant and dynamic centre, internationally renowned for excellence both in teaching and research. It currently comprises four academic units, namely: Chemistry, Computing Science, Mathematics and Physics. Hosting over 95 academic and research staff, 60 research students, 120 postgraduate taught students and 690 undergraduates; it is a close knit and friendly community, based on the main campus at King’s College. Launching in September 2021, the Aberdeen Institute of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, South China Normal University is a collaboration between the University of Aberdeen and South China Normal University (SCNU) to deliver three 4 year undergraduate degree programmes in China closely based on the content of the existing BSc (Hons) Computing Science degree (and variants) at Aberdeen. The Institute builds on an existing 2+2 articulation programme in Computing Science and Software Engineering with SCNU.

Data Science & Artificial Intelligence have been recognised as a priority for the University as part of its ‘Aberdeen 2040’ strategy, and the School is looking to significantly increase its strengths in these and related areas. The School’s strategic focus lies across the themes of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Trust, Identity, Privacy and Security (TIPS), and we particularly encourage candidates who work at the intersection of theory and application within these areas to apply. Within AI, application domains include cybersecurity, energy, food technology and healthcare, while theoretical research encompasses human/machine collaboration, natural language technologies and explanation, as well as machine learning and multi-agent systems. The TIPS theme focuses on computational trust and reputation systems; cybersecurity; provenance; and blockchain technologies - with application areas including healthcare and the digital economy.
Scotland’s third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland’s top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de-Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including His Majesty’s Theatre, Music Hall, Art Gallery, the P&J Arena, Museums, and Beach Leisure Centre. The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland’s most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit www.visitabdn.com
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University values a diverse working environment and recognises the benefits this can bring. The University is keen to receive applications from individuals from across all of the equality protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).

The University supports opportunities for flexible working for a range of reasons and has policies in place to facilitate this. The policies can be found at https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php.

The University’s commitment to gender equality has been recognised through the achievement of an Athena SWAN Bronze award at an institutional level and across all its subject areas. The University is also a Stonewall Diversity Champion to further LGBT+ equality.

The University is signed up to Advance HE’s Race Equality Charter, affirming the University’s commitment to the charter’s aim of improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.

Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using contact SCOTLAND-BSL.

The University is delighted to be accredited as a Disability Confident employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment.

HOW TO APPLY

Online application forms are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs

The closing date for receipt of applications is 21 July 2023

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Dr Yaji Sripada, Senior Lecturer in Computing Science

01224 27259

yaji.sripada@abdn.ac.uk

Please do not send application forms or CVs to Dr Sripada

Please quote reference number NCS212R on all correspondence