Funded PhD in Computer Science - Computational Social Science at UCL

About the project. Computational Social Science is a fast-growing research area at the interface of computer science, data science and social science, where fundamental social science problems are being investigated using data-driven computational thinking and methods.

The specific focus of this PhD is to develop computational methods to study social and societal changes post-pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our behaviours and attitudes in terms of how we socialise, how we work, how we travel, how we do business, and in general how we interact with one another. But what exactly are these changes and how can we measure them? How long-lasting are they and how can we monitor them as we gradually “return to normality”? How have they affected different segments (e.g., in terms of gender, age, income, and ethnicity) of the population? How can we measure over-representation, under-representation and bias that might be present in the data? How can we model these phenomena at different scales? Can we devise techniques for quasi-real-time analysis of these phenomena? With technology mediating most of our interactions, there is an abundance of data that can be accessed and analysed to answer these fundamental questions. The findings will help us understand how people and society have changed and may inform policies and interventions to adapt to these new “normalities”.

Candidate. Applications are invited for a funded 4-year PhD studentship in the UCL Department of Computer Science, starting September 2021 under the supervision of Prof Licia Capra and Prof Mirco Musolesi. Applicants should have strong interests in the interdisciplinary area of computational social science and will have freedom to steer the direction of the research towards their interests and strengths within the overall project ambition. Candidates must have a strong BSc (1st or 2:1) or Master’s degree in Computer Science or related field. They must have excellent written and verbal communication skills in English, strong work ethic and the ability to think creatively and independently. Knowledge of machine learning, data analysis and modelling skills are desirable.

How to apply. Interested candidates are encouraged to contact Prof Licia Capra before submitting an application (l.capra@ucl.ac.uk), with a CV and a short paragraph about their research interests. A complete formal application must be submitted via UCL Select no later than Friday May 21st, 2021 (please email l.capra@ucl.ac.uk your application number once submitted). Detailed information about the programme and how to apply can be found at https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/research-degrees/computer-science-mphil-phd

Funding and eligibility. This particular PhD position is funded by an EPSRC DTP scholarship for 4 years, starting September 2021 and is only available to candidates that meet one of the following nationality and residence requirements: UK nationals that meet residency requirements; EU nationals with settled status; EU nationals with pre-settled status that meet residency requirements; Irish nationals living in UK or Ireland; those who have indefinite leave to remain or enter.