Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

Research Associate/ PDRA in FAIR management and integration of soil health data



Reference: 1847-26

Grade: 7-8, depending on experience

Salary: £34,630 – £41,885 per annum, pro rata depending on experience

Contract Type: Fixed term (36 months)

Basis: 0.8 FTE or full-time (4 or 5 days per week, to be agreed at interview)

Job description

Job Purpose:

The post holder will work within the Horizon Europe funded project 'REGENSOILL' (https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101297170). REGENSOILL will establish a network of five Living Labs across Europe to advance the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields, responding to the EU Soil Mission objective of achieving healthy soils by 2030. The consortium includes expert partners from Universities, Research Institutes, SMEs, Governmental bodies and non-profit organizations across Europe and the UK.

The Aston University team will work in close partnership with an SME specialising in geochemical data management and will also collaborate with other consortium members to:

- Manage and curate the project's baseline datasets on soil contamination, health and biodiversity;
- Harmonise observations from the Living Labs with EU standards and infrastructures including INSPIRE and EU Soil Observatory;
- Ensure FAIR, interoperable access to project datasets and results for research, policy and innovation, and ensure an effective contribution to the Mission Soil Platform Knowledge Hub and EU Soil Observatory,
- Generate technical data specifications and data harmonisation tools with high-quality documentation.
- Implement a continuity plan for long-term access and reuse of REGENSOILL data outputs.

Main Duties/Responsibilities

- Identify and apply data and metadata, standards, models, semantics and concepts appropriate for soil health and remediation topics.
- Co-design, implement and periodically review the template through which Living Labs will submit data and metadata for curation and management.
- Work closely with the SME project partner to ensure compatibility of soil health and remediation data with their geochemical data platform.
- Work on the data integration necessary to allow the impact of remediation strategies to be evaluated over time, including appropriate quality assurances, provenance documentation and quantification of uncertainty.
- Summarise project work in high-quality scientific reports suitable for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals.
- Lead the writing and submission of deliverable presentations and reports for the European Commission.
- Contribute to the project's Data Management Plan, and to a sustainable data plan which will ensure availability and reuse beyond project end.
- Deal with problems that may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines.
- Coordinate consortium partners on specific tasks and document progress against the workplan and project milestones.

Additional responsibilities

- Engage in continuous personal and professional development in line with the demands of the role, including undertaking relevant training and development activities.
- Ensure and promote the personal health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- Carry out duties in a way which promotes fairness in all matters and which engenders trust.

- Promote equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion as well as working to support the University's environmental sustainability agenda and practices.

Person specification

	Essential	Method of assessment
Education and qualifications	PhD, or an MSc with relevant work experience equivalent to PhD level, in Computer Science, Informatics, Environmental Modelling, or a related discipline.	Application form and interview
Experience (please give concrete examples).	Planning and conducting self-directed research up to doctoral level (or equivalent professional R&D level) Practical experience with data management and quality control. Practical application of FAIR data principles and metadata generation. Strong understanding of semantic resources and approaches (e.g. controlled vocabularies, ontologies). Writing up / contributing to the write up of scientific research for high quality publications and/or reports. Positive collaboration within and outside of candidate's immediate research team.	Application form and interview
Aptitude and skills	Excellent verbal communication skills and the ability to deal with a wide range of people. Ability to present data and results in a clear and concise manner. Ability to maintain and facilitate dialogue between technical and other domains, or across disciplines. Ability to organize own work with minimal supervision and to publish high quality publications.	Application form and interview

	Essential	Method of assessment
	Ability to actively collaborate within and outside the candidate's immediate research team. A willingness to undertake further training as appropriate and to adopt new procedures as and when required.	

	Desirable	Method of assessment
Experience	Practical experience with collation, harmonisation and integration of environmental sample data. Practical experience with standards and approaches for metadata and provenance documentation. Practical experience with standards and approaches for federated data catalogues. Practical experience with Open Geospatial Consortium APIs and standards. Practical experience with tools for semantic annotation and resource maintenance (e.g. JSON-LD, SKOS, OWL, RDF, VocBench, Protégé..) Practical experience of software development and software project management. Practical experience of soil science and soil health monitoring.	Application form and interview

University values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the University. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them



How to apply

You can apply for this role online via our website https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs.

Applications should be submitted by 23.59 on the advertised closing date.
All applicants must complete an application form, along with your CV.

Any CV sent direct to the Recruitment Team and Recruiting Manager will not be accepted.

If you require a manual application form, then please contact the Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk.

Contact information

Enquiries about the vacancy:

Name: Lucy Bastin

Job Title: Professor in Computer Science

Email: l.bastin@aston.ac.uk

Enquiries about the application process, shortlisting or interviews:
Recruitment Team via recruitment@aston.ac.uk or 0121 204 4500.

Additional information

Visit our website https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr for full details of our salary scales and benefits Aston University staff enjoy.

Salary scales: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/payroll-and-pensions/salary-scales/index

Benefits: Benefits and Rewards | Aston University

Working in Birmingham: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/birmingham

Employment of Ex-Offenders: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the positions they applying for is listed an exception under the act.

Eligibility to work in the UK: Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control, they will require a visa to work in the UK.

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

The main routes available for those who need a visa to work in the UK are **Skilled Worker**, **Global Talent** and the **Graduate Route**.

Please see UKVI guidance for further information on eligibility, knowledge of English requirements and approved test centres https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa You can also find further information on our candidate immigration web page.

If you will conduct research in your role, you may need to apply for and obtain ATAS clearance before Aston can issue a Certificate of Sponsorship for your visa application. Please see our candidate immigration web page for further details.

Before you start and Right to Work

Right to Work Check
All employees must complete a Right to Work check before they commence work at Aston. HR will contact you during the onboarding process to arrange your check.

Cost of Living - Estate and Letting Agents
There are numerous Estate and Letting Agents that can help you find suitable accommodation. Useful websites for support and guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent/how-to-rent-the-checklist-for-renting-in-england and https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/
You can also use property search websites such as Rightmove or Zoopla.

Equal Opportunities
Aston University promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure, through our admissions policies for students, and our staff recruitment and selection processes that we encourage applications from all groups represented in the wider community at a local, national and international level.

The University will endeavour not to discriminate unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, against student or potential students, staff or potential staff. This commitment applies to all functions of the University and to any stage of an individual's career.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is included within the application form. Data you provide on the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be included in a general database, for statistical monitoring purposes, enabling the University to monitor the effectiveness of its Policy, Codes of Practice and Guidelines on Equal Opportunities in Employment. Individuals will not be identified by name.

Data Protection
Your personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) ("GDPR"). The University's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, including the Job Applicant Privacy Notice can be found at https://www2.aston.ac.uk/data-protection. Your application will only be used to inform the selection process, unless you are successful, in which case it will form the basis of your personal record with the University which will be stored in manual and/or electronic files. Information in statistical form on present and former employees is given to appropriate outside bodies.
Full details of our terms and conditions of service and associated policies and procedures are available online at https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/policies

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You can also use property search websites such as Rightmove or Zoopla.

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