The Alan Turing Institute

2021 Enrichment Scheme FAQs

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Elegibility

Can I apply if I am in my first year of my PhD?

You may apply during your first year of your PhD research, as long as you do not intend to start your Enrichment placement until your second year. We encourage applicants in their first year to consider the benefits of a January start, to allow for adequate time to complete any transfer or conversion requirements at their home university.

If your first year of doctoral studies is a training / rotation project year then you will need to wait until you have completed one year of research on your main doctoral project before you apply.

Are there nationality or other eligibility restrictions?

There are no nationality restrictions. However, applicants must be able to remain and study legally in the UK for the duration of their placement. It will be the student's responsibility to get approval from their university to study away if successful, which may involve informing your international office if you are on a Tier 4 visa. Unfortunately, the Turing cannot sponsor a visa on your behalf, therefore students must already hold a valid proof of Right to Study in the UK.

The Enrichment scheme is only currently open to students registered at a UK university.

Who are we looking for?

Candidates will be reviewed against the assessment criteria which are listed in the Call Document.

Participating in The Alan Turing Enrichment scheme offers the opportunity to collaborate with other students and researchers from a broad range of disciplines. We expect our students to embrace the opportunity to enrich their research and broaden their learning through their time here. Building collaborations requires independence and for students to be proactive and we suggest students consider how they would respond to this type of research environment.

Projects of an interdisciplinary nature are particularly valued for this scheme, as are projects that engage with the Institute's research challenges. Alignment with a programme will enable a student to have more connections at the Institute / partner location to share ideas with and allow greater development of their project.

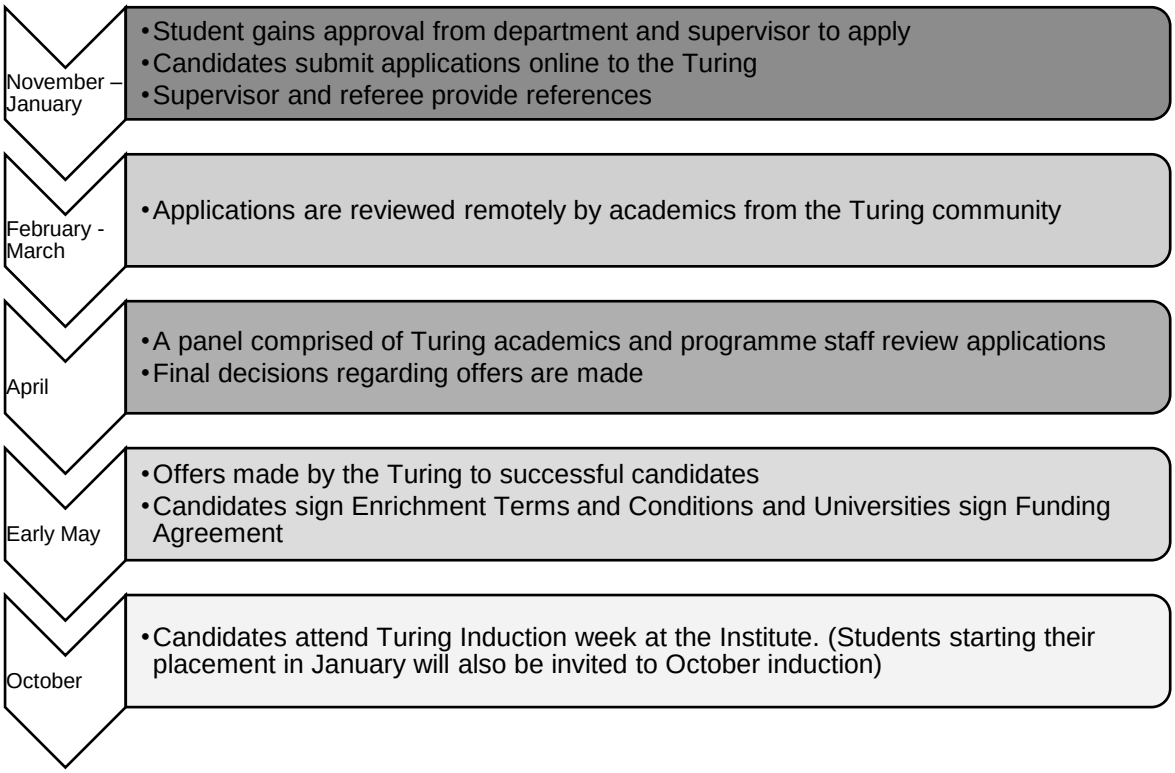
The Enrichment scheme will enable students to learn new skills from their interactions with academic staff and our team of Research Software Engineers within the Institute. Clearly identifying how you would utilise this environment and opportunities for interaction is important for a strong application

Students must be willing to be based at the Institute headquarters in London, at The Jean Golding Institute (University of Bristol) or The Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (University of Leeds) for the duration of their placement.

Application Guidance

Application timeline

The normal application process runs as follows:



How do I choose the length of placement and my start date?

The Turing recommends you discuss your choice of start dates and length of placement with your supervisor. It is suggested that you time your placement to compliment the length of your research project. For some students this may mean an

Enrichment placement early on in their research to develop new techniques, while others may wait until their project is well defined before making use of the resources available. We encourage applicants to consider the benefits of a January start, particularly for those students who will have just completed their first year.

How can I request reasonable adjustments to the application process?

The Alan Turing Institute and its partners are committed to creating an environment where diversity is valued and everyone is treated fairly. We encourage candidates to let us know about any reasonable adjustments they may require. You may already know what you would like to request, or you may like to have a general discussion of your options.

We will treat any information you disclose to us as sensitive and will handle it in line with the Data Protection Act 2018**.** Information will only be used to arrange reasonable adjustments and will not be used to assess your application.

To discuss an adjustment to the application process please contact our team directly at academic-recruitment@turing.ac.uk or on +44 (0) 20 3862 3360.

What areas of data science are relevant for the Enrichment scheme?

Students who are significantly engaged in any of the following academic disciplines are invited to apply, particularly those candidates whose work covers multiple disciplines:

- Algorithms
- Applications of Data Science
- Artificial Intelligence
- Bayesian Methods
- Causal Inference
- Computer Systems and Architectures
- Computer Vision
- Culture and Media
- Data-centric Engineering
- Data Science at Scale
- Defence and Security
- Digital Humanities
- Distributed Systems
- Economic Data Science
- Ethics for Data Science
- Ethical and safe AI
- Government
- Health and Wellbeing
- Law
- Logic
- Machine Learning
- Mathematical Theory
- Natural Language Processing
- Network Data Science

- Numerical Methods and Optimization
- Open Research and Reproducibility
- Privacy and Trust
- Programming Languages for Data Science
- Public Policy
- Pure and Applied Mathematics
- Social Data Science/Computational Social Science
- Statistical Methodology
- Statistical Theory
- Urban Analytics

Do I need to supply references?

As part of your application you will be required to supply two references. Your primary supervisor or head of department will be required to submit a reference. You are also asked to invite a separate individual to provide an academic reference.

Your referees should testify to your ability as a researcher in a formal context. They will be required to complete a structured reference form in the application system, detailing your academic ability, suitability to the Enrichment placement and agreement to your studying at one of the three locations.

You will be unable to submit your application until both references are complete. Please note that all supervisors are asked to commit to continuing supervision whilst students are on Enrichment placements. We recommend you inform your supervisor and referee in advance that they will be asked to register and submit references in order for you to submit your application. If either of your referees are unable to use the Flexigrant system please email academic-recruitment@turing.ac.uk for alternative arrangements.

In addition to this, the Turing will require at least two references as part of our security screening process. Similar requirements may be in place at partner locations.

Should I inform my department before applying?

Yes, you must inform your department to gain their permission before you apply. We strongly recommend students send their Head of Department, main administrative contact or other suitable individual the Guidance Note for Universities ahead of applying. If you are successful, we will ask for formal permission from your university to study away. We will also ask your university to administer any stipend top up you may be awarded.

What if my supervisor has questions?

We recommend supervisors review the **Guidance for Supervisors**. Supervisors can contact academic-recruitment@turing.ac.uk or call +44 (0) 20 3862 3360 with any questions.

Do I have to contact Turing Fellows before applying?

You are not expected to have contacted Turing Fellows, Research Fellows or Programmes before applying, however if you are in discussions regarding potential collaborations do feel free to mention this in your application.

While Turing Fellows support the assessment process, academics will not be able to review candidates for whom they have a conflict of interest.

How will my application be assessed?

Your application will undergo an initial eligibility screening. Following this your application will be reviewed by academics from the Turing community including Turing Research Fellows, Turing Fellows, representatives from the Turing's research programmes and/or the Academic Programmes team. There will not be an interview for candidates.

Applicant choices on study location will not be considered when evaluating suitability. Once an applicant has successfully progressed in the process, we will then consider study location preference when allocating places.

Can I request feedback on my application if I am unsuccessful?

Candidates may request feedback. Please note that feedback will only be available to unsuccessful candidates for up to 6 months after their application.

Can I reapply if I have been unsuccessful previously?

If you were unsuccessful in a previous application, you may reapply. However, please be aware that there have been changes to the Enrichment scheme recruitment process and criteria may vary. You may be interested in looking into other opportunities offered by the Institute such as our Data Study Groups and the Turing Internship Network.

Can I reapply if I was an offer holder last year?

If you were a successful offer holder for the 2020-21 Enrichment scheme then you will be contacted separately about an alternative route for application.

There will be separate allocation processes for former offer holders and new applicants. We have increased the size of the scheme to enable more opportunities for engagement in response to the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic.

When will I hear back?

All candidates will hear the outcomes of their application by early May. Please do not contact us for an update on your application prior to this date. If you have not heard from us by the end of May 2021 then please check any spam / email filtering options or contact us.

What to expect from the Enrichment scheme

Is it possible to join the scheme at a different time of the year?

Enrichment students may join the Institute and its partners in either October 2021, January 2022 or March 2022.
It is not currently possible to apply for deferred entry to the Enrichment scheme.

What is the duration of the Enrichment scheme?

We offer three lengths of Enrichment placement; 6, 9 or 12 months. Those applying for a start date in March are limited to 6 or 9 months of placement.

Can I undertake the Enrichment scheme if I am doing a part-time PhD?

It is possible to participate in the Enrichment scheme if you are doing a part-time PhD. The application form will ask you to indicate your preferred FTE (e.g. how many days a week you would like to be on placement).

Part time students spending 3 or more days per week at the Institute and its partners will usually be offered a stipend top up. Students choosing to spend 1 or 2 days will usually be offered travel expenses to support commuting costs up to a set limit.

You should be in an active research stage of your project during your Enrichment placement. For a full time PhD this is defined as after the first year of research. For a part-time PhD student this may be further along the doctoral timeframe.

I'm doing a full time PhD, can I do my Enrichment placement part time?

Students can choose how they undertake their placement. You will be asked to briefly explain your choice on the application form. This will be reviewed as part of your application but will not be used in isolation as in the final assessment of applications.

Are students based in London?

Students are expected to be at the Institute headquarters (in the British Library), at the Jean Golding Institute (University of Bristol) or the Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (University of Leeds) for the entirety of their placement. There are no residency requirements for the Enrichment scheme.

There may be occasions when remote engagement is necessary (due to restrictions or access to training activities), but the assumption is that we will run a face-to-face scheme in 2021-22 and expect face-to-face engagement.

The Institute and its university partners can provide guidance on securing accommodation in London, Bristol and Leeds. In addition, students will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses for necessary visits back to their home university when based in London, Bristol or Leeds, in line with the Institute's student travel and expenses guidelines. As relocating for the Enrichment scheme is a major change in circumstances, we encourage students to consider the impact of this change as they prepare an application.

What facilities can be used as part of the Enrichment scheme?

All students will be loaned a laptop for the duration of their Enrichment placement. We currently offer either Mac or Windows research laptop options.

Among the research benefits of the Enrichment scheme are:

- A standing taskforce of Research Software Engineers/Data Scientists (local provision in Bristol and Leeds also available)
- Opportunity to apply for Microsoft Azure cloud credits and other research resources
- Opportunity to apply for the Enrichment Conference Fund
- Access to shared workspace in your Enrichment location (British Library, Jean Golding Institute, Leeds Institute for Data Analytics)
- A Turing email account (or local provision equivalent)
- Opportunities to collaborate with researchers working in other domains, including in Turing Interest Groups
- Opportunities to engage with industry partners and government, benefiting from the Turing's position as a national institute
- A physical, collaborative space with no disciplinary boundaries
- Access to training schemes and activities at staff rates
- Access to apply for funds for training provision

What training is available?

The Academic Programmes team coordinate a large number of training activities throughout the year for Enrichment students. These include our flagship courses in Research Software Engineering, and Reproducibility, Ethics and Open research, as well as opportunities to take online courses developed together with our research collaborators, and access technical training in specific data science and AI topics.

There will also be local activities at each location which are detailed on the relevant information pages and will be clearly communicated to offer holders.

Many of the training activities will be adapted for online delivery to enable us to both maintain continuity and to engage Enrichment students between the locations.

In order to contribute to the collaborative nature of the Turing, students are also encouraged to self-organise talks and tutorials within the student body to build links within the cohort and learn from their peers. Students can also choose to present their research to the wider Turing community through (virtual) posters and technical talks at invited meetings.

Wherever possible training will be offered to the whole cohort of Enrichment students across all of the locations.

What is the Enrichment Conference Fund?

The Turing Enrichment Conference Fund has been designed to support students to travel to conferences to present research enabled by their time on the Enrichment scheme. The fund awards up to £400 to eligible students and is available for current and former Enrichment students. Successful students will be given information on eligibility criteria and how to apply once they start their placement.

How will my progress be monitored?

Enrichment students must conform to their home university's assessment and engagement requirements. In addition, students will be asked to provide reports and presentations during their placement detailing the outcomes of their time on the scheme.

Students will have a review meeting during their placement, usually within the first term and be asked to provide a report at the end of their placement. Some students may be asked to present their work at meetings or events on a voluntary basis.

Each location will have a key contact that will be responsible for helping you settle and make the most of the scheme.

What support is available to Enrichment students?

We have dedicated student services support at the Turing to provide help and advice throughout your time with us. In addition to this, you will be able to access all services offered by your home university as well as the Turing's employee assistance programme which includes a telephone counselling service.

For research advice we currently provide both academic mentors and programme mentors to our cohorts of students. As part of the Enrichment scheme you will join the community of students and researchers based in our London headquarters, at the Jean Golding Institute (University of Bristol) or the Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (University of Leeds) and be able to access peer support, advice and guidance through your time in our office or on campus in Bristol and Leeds.

How much is the stipend top up?

The stipend top up will vary depending on a student's existing stipend, length of placement and location. The maximum top up is calculated as the difference between the UKRI indicative stipend and the Turing Studentship stipend levels. For 2021/22 the expected maximum is £6700 per annum in London and £5200 in Bristol and Leeds. This figure will be pro-rated for placements less than 1 year or less than 1 FTE.

If you are in any doubt, please contact us for further clarification.

How frequently do students receive the stipend top up?

The stipend top up is paid by the Turing to your home university, who then administer it to the student. The timings of stipend payments are therefore set by the home university, however the Turing suggests payments are made in line with existing stipend payments.

How can the travel allowance be used by students?

This will depend on the type of placement a student chooses. For Full Time students the travel allowance is for students to visit their home university from their usual place of residence to meet with their supervisor. It **cannot** be used to commute from their usual place of residence to their chosen location of placement. Part time students may receive a travel allowance which can be used for commuting costs in place of stipend if they do not intend to relocate to London, Bristol or Leeds.

What is the Enrichment Access Fund and who is it for?

The Enrichment Access Fund provides financial support to students to participate who otherwise would not be able to due to a disability, additional need or caring responsibility.

The fund provides awards of up to £500 per month and applications will be assessed separately to the main call.

The fund is expected to support the following costs:

- Additional housing costs (e.g. specific location or access requirements)
- Additional childcare or other caring costs (e.g. beyond what the student would ordinarily incur)
- Additional support costs

The fund is not intended to provide support for students who do not meet the criteria above with the costs of moving to London or the other locations and does not replace the stipend top up offered as standard to students apply for Enrichment who qualify.

How do I apply for the Enrichment Access Fund?

You can apply for the Enrichment Access Fund through the Flexigrant form. The information you share will not be visible to reviewers and will be assessed separately to your research application.

As part of the application you will be asked to briefly outline the additional expenses you would incur by taking part in the Enrichment scheme and the reason for this.

We may need to follow up your application with a phone call to find out more details. This will not contribute to an assessment of your overall Enrichment application. We will also help you contact and talk to local support at the partner universities if you apply for one of those locations.

How can I find out more about the Enrichment Scheme?

To help students prepare for their placement or find out if the scheme is right for them we will be running an information session during the application period. The session will be available via webinar and you can register for a free place online. Further information on how to register will be available soon.

12 January 2021, 3-4pm

You can also watch our formers students talking candidly about their experiences on our YouTube channel.

As the opportunity to be based in Bristol and Leeds is new, we will provide as much information as we can including opportunities to talk to students currently based at those partners.

Covid-19 and the Enrichment Scheme

I heard last year's scheme was cancelled – will that happen this year?

The 2020-21 Enrichment scheme was cancelled because of the pandemic. We had hoped to be able to run the scheme with a delayed start date, but the second wave in the winter months and subsequent government guidance prevented that.

However, we are working hard to move many of the training activities online and provide opportunities for those students to take part in building a network in the digital

space. This means we will be more prepared to run the 2021-22 Enrichment scheme in person or with an ongoing reliance on online activities if needed.

There is always the risk of unexpected disruption, but we will make it clear to those offered a place on the 2021-22 Enrichment scheme when we will be making decisions to give you time to plan any relocation.

What measures are being taken to ensure the scheme is Covid-secure?

The Institute has been working hard to put in place measures to make the office in London Covid-secure as per government guidelines. These include, but are not limited to:

- Limited access to the office space through a desk-booking system
Personal contact details taken upon entering the office for tracking
- Blocked-off desks for 2m social distancing
- One-way corridor system
- Reduced touch points including automated taps in bathrooms
- Extra cleaning scheduled to take place every day
- A duty manager who will be the first point of call for any reports of illness and will ensure that the appropriate steps are taken

All these measures will be revisited before the reopening of the Institute to ensure that they are updated to the latest government guidelines.

The University of Leeds and the University of Bristol also have specific measures in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of all students across campus. Please follow the links above for further information on any arrangements and measures put in place by our partners.

Online training activities and opportunities to build community will be available in case an in-person delivery is not viable. The Institute will be closely monitoring the current situation and will ensure to promptly communicate offer holders any changes in the delivery of the scheme.

I was a 2020-21 offer holder. Can I reapply?

In recognition of the cancellation of the 2020-21 Enrichment scheme we will be offering a fast-track route for former offer holders. You will be contacted about the method of reapplication directly by the Turing.

If 2020-21 offer holders are reapplying will there be enough new spaces?

In total, we will offer up to 80 spaces on the scheme and expect up to half of those to be reapplications. We have brought forward the expansion of the Enrichment scheme, including the alternative locations, to cope with the higher demand.

If I am offered a place for 2021-22 can I defer?

The deferral for the 2020-21 offer holders is a specific response to the impact of the pandemic. We all hope that there will not be further disruption and deferral of a place is not permitted under normal circumstances.

Alternative locations

What is an alternative location and why might it be useful?

The Alan Turing Institute has a network of university partners throughout the UK, each contributing to the scientific community. As a pilot for 2021-22 we have decided to host Enrichment scheme centres at two of these universities: Bristol and Leeds.

We hope that some people will find these locations easier when planning how to engage with the Enrichment scheme, especially if they have commitments in their home universities or personal lives that require more frequent visits.

In addition, each location will have its own unique resources and academic community, which may be a better alignment with your interests in data science and AI.

What is the same and what is different about the locations?

We are aiming to make the experience as consistent as possible across the available locations. There will be many shared experiences using remote engagement, including the flagship training courses.

Each location will have an Enrichment Coordinator who will be the first point of contact for participants and run weekly opportunities to check in with the other students. They will be in contact with the central team at the Turing, who will also provide administrative support.

Those participants attending Bristol or Leeds will have a lower stipend top up than those attending London. This is in recognition of the elevated prices within the capital. However, they will also have access to University facilities.

To find out more about the specific offerings at Leeds and Bristol, please look at their information pages on the Enrichment scheme website. As these this is a new venture for us, we will be especially interested in working with the cohorts to shape an excellent

experience.

How will location choice impact my application?

All applications for the Enrichment scheme will be assessed on the basis of the quality of the candidate's application, not taking into account the desired location. Once we have generated a list of suitable candidates then we will consider the location.

Participants at each location will be decided on both their preference and the expertise of the local academic leads in generating a balanced cohort of diverse Enrichment students. This process has been used for recruitment to the London based scheme previously.

We would like you to specify any location where you would like to participate in the Enrichment scheme. You can also specify a preference if you have one, and where possible we will allocate people to their first choice.

The reasons for picking a location will vary. If you pick a location based on the academic community and opportunities for collaboration in that location, you should make it clear in your application. Likewise, if you have a preference for personal reasons you can indicate this on the form.

Students already in those locations?

We are not expecting students based at Bristol or Leeds to apply for an Enrichment placement in their home universities. We hope they are already integrated into the data science communities and will therefore benefit from engaging with new people at a different location.

However, there may be some cases where a student with little engagement with the community may find a placement in their home university beneficial, or where personal circumstances contribute to it being the only opportunity for engagement.

In these cases, you should specify in the form why this should be considered. These factors will not be taken into account until applications have been assessed and a list of suitable candidates drawn up.

Why were Bristol and Leeds selected?

The Turing has 13 university partners in the UK, and we wanted to run a pilot of alternative locations in two of those universities. In discussion with all of the Turing University Leads we selected Bristol and Leeds based on their geographic location to serve distinct areas of the UK and the presence of general data science institutes (The Jean Golding Institute / The Leeds Institute for Data Analytics) that provide a diverse community for Enrichment students to engage with.

In the future, if the pilot is successful, we may extend the network to other universities within the Turing partnership.