

**Postdoctoral Fellow: Societal Aspects of AI**  
**University of Toronto**  
**Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence**  
**Schwartz-Reisman Institute for Technology and Society**  
**Computational Social Science Lab**

Full-time Postdoctoral Fellow position available immediately until September, 2025, with potential opportunity to extend

**PIs:** Richard Zemel (Columbia University) and Ashton Anderson (University of Toronto)

**Posted**

February 20, 2024

**Employer**

University of Toronto

**Location**

Toronto, ON, Canada, with frequent travel opportunities to New York City, NY, USA

**Deadline**

Rolling, with a closing date of March 31, 2024. Preference will be given to early applicants.

**Job description**

**Postdoctoral Fellow: Societal Aspects of AI**

We seek a Postdoctoral Fellow to join our collaboration on investigating the societal aspects of AI and machine learning methods, including LLMs and other generative models.

The rapidly expanding scope of AI, particularly generative models, has the potential to bring about major societal change. The goal of this project is to determine AI methodologies, frameworks, and environments that maximize societal benefits and minimize harms. The scope is deliberately unconstrained to accommodate a variety of perspectives that candidates may bring, but includes interpretable and explainable AI, in-context learning, and multi-agent approaches. Societal outcomes of interest include fairness, bias, polarization, and misinformation. A major goal of the work will be to promote positive human-AI interaction, and identify ways that new AI methods can augment human ability across a variety of domains.

This position offers a unique opportunity to contribute to research at the forefront of AI and society from a technical perspective. The postdoctoral fellow will be co-supervised by Professor Richard Zemel at Columbia University and Professor Ashton Anderson at University of Toronto. The position also offers the opportunity to be affiliated with the Vector Institute for Artificial intelligence, the Schwartz-Reisman Institute, and the Computational Social Science Lab.

Candidates for this position should have a PhD in computer science or a closely related field. Candidates should have demonstrated expertise in AI, machine learning, and answering social questions, possess strong communication skills, and be able to work independently.

### **Application instructions**

To apply, please complete the application [form](#) and have 2–3 referees send reference letters to [ashton@cs.toronto.edu](mailto:ashton@cs.toronto.edu).

### **About the Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence**

The Vector Institute is an independent non-profit corporation, with Faculty Members and Affiliates from the University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, and other Canadian universities. It is supported with generous funding from the provincial and federal governments, as well as Canadian industry sponsors.

The Vector Institute is located in the brand new Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus, overlooking downtown Toronto and the beautiful Queen's Park. On any given day, the Vector Institute houses over a hundred students, dozens of Faculty Members, supported with state-of-the-art compute power, and dedicated professional staff. The daily life and concentration of expertise in the Institute fosters collaboration and the exchange of ideas among its members through talks, seminar series, visitors, and tutorials.

The Vector Institute's vision is to drive excellence in the creation of artificial intelligence, to use it to foster economic growth, and to improve the lives of Canadians. To that end, the Vector Institute has close ties to both academia and industry. This puts our Postdoctoral Fellows in a unique position to contribute broadly. A successful contribution can range from developing core algorithmic techniques and theoretical analyses of machine learning algorithms, to working closely with existing companies and health organizations, to engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

### **About the Schwartz-Reisman Institute for Technology and Society**

The Schwartz-Reisman Institute for Technology and Society is a research and solutions institute developing innovative approaches to addressing the societal role of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and examining the complexities of human communities and the systems that govern them. It draws on diverse expertise across universities, government, industry, and community organizations to conduct integrative research and human-centred solutions to obstacles and challenges posed by emerging technologies.

### **About the Computational Social Science Lab**

The Computational Social Science Lab is an interdisciplinary research group in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Toronto. We do research at the intersection of AI, data, and society to better understand the online world and the role of algorithms in digital life. To answer questions on these topics, we analyze large-scale Web datasets, conduct online randomized experiments, and develop and apply machine learning methods.

**Job duties**

The job duties listed are typical examples of work performed by positions in this job classification and are not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, tasks, and responsibilities. Specific duties and responsibilities may vary depending on department or program needs without changing the general nature and scope of the job or level of responsibility. Employees may also perform other duties as assigned.

University of Toronto is an equal employment opportunity and affirmative action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

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