

Isambard Global Visiting Professorship

AI and Emerging Technologies





**Welcome
to Bristol**

**A City of
community,
diversity
and boldness**



Why join us?

The University of Bristol offers an unparalleled environment for world-leading academics to engage in transformative research, innovation, and collaboration.

Our Global Visiting Professorship Scheme invites distinguished scholars in AI and related emerging technologies to join a vibrant, interdisciplinary ecosystem that is shaping the future of science, society, and industry.

A Global Leader in AI

Bristol is home to a comprehensive and interconnected array of AI research activities spanning core AI research, delivering new insights and innovations, applied AI research, putting AI technologies to work across a wide range of high impact application domains, and critical AI research, informing the future development and deployment of ethical, scalable, and human-centred AI systems.

Named [AI University of the Year](#) at the 2024 National AI Awards, Bristol hosts the UK's £225m national AI supercomputing facility, [Isambard AI](#), leads two of the UK's nine national AI research hubs (in [AI for Collective Intelligence](#) and [INFORMED-AI](#)), hosts Centres for Doctoral Training in Interactive and [Practice-Oriented AI](#), and runs significant AI research programmes across the [Bristol Robotics Lab](#), [Bristol Digital Futures Institute](#) and [ESRC Centre for Socio-digital Futures](#).

Our AI research is deeply connected to real-world impact, spanning the UK's eight growth-driving sectors and being applied to critically important problems in health, climate, infrastructure provision and public policy. Crucially our research explores the wider impacts of AI, including on the world of work, and the development of socially-responsible AI encompassing ethics and regulation.

Overall, Bristol offers visiting Scholars a world-class environment that combines excellence across the whole span of diverse AI activities with access to the cutting-edge computational infrastructure and skills necessary to push AI research forward.

A Nexus of Technological Excellence

The collective strength of our research is amplified by world-class capabilities in:

- **Quantum Technologies:** Home to the UK's largest quantum innovation centre and pioneers of the first chip-based quantum computer.
- **Cyber Security:** One of the UK's leading research groups specialising in security and privacy in large-scale infrastructures supported by an extensive cyber security testbed facility.
- **Creative Technology:** An interdisciplinary research community spanning Arts, Social Sciences and Engineering, including the state-of-the-art MyWorld facilities.
- **Engineering Biology:** A global leader in AI-driven protein design and synthetic biology, with a strong track record of spinouts and industrial partnerships.
- **Advanced Connectivity:** Through our Smart Internet Lab, we are shaping the future of 6G and open networks, in collaboration with over 500 telecoms companies.
- **Semiconductors:** At the heart of the UK's 'silicon gorge', we lead the REWIRE Innovation and Knowledge Centre, transforming high-voltage electronics and securing the UK's semiconductor future.
- **Societal Impact, Ethics and Regulation of AI:** Renowned academic leadership in the commercial, legal, ethical and political implications of technology development, implementation and its use.

A Culture of Innovation and Impact

Bristol is a national leader in research commercialisation:

- Ranked top 3 in the UK for spinout investment value and volume.
- Home to the SETSquared Partnership, the UK's #1 start-up hub.
- Launching the Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus in 2026 - a new epicentre for interdisciplinary research, enterprise, and global collaboration.

A City and University like no other

Our city is home to an inclusive and globally represented population, with people from more than 180 countries and home to 45 religions & 91 languages. According to the 2021 census, 18.9% of the were Asian or Black heritage and a Minoritised ethnic background. A longstanding pillar of the cultural calendar, [St Paul's Carnival](#) saw 100,000 people joining to celebrate Caribbean Culture, while the multi-faith [Grand Iftar](#) hosted its 2025 event at Bristol Cathedral, located in the heart of the city.

Bristol is a UNESCO City of Film, a hub for creative and high-tech industries, and a city that blends cultural vibrancy with scientific excellence. Our university's interdisciplinary ethos, commitment to societal impact, and global partnerships make it an ideal destination for scholars seeking to make a difference. Bristol has an extraordinary and powerful tradition of enterprise, exploration and nonconformism. It is a Social Enterprise City and the UK's first European Green Capital. It was recently voted one of the UK's five Centres of Cultural Excellence. It boasts the most educated workforce in the country and some exceptional cultural institutions – including the Watershed, Spike Island, Bristol Old Vic and St George's – to deliver a world-class programme in the arts.

The city is home to world-class high-tech and creative companies such as Airbus, Toshiba, Aardman, BBC, Oracle, Cray, Amazon, IBM and Sony, and to a rich proliferation of SMEs and early-stage enterprises. The University of Bristol is constantly using research collaboration, educational partnerships, placements and productive knowledge exchange to build more effective links with the external community and regional industries.

The University is in one of Europe's most creative and dynamic cities, with which it enjoys a close and synergistic relationship. For our people and students, the city is an unending source of research opportunities and a laboratory within which to test solutions with potential global impact. For the city, the University is one of its largest employers and a major contributor to its economic, social, cultural and intellectual vibrancy.



Support during your visit

Our Global Visiting Professors are high-value academic or industry role models, at the height of their discipline or sector and play a crucial part in the shaping of our research culture, creating new and reinforcing existing transnational links with global institutions and for-profit organisations, through mutually beneficial partnership.

Visiting Professors are invited to join us for periods of 3 -12 months, to promote research collaboration and to contribute, where possible, to the teaching environment through open and public events. We encourage visitors to immerse themselves into academic life during their time within the institution, allowing us to enhance the experiences of our researcher and student communities through the rich exchange of knowledge and experience.

Tailored support for your visit

We recognise that undertaking a visiting appointment has its own logistical challenges. We provide comprehensive support for visiting professors to ensure that the experience of arriving and staying in Bristol is as seamless as possible.

Our support includes:

- Paid accommodation within close proximity to Campus.
- Supplementary support for living expenses to offset the cost of your time in Bristol.
- Reimbursement of any visa related costs, alongside Individualised visa support and guidance.
- Reimbursement of visiting activity-related travel costs, and incidental research expenses.



Supporting information

Employment status

Our visiting professors are not employees of the University and do not receive a salary. They are granted **honorary status**, which allows access to University facilities and resources, while creating a long-term affiliation with Bristol.

Visiting the UK

If not already in possession of an appropriate visa, international visitors will typically require a Standard Visitor visa or an Academic Visitor visa, depending on the length and nature of the visit. The University will provide a letter of invitation to support any visa application. If there are plans to undertake any paid work while in the UK, this must be undertaken within the first 30 days of arriving in the UK.

Activities during your visit

These can vary widely based on the nature and scope of a visit, however typical activities are likely to include:

- Engaging in collaborative research with our academic community.
- Delivering public lectures and attracting key thought leaders to Bristol events.
- Contributing to mentoring of our academic community, workshops, or postgraduate training where appropriate.
- Networking with relevant industry partners and key government bodies.

Incoming Global Visiting Professors require senior academic sponsorship by a host school and faculty.

Our scheme is targeted at distinguished academics from the world's leading universities and exceptional industry leaders with a proven record of innovation and impact in AI or related technological domains. Visitors will typically hold a substantive professorial post at their home institution, or a relevant leadership role within industry.

Duration

Visits can range from 3 to 12 months, depending on the nature of the collaboration and mutual agreement between the visitor and the host school.

Access to facilities and resources

Visiting Professors will have access to:

- Office space and IT facilities.
- Library and research resources.
- Opportunities to collaborate with leading research groups and lab facilities. (such as Bristol Centre for Supercomputing and Isambard-AI, Smart Internet Lab, Bristol Cyber Security Group, AI Post Doctoral Training Hubs, MyWorld)
- An individually curated series of invitations to seminars, workshops, and networking events.

Financial support

The University provides funding to support travel, accommodation, and certain aspects of research activity. Applicants may also choose to explore external funding or sabbatical support from their home institutions. Available support also covers travel and visa costs for immediate family members accompanying for a planned visit. In particular circumstances, visiting scholars may receive an honorarium which is a one-time payment granted in recognition of a special service or distinguished achievement such as a keynote speaking, symposium hosting, participation in a workshop, panel discussion, or similar activities.

Who to contact

For initial enquires on our visiting professorships and further information on any aspect of the scheme please direct contact to uob-IsambardGVP@bristol.ac.uk, to be picked up by a member of our Talent team.

**A University
of curiosity,
creativity and
collaboration**



