Call for applications
Funded Doctoral Position
Social Sciences, LUT University, Finland

The Department of Social Sciences at the LUT School of Engineering Sciences is seeking a **junior researcher (doctoral student) in social sciences, specialising in critical AI and data studies,** to strengthen its fields of study in **political economy, economic sociology, and science and technology studies with critical approaches**. Specifically, we are seeking a curious mind who aspires to an academic career, is passionate about continuous learning, and aims to make the world a better place through science.

The recruited candidate will contribute to the Research Council of Finland funded research project *"Between brains and computers: the social (re)construction of 'intelligence' in the digital economy",* as part of LUT's Research Group on Economy, Technology and Society (GETS), led by Associate Prof. Edemilson Paraná. The project explores how AI and neurotechnology reshape ideas of intelligence in society, and how this influences science and business. As AI and brain-related technologies rapidly advance, they impact what it means to 'know' and 'think'. Our research investigates how scientists and companies define 'intelligence' and how these definitions influence technological and economic practices. Using interviews, quantitative data analysis, and archival research, the study focuses on global leading AI and neurotech hubs. By analysing debates among neuroscientists, computer scientists, and businesspeople, the project seeks to uncover the power dynamics and socioeconomic impacts of different notions of intelligence. The recruited researcher should demonstrate **qualitative, (basic) quantitative and/or mixed-methods research skills** and have excellent capabilities for academic tasks.

LUT University launched degree programmes in social sciences and communication sciences in the autumn of 2023. With significant public funding, LUT is building a school of social sciences with a goal of a thousand students and a hundred researchers by the 2030s. You can contribute by joining us in building this new school. LUT's research in social sciences is rooted in understanding society and human activities in relation to global sustainability problems. We believe that by engaging people and communities more actively from the outset of problem-solving, we can affect change more swiftly.

What we expect

You must have a master's degree (M. Sc. or equivalent) in a relevant field (preferably sociology or political economy). Alternatively, you may possess a degree in another social science field, such as political science, anthropology, communication sciences, economics, or humanities, and have a desire to apply that knowledge to contribute to social sciences related to the **data/digital economy, the digital transformation, big data and AI, automation, human–machine interaction, and neurotechnology.**

You must have the ability and motivation to complete the doctoral studies within their normative duration (i.e., four years). You must be fluent in English (both written and spoken). Knowledge of other languages is an advantage. You should aspire to write an article-based doctoral dissertation (in English) and publish in top-tier international academic journals in the field. Organisational skills and knowledge of research project development and grant applications are beneficial. Proficiency in

research ethics is required, as are good computer skills. Practical social media and web page design skills are a merit.

The ideal candidate possesses extensive knowledge of scientific writing and qualitative and/or quantitative research methods and a solid commitment to research ethics. Previous scientific publications in the field are a significant advantage.

The ideal candidate for the position

The LUT social sciences department focuses on solving problems of the future and addressing the sustainability crisis at the intersection of people and technology. To that end, we seek a candidate with a critical perspective on the **shifting conceptions of intelligence in the digital society**. The research interests of the ideal candidate would encompass topics related broadly to the digitalisation of society and the areas of AI, data, neurotech and platform studies from an STS and/or political economy perspective. The candidate should be interested in writing a dissertation on the above-mentioned research project theme. This can touch upon the following areas and their interaction:

- Digital/data economy, and data markets
- Platforms, big data and artificial intelligence
- Automation of work and production
- Neuroscience, neurotechnology, human–machine interactions, brain-computer interfaces
- Brain, machine, and intelligence

Job description

- Completion of an article-based doctoral dissertation within four years
- Involvement in research projects in various roles
- Active participation in a research group, including research assistance and event organising
- Assisting in project/research group administration and maintaining a media presence (e.g., project web pages and social media)

What we offer

- An opportunity to launch a successful academic career and become an expert in the field of the dissertation
- A four-year contract for completing the doctoral degree (if the candidate obtains the right to pursue postgraduate studies at LUT University); the contract will initially be for one year and can be extended by three years, provided that studies and research progress successfully
- Encouraging and supportive supervision by the professor and research network

The job is based in Lappeenranta, Finland, but part of the work can be performed remotely. The work begins with a standard six-month trial period as soon as possible, but the start date is negotiable.

The salary is based on the current collective agreement for Finnish universities. The typical gross starting salary for a junior researcher is **approximately 32K euros per year**. In addition to a competitive salary, the job offers a wide range of benefits, including a holiday bonus, generous holiday entitlement, a research incentive scheme with personal rewards for high-quality publications, flexible working hours, occupational health care, a collegial work environment, and support for your learning, training, and development.

How to apply

Please submit your application to edemilson.parana@lut.fi until **03 October 2025**, attaching the following:

- A cover letter (maximum 2 pages)
- Your curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages)
- A research statement describing your intended dissertation project, work in progress, plans for publication, and academic goals (maximum 4 pages)
- A copy of your degree certificate; if the original documents are not in English, Finnish, or Swedish, each document must be accompanied by an official certified translation into English or Finnish

If you have prior publications, teaching qualification certificates or a teaching portfolio (maximum 10 pages), please include them; they are not obligatory but are highly advantageous.

All application materials should be submitted in English.

More information

For further information, please contact **Associate Professor of Social Sciences Edemilson Paraná**, edemilson.parana@lut.fi