Talking Mats

Location: Stirling University Innovation Park

Salary: £27,000 - £30,000

Post Type: Full Time

Contract Type: Fixed Term – Ends 30/05/2023

Closing Date: 5pm Wednesday 11th May 2022

Interview Date: Monday 16th May 2022

We have an exciting opportunity for a Development Associate to join Talking Mats Ltd.

Talking Mats Ltd is an award-winning social enterprise which originally developed from research at Stirling University and now has an international reach.

We were delighted to receive a SMART award for research and innovation which allows us to embrace future technologies and Artificial Intelligence to enhance and develop our communication framework.

We want to build a proof-of-concept system that **can track user behaviour** from both the Talking Mats app and video recordings and use data to automatically detect interactions that require the skill of a trained observer. This will be done using a combination of computer vision and machine learning algorithms.

We will also build the Data platform and Architecture on to our existing technology to allow TM Ltd to create **new Data Services**. These will provide key insights to support individuals and services by assessing organisational performance, identifying trends and risk factors. We want to be able to measure the quality of the input to maximise independent views.

The successful candidate will understand the impact of communication impairment and have a track record of carrying out high quality research. You will work collaboratively with the research team including, Dr Kevin Swingler, Head of Mathematical Science, University of Stirling and Dr Jill Bradshaw, University of Kent conducting qualitative and quantitative research.

You will also be committed to the vision of Talking Mats to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties.

We are offering this position on a full time, fixed term basis until May 2023.

Essential	Desirable
• Experience in communication disability and committed to the vision of TM	• Trained in Talking Mats
• A postgraduate research degree in social sciences, psychology, or related area (or equivalent)	• Possess a open-minded and flexible approach
• Embraces potential of future technologies and AI	• Blog and Social media skills

• Excellent project delivery skills including use of IT , managing data and statistics	
• Excellent communication skills (verbal and written)	
• Ability to work in a team, and to work towards project aims and objectives, and their associated deadlines	

This post is a full-time, short-term contract for a year, based in central Scotland but with flexibility for home working (e.g. .60% Home and 40% office)

As a Development Associate, you will:

- Carry out high quality research on using AI to capture non-verbal signifiers when using a Talking Mat.

- Organise and co-ordinate standard data collection procedures with stakeholders, including conducting Talking Mat interviews using the Digital Talking Mat.

- Analyse, interpret and assist in using the data to develop potential new products as well as collating and analysing feedback from customers and users

- Be the conduit for networking and keeping people informed about the project including opening up potential new markets

- Form and maintain positive and productive relationships with research participants and colleagues.

To be successful in this role you will have/be:

- A postgraduate research degree in social sciences, psychology, or related area (or equivalent)

- Good understanding of research methods

- Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative approaches and previous experience of applying them

Talking Mats Ltd is at the forefront of communication support. Our vision is to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties by increasing their capacity to think about and communicate effectively about things that matter to them. Talking Mats has a worldwide community of users and has a strong research base..

Job role

- ➢ Assist in quantitative and qualitative research
- ➢ Co-ordinate standard data collection procedures with stakeholders, including conducting interviews using the Digital talking Mat.
- ➢ Maintain confidentiality and security of data in accordance with GDPR and or data compliance
- ➢ Work closely with other members of the research team.

- ➢ Organise and liaise with panel of experts from wider Talking Mats community.
- ➢ Deal with any problems which may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines.
- ➢ Effectively plan own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed programme.
- ➢ Participate in team meetings and contribute to team discussions and decisions.
- ➢ Other duties may be allocated which contribute to the commercial success of Talking Mats.

The selection panel will be looking for clear evidence and examples in your CV and covering letter about your suitability for this role as outlined above.

Please send your CV and covering letter to Heather@talkingmats.com by 5pm on Wednesday 20th April.

This post involves a presentation or assessment activity as part of the interview process. Full details will be confirmed to you by email.