University College Dublin
Ireland's Global University

Academic Director of the UCD AI Institute and Professor of Artificial Intelligence

Perrett Laver

AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

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University College Dublin (UCD) is seeking to appoint an Academic Director of the UCD AI Institute and Professor of Artificial Intelligence.

This role requires an internationally recognised academic leader, who has led cross-disciplinary initiatives at scale. They will have a distinguished research and teaching profile in Artificial Intelligence, from any disciplinary perspective. The successful candidate will establish the new UCD AI Institute, and provide transformative, cross-disciplinary leadership through the cultivation of a dynamic research culture, innovative curriculum development, and the pursuit of prestigious national and international funding opportunities.

They will oversee high-quality, impactful research collaborations that advance the field and address major societal challenges and opportunities associated with AI. As Academic Director of the UCD AI Institute, the appointee will establish the Institute and guide the evolution of its programmes of activity, fostering strong external partnerships and pioneering international collaborations. The role also carries a significant contribution to the broader strategic development of artificial intelligence at UCD, encompassing education, training, research, governance, and operational leadership.

Principal Duties & Responsibilities:

- Establish the new UCD AI Institute from the ground up, and provide ongoing strategic leadership for the UCD AI Institute, shaping its vision, direction, and long-term development in line with the UCD Strategy to 2030.
- Lead the Institute's strategic objectives, identifying and advancing new opportunities for growth, impact, and innovation.
- Expand and support a broad, interdisciplinary research community, enabling new avenues of collaboration and academic engagement.
- Establish and promote a unified, nationally and internationally recognised identity for the UCD AI Institute.
- Oversee high-profile interdisciplinary coordination across the University, requiring exceptional academic leadership and influence.
- Maintain an outstanding publication and citation record that reflects international research leadership.
- Build, coordinate, and sustain collaborations and cross-faculty research initiatives across UCD.
- Develop and strengthen international partnerships and collaborative research networks.
- Represent the Institute at national and international levels, enhancing its visibility and strategic influence.
- Lead the advancement of human-centric AI research that addresses societal needs and global challenges.
- Foster AI collaboration across disciplines to support interdisciplinary innovation.
- Promote responsible, ethical, and human-centred approaches to AI research, education, and practice.
- Engage proactively with industry, government, and international research communities to enhance the Institute's impact and reach.

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Line Manager: Vice President for Research, Innovation and Impact

Post Duration: This role is a permanent academic position linked to a UCD School to be confirmed based on the discipline of the successful candidate. The AI Institute is a strategic initiative of the UCD Strategy to 2030, and is therefore subject to review as the university enters into a new strategy term from 2030 to 2035. Our expectation is that this will be a longstanding structure of the University, as has been the case with our other institutes. This professorial appointment is a permanent academic role which will continue beyond the outcome of any Institute review process.

Reaching the 5 year term in 2030, a second 5 year term may be sought with the agreement of the VP for Research Innovation and Impact, or alternatively the role holder could step down as Director and become a normal part of the academic faculty of the School with the agreement of the relevant Head of School.

Salary: 95 Full Professor (7937) €145,741 - €184,251

Appointment will be made on scale and in accordance with the Department of Finance guidelines.

Details on eligibility to compete and pension information is available at https://www.ucd.ie/hr/resourcing/eligibilitytocompete/

UCD is committed to creating an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone is afforded equality of opportunity. We welcome applications from everyone, including those who identify with any of the protected characteristics that are set out in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. Learn more about Diversity at https://www.ucd.ie/workatucd/diversity/

Selection Criteria:

Selection criteria outline the qualifications, skills, knowledge and/or experience that the successful candidate would need to demonstrate for successful discharge of the responsibilities of the post. Applications will be assessed on the basis of how well candidates satisfy these criteria.

Mandatory:

- An internationally recognised leader in interdisciplinary AI research with prestigious funding awards and a globally impactful publication record, with an ability to lead and shape major cross-disciplinary research initiatives that set international standards for excellence, innovation, and impact.
- A track record of delivery of ambitious and imaginative academic leadership at scale with proven capability to take on a significant research institute leadership position.
- A proven ability to contribute to the strategic development of AI at the University, including innovative curriculum leadership, the development of a strong research culture, and the mentoring of early career academics.
- An exemplary vision for the future direction of globally-leading artificial intelligence research and its integration into novel academic programmes.

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- A proven ability to foster strong external partnerships and sustain impactful international collaborations across industry, government, and international research communities to enhance the Institute's impact and reach.
- A sustained record of people leadership, including effective team mentorship, development, and collaborative working.
- Demonstrated leadership and sustained commitment to gender equality and the broader equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) agenda.
- A substantial and sustained reputation in impact beyond academia through, for example, a track-record of technology transfer to leading companies internationally, high-level international advisory positions, major policy or cultural impact, or other notable forms of non-academic impact.
- Evidence of measures of esteem, such as personal research awards and membership (Fellow or equivalent status) of relevant learned bodies.

Desirable:

- Demonstrated understanding of the European research funding landscape, including major programmes, funding mechanisms, and strategic opportunities for securing competitive grants.

Supplementary Information:

The University: https://www.ucd.ie/
UCD Strategy 2030: Breaking Boundaries: https://strategy.ucd.ie/
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at UCD: https://www.ucd.ie/workatucd/diversity/

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