LIDA Data Scientist Internship Programme: Information for External Partners

The LIDA Data Scientist Internship Programme is designed to provide data science solutions to challenges in industry and the public sector whilst increasing the data science capacity of its interns, in order to supply the ever-growing need for data science expertise in the real-world. LIDA recruits early career graduates and gives them the opportunity to work on 6-month projects involving novel data sets and problems provided by LIDA's partners in order to produce quick analytical solutions. Annually in April, LIDA issues its call for proposals for projects to run as part of its Intern Programme.

If you or your organisation has a particular data problem and the funding to convert this into a 6-month project for a LIDA data science intern to work on, then LIDA is interested in working with you and receiving your project proposal as part of its April projects call.

Background to the Programme – why was it created?

The Programme was founded in 2016 to bridge the gap between academic research enquiry and the increasing industry demand for skilled data scientists and has a proven track record of success over the last five years. The Programme is central to LIDA's core strategy of fostering innovative research, developing data science excellence, and generating sustainable partnerships and potential future income streams for the University. External partners are asked to collaborate with University academics in order to submit a 6-month proof-of-concept project proposal for the application of complex analytical techniques to real data. Projects are encouraged where there is a clear intent to collaborate on a real-world problem for the public good, satisfying LIDA's strategic aim of promoting data science collaborations for the good of society.

On completion of their internships, most interns have gone on to employment in data science roles in industry, thus bridging the gap between academia and industry and supplying skilled data scientists in the public and private sectors.

The structure of the Intern Programme

- The Programme operates on an annual basis, with interns employed by LIDA on 12-month, full time, fixed term contracts from Sept-Sept in order to get hands-on technical experience using real-world data and to establish links with external project partners.
- Each intern completes two 6-month projects which run Oct-March and April-Sept. Most projects will have an academic PI and Co-I(s) as well as an external partner.
- Please also see the annex at the end of this document for a cyclical diagram of the Programme.

Benefits of the Programme to the external partner:

Soon to be in its sixth year, the LIDA Internship Programme offers our external partners the opportunity to convert their unique data analytics questions and challenges into 6-month internship projects. The programme allows academics and external partners to test new ideas, methods and techniques before committing to a longer term programme of work. The intern assigned to your project will have the support of leading experts based at the multi-disciplinary Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (LIDA), working across each of LIDA's key areas: Urban Analytics; Health Informatics; AI & Immersive Technologies; and Mathematical Methods.

- By funding a LIDA Intern project, you set the project brief and guide the direction of travel in the project, working with some of the best academic minds at the forefront of their fields;
- You will have access to 1 intern working full time exclusively on your research project for 6 months;
- You will receive regular updates during the 6-month project in the form of presentations to company by the intern and project briefings;

- You will receive a final report provided by the intern and their academic supervisors at the end of the project, together with any other outputs as agreed;
- You will have access to unique LIDA data science training opportunities at a discounted partner rate.

Partners are asked to provide:

- **Project costs:** to cover the intern's salary, training, travel and subsistence for the 6 month period (£18.5k). Please note that interns are recruited by LIDA and paid through University payroll. There may be additional costs associated with hosting your data on LIDA's cloud based, highly secure data analytics IT platform (LASER). If you would like to discuss the potential costs of using this infrastructure then please get in touch with the LIDA Data Analytics Team.
- A research question, with input from an academic collaborator at the University of Leeds who will co-supervise or be primary supervisor of the intern throughout the 6-month project.
- The intern will spend the majority of their time based at LIDA, but some time may be spent at the company where appropriate. We find this split works well as the interns learn collaboratively from one another, they have access to facilities and training, and are close to their academic supervisor(s).

For any further questions regarding the LIDA Data Scientist Internship Programme, or if you wish to be put in touch with academics working in relevant fields with whom you would be interested in exploring a project collaboration on the Programme, please contact:

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Annex: Cyclical diagram of the LIDA Internship Programme

1. Feb-April: Project PIs and external partners asked to submit expressions of interest for projects ahead of the April Call for Proposals. Work with funders to secure funding where relevant.

2. April-May: Call for Proposals is issued on 1st April with deadline of end of April. Project selection takes place via internal panel process in May. Decisions communicated to project PIs.

3. June-July: LIDA undertakes its recruitment process to appoint LIDA interns on 12-month fixed term contracts.

4. Aug-Sept: Offers are made to successful interns. Project PIs are invited to take part in the process for matching interns to their projects. Interns are inducted at the end of September.

5. Oct-March: Interns work on their first 6-month project, receive training, presenting on their work and completing outputs.

6. April-Sept: Interns work on their second 6-month project, receive training, presenting on their work and completing outputs. Internships end at the end of September.