

Job - PhD position within the visuAAL Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network

PhD position

Details

Location	RWTH Aachen University Germany
Function types	PhD position
Scientific fields	Social science
Hours	40.0 hours per week (in annual calculation)
Salary	See below
Education	Doctoral Programme Communication Science, in Psychology or Sociology
Job number	visuAAL ESR 2
Employer	RWTH Aachen University Germany
Short link	http://www.comm.rwth-aachen.de

Job description

visuAAL is a four-year (2020-2024) Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Innovative Training Network, funded by the European Union, that aims at bridging the knowledge gap between users' requirements and the appropriate and secure use of video-based AAL technologies to deliver effective and supportive care to older adults managing their health and wellbeing.

visuAAL will seek to increase awareness and understanding of the context-specific ethical, legal, privacy and societal issues necessary to implement visual system across hospital, home and community settings, in a manner that protects and reassures users; outputs will stimulate the development of a new research perspective for constructively addressing privacy-aware video-based working solutions for assisted living.

visuAAL will provide a transdisciplinary and cross-sectoral combination of training, non-academic placements, courses and workshops on scientific and complementary skills to 15 high achieving Early Stage Researchers (ESRs). These newly hired ESRs will contribute through their individual research projects to fulfil visuAAL's aims.

visuAAL brings together 5 universities:

- Chair of Communication Science, Human-Computer Interaction Center, RWTH Aachen University, Germany
- The Swedish Law and Informatics Research Institute (IRI), Stockholm University, Sweden
- The Trinity Centre for Practice and Healthcare Innovation, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
- Computer Vision Lab, TU Wien, Austria
- Department of Computing Technology, Universidad de Alicante, Spain (Project Coordinator)

This Consortium is complemented by 14 partner organizations from Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom; that will contribute to the research and training activities.

For more information about visuAAL, see <https://www.visuaal-itn.eu/>.

In the framework of visuAAL, RWTH Aachen University is recruiting a PhD researcher for a period of three years.

Project description

Project title: (Dis)Trust in medical technologies and medical support considering (severe) health decisions
Objectives: Trust as a major component of the acceptance of medical technologies is essential. Especially in severe health- and life-end- decisions, socio-ethical perspectives on lifelogging and medical technology are of paramount impact. Thereby, trust in technologies and decisions of medical personnel are of utmost importance for people who need assistance and care. Yet, trust concepts prevailing are concentrating on different usage contexts and lack of understanding which factors need to be considered in severe illness and under vital conditions. This thesis examines the extent to which trust in technology and medical support impacts technology acceptance and decisions in (severe) health situations.
Expected Results: The dissertation will explore insights into trust building and the trust requirements in sensible user groups and usage contexts.
Supervisory Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Martina Ziefle (RWTH Aachen University)• Second Supervisor: Prof M. Richart (University of Alicante)• Co-Supervisor: Dr. Anne Kathrin Schaar (RWTH Aachen University)• Advisor: Dr. Barbel Brüning (Lebenshilfe NRW)
Planned secondment(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secondment 1: University of Alicante (Supervisor M. Richart) M18 – M20, Research on benefits and barriers to adoption of lifelogging technologies• Secondment 2: Lebenshilfe NRW (Supervisor B. Brüning), M31-M33, Case Study
Enrolment in Doctoral degree(s): Doctoral Programme in Communication Science, Humanities Department (Dr. phil.), RWTH Aachen University

Requirements

- Applicants must hold a relevant Master's degree (or equivalent) in Psychology, Communication Science, Sociology or a related area
- Applicants must not have been awarded a PhD degree
- At the time of recruitment, applicants must have less than four (full time equivalent) years of experience within a research career (measured from the date when the applicant obtained the first degree entitling him/her to embark on a doctorate, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged)
- Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the recruiting institution for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date
- Proficiency in written and spoken English
- Be highly motivated;
- Creativity and high level of independency;
- It is the policy of the visuAAL project to promote equal opportunities between men and women and stimulate gender balance.
- Additional requirements:
 - Proficiency in written and Spoken German (level C2)
 - Competent in empirical qualitative and quantitative social science methodology
 - High social competence (interacting with frail, old and handicapped people)

Conditions of employment

We offer a 3-year full-time PhD contract. The first year will be a probation period, after a positive assessment the position will be extended with another 2 years.

The full-time gross monthly salary amounts to € 4074,00 (net salary: € 2408,00) plus mobility bonus and bonus according to family charges.

The salary and terms of employment for this position will correspond to the requirements of the collective agreement for the public service of the federal states 2021 in North Rhine-Westphalia Germany (basic civil service salary, level E 13), and in the provisions of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.

We offer a dynamic and challenging job in an internationally oriented organisation where young people receive an advanced education and scholars conduct exciting research.

You will participate in the research training sessions in the framework of the visuAAL Marie Skłodowska Curie ITN project.

Contract type: Temporary, we offer a 3-year full-time employment contract.

Organisation

Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH Aachen University) was established in 1870 and with its 45,377 students enrolled in 157 degree programs is the largest technical university in Germany. More than 7000 students and more than 900 doctoral students graduate annually from RWTH Aachen University. The university counts more than 540 professors as well as more than 5,370 academic and more than 2,700 non-academic staff members. RWTH Aachen University is composed of 260 institutes spread over nine faculties. RWTH Aachen University is the largest employer in Aachen City Region and the university is one of the most renowned institutions of education throughout Europe.

The Chair of Communication Science (COMM) at RWTH Aachen is an interdisciplinary research group working on the empirical-experimental evaluation of human factors in technology. The impact of individual cognitive and affective factors on technology acceptance and the interaction and communication between humans and technology is integral part of the user-centered research approach. One focus is directed to the understanding of acceptance of medical assistive technologies for seniors, especially in novel and conflicting usage scenarios, in which the understanding of the social nature of needs and wants, but also the concerns, fears might help to inform the technological developmental process.

ESRs will live in the westernmost city in Germany. Aachen is located in the border area to the Netherlands and Belgium (Euregio Maas-Rhine).

Department

Chair of Communication Science, Human-Computer Interaction Center, RWTH Aachen

How to apply?

Submit your application to <https://www.visuaal-itn.eu/esr-vacancies>. Please, ensure that you select vacancy number ESR 2.

The following documents must be submitted with your application:

- (a) Written documentation concerning prior education, including a certified copy of your Master certificate and list of grades (with certified translation for languages other than English or Spanish);
- (b) A personal letter of motivation, indicating why you wish to conduct this research project offered by RWTH Aachen University, and why you expect that you will be able to complete the research and training programme successfully;
- (c) Detailed curriculum vitae, including – if applicable – relevant publications;
- (d) Two references from academic referees; (who will be contacted by the Consortium using standardised forms),
- (e) The applicant should have a minimum level of proficiency in English language, which could be demonstrated by providing an English language certificate and that will be confirmed in a later interview, if needed.
- (f) Draft project proposal, including timeline (max length. 3000 words)
- (g) A substantial piece of writing in English, such as a (draft) master thesis or research paper.

Selection procedure

Applications can be submitted at any moment while the position is open. Submitted applications will be evaluated every two weeks and applicants will be contacted with the outcome of this evaluation. Those applicants shortlisted will be invited to an interview with the Supervisory Committee.

Selection criteria

Criteria	Rate
Relevant academic background (including the quality of the substantial piece of writing)	0-30
Motivation statement	0-10
Relevant publications/work experience	0-15
Draft project proposal, including timeline	0-30
Mobility (during Bachelor and/or Master)	0-5
Evaluation by referees	0-10

Information

For questions related to this project proposal, please contact ziefle@comm.rwth-aachen.de
For all other questions, please use the following email address, clearly indicating the visuAAL vacancy number ESR 2: info@visuaal-itn.eu