

Post Details	Last Updated: 4 November 2025		
Faculty/Administrative/Service Department	Surrey Institute for People-Centred Artificial Intelligence (PAI)		
Job Title	Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) Programme Manager		
Job Family	Professional Services	Job Level	5
Responsible to	CDT Director and PAI Director of Strategy (DoS)		
Responsible for (Staff)	CDT Operations Team		

Job Purpose Statement

The role is responsible for leading the delivery and supporting activities of the **UKRI AI Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) in AI for Digital Media Inclusion**. This involves promoting its research excellence, training, and innovation in artificial intelligence, and applying these for the benefit of society through inclusive digital media services.

The Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI (PAI) leads the UKRI AI CDT in partnership with StoryFutures at Royal Holloway, University of London. Over the eight years of awarded funding, the CDT will train more than 80 postgraduate PhD researchers, who will become leaders with unique expertise in developing AI-enabled inclusive and responsible digital media services.

The CDT Manager is responsible for planning, delivering and monitoring activities to support the CDT Leadership and extended teams across both universities on matters relating to governance and accountability to funders, researchers experience, training programmes, partner engagement, and budgetary and administrative effectiveness.

The postholder line manages members of the CDT's operations team and reports to the PAI Director of Strategy (DoS), to ensure coherence in activities of the professional services team and alignment with Surrey's people-centred AI approach.

On a day-to-day basis, the postholder will serve as the initial point of contact for CDT stakeholders and will act as an intermediary between the CDT community and the broader teams. This role also contributes to the overall strategy on People-Centred Artificial Intelligence within the broader PAI initiative.

Key Responsibilities This document is not designed to be a list of all tasks undertaken but an outline record of the main responsibilities (5 to 8 maximum)

1. Responsible for the design, development and delivery of the Management Plan for the CDT according to UKRI regulations and principles established by the CDT's Director and Leadership team. On a day-to-day basis, the postholder manages the activities to support the Director (based at Surrey) and Co-Directors (based at Surrey and RHUL) in the implementation and on-going development of the CDT strategic operating plan.
2. To lead the CDT professional services team, promoting the ethos of inclusion and responsible AI in the challenge-led training programme to ensure a first-class PhD experience and active engagement by all external and internal stakeholders (doctoral college teams, funders, academics, partners, focus groups and relevant organisations). To define operational objectives, timeframes and resources/tools to support the CDT administrative activities.
3. To manage the overall schedule of the CDT across the variety of its activities, from recruitment to training programmes, to events and challenge projects, to funder reporting periods, governance boards and industry events, identifying scheduling conflicts, resource issues and finding creative solutions to competing demands. To manage CDT committees and meetings and to represent the operational activities with funders and governing bodies (UKRI) at relevant events, including facilitation of the Independent Advisory Board.

4. To conduct and maintain detailed planning, ongoing reviews and analysis of the CDT's performance and evaluate operational performance against CDT objectives and KPIs, reporting to the CDT management board. Identifying issues, taking into account constraints from university regulations and policies, funding body, industry and academic partners, sharing outcomes and making recommendations to support decision-making.
5. To support the CDT Leadership Team in activities related to growing industry sponsorship, including developing and fostering good relationships with existing and new industrial consortium partners and other relevant organisations.
6. To work closely with the CDT Inclusion and Ethics leads to contribute and align with the strategic priorities of the CDT, building awareness and developing operational processes that embed an EDI approach throughout.
7. In liaison with the CDT training manager, to lead the annual PhD recruitment cycle for the CDT, including developing recruitment strategies to attract diverse and high-calibre candidates, organising outreach activities and open days, coordinating the application review process with academic supervisors across both institutions, managing interview panels and selection committees, and ensuring recruitment practices align with EDI principles and UKRI guidelines for widening participation
8. To work with the Finance team at Surrey and RHUL to ensure that funds are managed in line with universities' and UKRI guidelines, reporting on progress and overseeing expenditure and budget profiles. To monitor researchers' studentships funding and their use of support grants.

N.B. The above list is not exhaustive.

The postholder will be primarily based at the Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI, University of Surrey, and may be required to work at any of the locations at which the CDT in AI for Digital Media Inclusion is conducted, including Royal Holloway University of London and the CoSTAR National Lab. for Creative Industries R&D at Pinewood Studios.

Elements of the Role

This section outlines some of the key elements of the role, which allow this role to be evaluated within the University's structure. It provides an overview of what is expected from the post holder in the day-to-day operation of the role.

Planning and Organising

- Be prepared to develop your own management tools, using accessible and GDPR compliant digital tools, for the CDT and oversee the implementation and ongoing monitoring of key activities.
- Facilitate the long-term and strategic CDT planning process and be the conduit of information with the wider teams' functions.
- Role model best practice communications planning and execution (including measurement of effect) across institutions.

Problem Solving and Decision Making

- Use your professional expertise to provide recommend courses of action that will solve communication challenges – always taking an audience-first approach. Work with colleagues collaboratively to produce solutions to problems and creative ideas.
- Use insights and data to inform courses of action and to review performance.
- Identify gaps in our insights and recommend solutions to fill them.
- Be adept at prioritisation and multi-tasking on concurrent high-profile projects; this includes managing expectations with individuals who you may not be able to provide communications support.

Continuous Improvement

- Maintain an understanding of the PAI/Surrey and StoryFutures priorities and how the CDT is delivering against them.
- Build and maintain trusted working relations with relevant colleagues and senior leaders
- Support the development and delivery of events as part of the CDT and wider teams.
- Maintain one's professional skills currency by exploring best practice and keeping abreast of developments in ethics and inclusion as well as the AI and Creative industries

Accountability.

- Whilst the postholder's actions are guided by the CDT Director, they will have professional autonomy to decide how to achieve their aims and objectives without supervision, working within University guidelines at all times.
- The post holder will be responsible for the accuracy and appropriateness of the outputs produced but is expected to seek subject matter experts to 'sign-off' finalised official materials.
- Responsible for the provision of communications advice to the CDT that is in line with the strategic communication objectives, spotting opportunities to further the University's reputation, and for providing communications planning information.
- Building and maintaining effective working relationships that span team and organisational boundaries.
- Exercise discretion in respect of the confidentiality and sensitivity of the information handled.

Dimensions of the role

- This role is part of the PAI professional services team and CDT Operations Team, led by the PAI Director of Strategy (DoS)
- This role is highly collaborative and requires the post holder to work and communicate with colleagues effectively, especially with the CDT leads and professional service teams across both institutions (Surrey/RHUL) and externally with partners, funders and other stakeholders.

Supplementary Information

- The post holder may be required to work out of hours occasionally to either support functions and events that are directly related to their role.

Person Specification This section describes the sum total of knowledge, experience & competence required by the post holder that is necessary for standard acceptable performance in carrying out this role.

Qualifications and Professional Memberships

Degree or equivalent professional qualification, plus substantial experience with project management and student/academic administration in higher education

or:

Broad vocational experience, acquired through a combination of job-related vocational training and considerable on-the-job experience in demanding roles.

E

Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge) This section contains the level of competency required to carry out the role (please refer to the Competency Framework for clarification where needed and the Job Matching Guidance).

**Essential/
Desirable**

**Level
1-3**

Extensive experience of project management, leading, and delivering multi-organisations activities (planning and progressing work activities without general guidelines, using initiative and sound judgement, without reference to others)

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3

Excellent stakeholder engagement skills and demonstrable ability to build networks and influence colleagues positively. Demonstrable ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with a wide range of people and roles at different levels of seniority and to influence decision making

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3

Strong Budgeting Skills & Financial Management reporting – collecting complex data, analysing key findings and summarising recommendations for senior staff. Knowledge and experience of KPI and impact monitoring

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3

Experience of working in roles that involve EDI strategy, process, governance or reporting.

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3

Strong writing, verbal, communication, presentation and organisational skills and ability to multitask on a wide range of projects and ongoing deadlines. Able to effectively manage own workload and conflicting demands

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3

Experience of compliance, quality assurance, reporting and governance policies

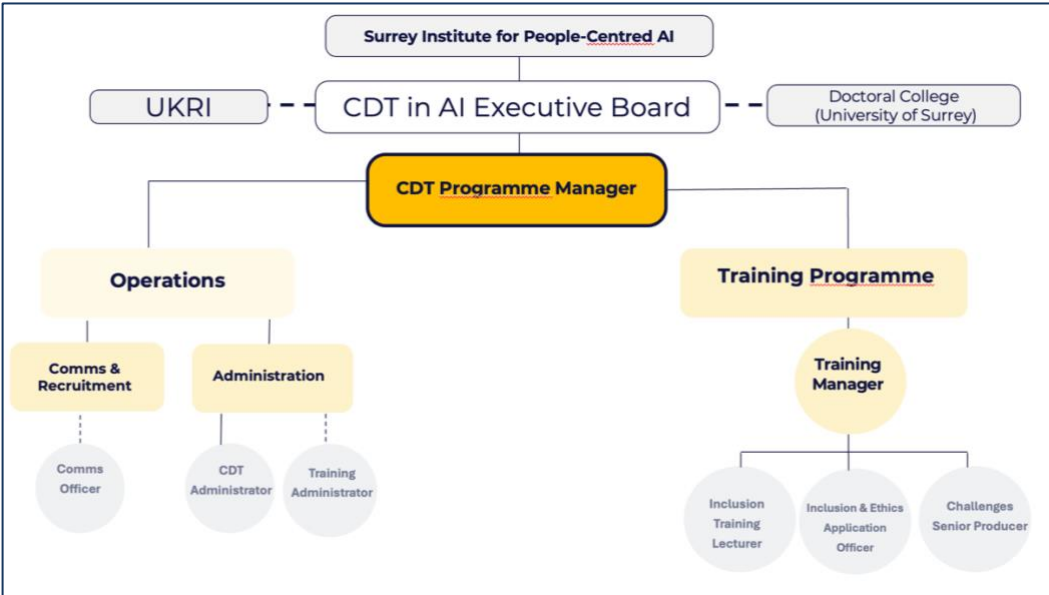
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Experience of working in the Creative industries or AI sectors.

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Special Requirements:	Essential/ Desirable
Flexibility to work outside normal office hours, if required and travel between CDT partner locations.	D
A keen interest in emerging technologies, research and innovation in AI (Artificial Intelligence) XR (Mixed Reality), VR (Virtual Reality), AR (Augmented Reality), Realtime technologies (Games Engines)	D
Excellent interpersonal skills, including team-working, proactive approach, willing to experiment, creative thinker and ability to interpret content requirements and opportunities	E
Core Competencies This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). n/a (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade.	Level 1-3
Communication Adaptability / Flexibility Customer/Client service and support Planning and Organising Continuous Improvement Problem Solving and Decision-Making Skills Managing and Developing Performance Creative and Analytical Thinking Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills Strategic Thinking & Leadership	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
This Job Purpose reflects the core activities of the post. As the CDT and the post holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and to the emphasis of the post itself. The University expects that the post holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training where necessary. Should significantly changes to the Job Purpose become necessary, the post holder will be consulted, and the changes reflected in a revised Job Purpose.	
Organisation and Governance Structure  <pre> graph TD UKRI[UKRI] --- CDT_Board[CDT in AI Executive Board] DC[Doctoral College University of Surrey] --- CDT_Board CDT_Board --- CDT_PM[CDT Programme Manager] CDT_PM --- Operations[Operations] CDT_PM --- Training_Programme[Training Programme] Operations --- Comms_Rec[Comms & Recruitment] Operations --- Admin[Administration] Comms_Rec --- Comms_Off[Comms Officer] Admin --- CDT_Admin[CDT Administrator] Admin --- Training_Admin[Training Administrator] Training_Programme --- Training_Manager((Training Manager)) Training_Manager --- Inclusion_Lect[Inclusion Training Lecturer] Training_Manager --- Inclusion_Ethics[Inclusion & Ethics Application Officer] Training_Manager --- Challenges_Senior[Challenges Senior Producer] </pre>	

Background and context

The UKRI AI Centre for Doctoral Training in AI for Digital Media Inclusion brings together the world-leading expertise of the Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI (PAI) at the University of Surrey, a pioneer in AI technologies for the creative industries (including vision, audio, language, and machine learning), and StoryFutures at Royal Holloway, University of London, a leader in creative production and audience experience (arts, psychology, user research, and creative production).

Our CDT programme is designed to develop the skills and understanding required to create intelligent media services which are inclusive for all. Through a unique challenge-led PhD research training programme, co-created with stakeholders and industry partners, we aim to train future industry leaders to shape real-world digital media inclusion. Our vision is to deliver unique cross-disciplinary training embedded in real-world challenges and creative practice, and to address the industry need for people with responsible AI, inclusive design and creative skills.

Funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), this programme is part of the government's strategic effort to position the UK at the forefront of global AI expertise. Our goal is to train PhD researchers to be ready to lead the transformation towards responsible, AI-enabled inclusive media.

Our CDT programme's vision is to train future creative industry leaders to realise the potential of AI to enable intelligent digital media services designed to be inclusive for all. Future media will intelligently adapt to individual interest, demographics and accessibility needs to increase audience engagement and reduce barriers to inclusion. We are steadfast in our commitment to responsible AI and digital media inclusion within the creative industries and beyond. We believe that equal representation, access, and inclusion in digital media and services is essential for societal inclusion and fostering a diverse and vibrant creative media landscape.

Our mission is to ensure that all voices, regardless of background, are heard and valued in the digital realm. We actively work to break down barriers to entry and provide opportunities for underrepresented groups to thrive in digital media and aim to ensure that all our digital media communications are accessible. Our CDT will be a catalyst for the UK creative industries to lead future AI-enabled media services which are inclusive for all.

Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI (PAI)

The Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI is the founding pan-university research institute at the University of Surrey, bringing together core AI-related expertise in audio-visual AI, machine learning, signal processing, computer science, and mathematics, with domain expertise across engineering and physical sciences, human and animal health, law and regulation, business, finance and the arts, humanities and social sciences.

Our multi-disciplinary approach puts people at the heart of AI. Our research starts with the challenges that impact individuals, communities and society, and identifies how AI can address them safely, responsibly and inclusively. PAI's success builds on the strength of the University of Surrey in foundational AI over the past 38 years through the Centre for Vision, Speech and Signal Processing (CVSSP) which is ranked 1st in the UK for Computer Vision and in the top 5 for both AI and Robotics.

StoryFutures

StoryFutures is Royal Holloway's Strategic Business Unit that is designed to catalyse, promote and accelerate multidisciplinary applied R&D in collaboration with creative industries partners. The unit brings together researchers from disciplines as diverse as Electronic Engineering and Drama, Geography and Psychology, Media Arts and Management (to name a few). Inclusive Innovation has been at the heart of StoryFutures work, including the ground-breaking StoryTrails with David Olusoga and 50 diverse creatives; the professional skills initiative, StoryFutures Academy (with the National Film & Television School); and The National Gallery's Keeper of Paintings. Our work has primarily focused on the creative application of innovative technologies, especially VR, AR and MR – and increasingly working with AI.

StoryFutures also leads the new £51.1m CoSTAR National R&D Lab, built in partnership with University of Surrey PAI lead partner for Creative AI. The CoSTAR National R&D Lab brings together these institutions in a world-leading partnership with Pinewood, BT, Disguise and Abertay University to ensure the UK's Screen and Performance industries have the innovation infrastructure to access cutting-edge research, facilities, specialist technologies, capabilities, tools, knowledge and expertise to compete globally.

