



VACANCY NOTICE – 2022-IPR-B6-FGIV-021997¹

Scientific Project Officers – Algorithmic Transparency – Inspections

Type of contract	Member of the European Commission's contract staff, Function Group IV (article 3b of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants)
Duration of contract	36 months (renewable up to maximum 6 years)
Number of vacancies available	6
Area	Algorithmic transparency, Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence
Place of employment	Seville (ES), Ispra (IT) or Brussels (BE) ² Please indicate in your application your preferred place(s) of employment.
Indicative basic salary	3,710.50 € - 5,374.44 € (applicable as of 1 st of January 2022) For more detailed information please consult: Working Conditions .

WE ARE

The [Joint Research Centre \(JRC\)](#) is the science and knowledge service of the European Commission: our mission is to support EU policies with independent evidence throughout the whole policy cycle.

The current vacancy is with the newly formed **European Centre for Algorithmic Transparency (ECAT)**, which, through its scientific and technical expertise and analyses, will reinforce the European Commission's supervisory role in the context of the **EU Digital Services Act (DSA)** - in close collaboration with the Directorate General for Communication Networks, Content and Technology ([DG CONNECT](#)). The ECAT will be established in the second half of 2022 and will be located **in three JRC sites (Seville, Ispra and Brussels)**.

The **EU Digital Services Act (DSA)** is the world's first platform regulation that seeks to comprehensively address the most pressing societal risks emerging from the use of online

¹ The same vacancy has been published with ESRA reference number: 2022-SVQ-B6-FGIV-021998 (for Seville) and 2022-BRU-B6-FGIV-021996 (for Brussels). Please apply to this vacancy only one time.

² Being posted on other sites of the JRC (Petten, NL or Geel, BE) can be considered as an option upon request of the candidate.



platforms. Amongst other challenges, it focuses on tackling the dissemination of illegal content, goods and services online, protecting freedom of expression, and addressing disinformation.

It imposes obligations for online intermediaries and platforms (e.g. online marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms) according to their role, size and impact in society. It seeks to empower users of digital services – for example by regulating advertising and recommender systems on online platforms – and to protect them, by imposing obligations on digital services and holding them accountable through an unprecedented transparency mechanism.

Since a wider reach is coupled with the most severe risks, very large platforms and search engines with a user base of more than 45 million monthly average users (representing around 10% of the EU population) bear special obligations. Most prominently, they will be subject to a supervised risk management obligation and will need to adapt their service, their systems and their algorithms to address the societal risks they may pose. They will be subject to external independent auditing and will be under public scrutiny from civil society, vetted researchers and others.

This adaptive and anticipatory legal framework needs strong regulatory supervision and cutting-edge competence within the regulators. The European Commission will lead the supervision and enforcement of obligations for the largest platforms and search engines. This vacancy is part of the Commission's efforts to strengthen its capability and prepare for the enforcement of the rules. The Regulation was proposed by the European Commission in December 2020 and should enter into force in the last quarter of 2022.

We offer:

- jobs in a **dynamic, multidisciplinary research field** at the cutting edge of algorithmic systems transparency and trustworthy artificial intelligence, with a tremendous societal impact in Europe and beyond;
- a unique opportunity to **help make the online space safer and more transparent** for all Europeans and to work hands-on on some of the **most exciting and complex challenges brought by online platforms**;
- a family-friendly working environment, with online collaboration and occasional travel for on-site investigations on the premises of online platforms and cooperative work with colleagues in Brussels, Seville or Ispra.

WE PROPOSE

The jobholder will join an interdisciplinary and multicultural team of researchers working in the ECAT and more broadly contribute to the JRC's research portfolio on Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence and algorithmic transparency. The jobholder will work in close collaboration with ECAT scientific researchers and a wide range of partners, in particular legal and policy experts in the enforcement units of the European Commission, in DG CONNECT. S/he will be part of cross-department teams during investigations and will interact with the technical departments of very large online platforms and very large online search engines. Activities may also include collaborations with external researchers and scientists, and other various stakeholders in EU Member States and civil society organisations.

For this team, we are looking for **applied researchers** with a strong motivation to work in a goal-oriented environment for the public good. The ideal candidate should have a sharp curiosity and creativity, as well as a problem-solving mentality to – collectively, within a case



team – obtain and link various pieces of evidence. S/he should have the ability to come up with creative questions and investigative methods to deepen our understanding of some of the most advanced algorithmic systems used by online platforms, and the real-world challenges they pose, while respecting strict case-handling protocols.

The work may involve:

- designing practical experiments to assess the societal risks posed by online platforms' algorithmic systems, producing evidence about their impact on users and society;
- implementation and application of algorithmic auditing and impact/risk assessment methodologies in practical scenarios with real-world constraints;
- development of new skills together with their team.

WE LOOK FOR

We are looking for **applied researchers and investigators** with a strong motivation to work in a goal-oriented environment for the public good.

Highly motivated outstanding candidates with a keen interest in supporting EU digital policies should have the **following experience/skills (essential)**:

- A university degree and at least 2 years relevant research experience or a PhD (doctoral diploma) in disciplines relevant to this vacancy such as computer science, artificial intelligence, social sciences or engineering.
- Practical experience in the design, development and/or evaluation of algorithmic systems such as AI-based content recommendation, moderation and search systems.
- Very good (C1) knowledge of English.

Any of the following skills and experience would be **desirable**:

- Experience in conceptualizing and performing algorithm inspection, auditing or testing activities. Knowledge of the architecture and lifecycle (design, verification, deployment, operation) of large-scale algorithms used by online platforms and search engines.
- Experience in the review and analysis of source code and technical documentation of complex software systems, including technical reports, audit reports, architecture and design specifications, patent applications, scientific articles, technical standards, and API documentation.
- Experience in open source intelligence (OSINT) techniques and skills in large-scale collection (scraping) and analysis/mining of live data and information from online sources, such as search engines, social networks and other online platforms.
- Knowledge of the various software tools and libraries that support or automate any of the above-described activities; ability to develop customised software tools for interacting with online platform systems, and for related data collection and analysis activities.
- Experience in applied investigative work in the context of online platforms, social media, artificial intelligence and/or digital technologies.
- Experience in on-site inspections, cooperation with regulators, and/or setting up digital forensic capabilities.



HOW TO APPLY

If you are **already on a valid CAST FGIV reserve list**, or you **have already applied to one of the calls below**, you can directly submit your application at <http://recruitment.jrc.ec.europa.eu/?type=AX>.

If not, before applying to this position, **you must register** for one of the two following:

- the [Call for Expressions of Interest | EU Careers \(europa.eu\)](#) (CAST Permanent FGIV), which is used by a wide range of organisations (institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the European Union), or
- the [specialised call for researchers](#) (JRC Call COM/1/2015/GFIV – Research), which is mainly used by the JRC.

Note that each of the calls above has **different minimum eligibility requirements and different selection tests**.

The JRC cultivates a workplace based on respect for other people and the environment, and embraces non-discriminatory practices and equality of opportunity. In case of equal merit, preference will be given to the gender in minority.