Utrecht University, Faculty of Humanities, Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS)

Positions for 2 PhD researchers or Postdocs in Computational Linguistics

Deadline for application: **May 5, 2010**

Vacancy Number	681018
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities

Description of faculty

Utrecht University, founded in 1636, has developed into one of Europe's largest and most prominent institutes for research and education. The faculty of Humanities, with nearly 7,000 students and nearly 900 staff members, offers an inspiring and dynamic working environment. Our research and education programmes focus on culture, history, arts, literature, media, language, philosophy and theology, covering the period from classical antiquity to the present day. We pay special attention to interdisciplinary and international collaboration, the use of new media, and high-quality teaching and research. The research programmes are organised in four institutes:

- Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC),
- Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS),
- ZENO Research Institute for Philosophy,
- Research Institute for Theology and Religious Studies (INTEGON).

The Utrecht University Graduate School of Humanities monitors and guarantees the outstanding quality of education programmes for Research Master and PhD students. The enthusiastic colleagues, the workplaces and excellent facilities both in the modern Uithof and the historic town centre of Utrecht provide a stimulating, professional atmosphere. Moreover, the faculty of Humanities offers attractive terms of employment.

Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS) has a vacancy for

Job titles

2 PhD researchers or Postdocs in Computational Linguistics (1 fte each)

Salary

PhD researcher starts at € 2,042 and a post doc starts at € 2,977 gross per month

Job descriptions

These positions are part of a five-year research programme 'Between Logic and Common Sense' funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO. The programme, supervised by Dr. Yoad Winter, investigates the interaction between word meanings and sentence meanings. While word meanings are often related to common sense aspects of semantic concepts, sentence meanings are derived using logical operators. The program will study how the two modules interact. Three issues will be addressed:

- How should formal theories of meaning be modified in order to incorporate methods and ideas from the study of common concepts?
- What psycholinguistic evidence exists that supports this interaction?
- How can interactions between word meaning and logical meaning be exploited for automatic treatment of reasoning in natural language (entailment)?

The program combines methods from formal semantics, experimental psycholinguistics and machine learning.

The programme comprises two post-doctoral projects and three PhD projects. See below for a link to the programme and general descriptions of the projects:

http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad/vici/ViciProgram-Winter.pdf

http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad/vici/projects.html

The current opening is for:

PhD/postdoc project 1 (vacancy no. 681018-A) starting date 1-10-2010 (negotiable, postdoc between 1 Oct 2010 and 1 Feb 2011):

The project, supervised by Dr. Yoad Winter, uses annotated entailments for developing machine learning algorithms that recognize unseen entailments on the basis of lexical/syntactic tools and resources. The learning model will use a semantically annotated corpus as a training set for acquiring semantically relevant information from other resources (e.g. WordNet, Penn Treebank, OpenCyc) when parsing entailments.

The project uses methods from computational linguistics and machine learning.

For a more detailed project description:
http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad/vici/projects.html#4

PhD project 2 (vacancy no 691018-B) starting date 1-10-2010 (negotiable):
The project, supervised by Dr. Yoad Winter, develops a computational version of formal semantic theory that is suitable for annotating a corpus of textual entailments. The PhD researcher will accompany actual annotation of an entailment corpus. The annotated corpus and annotation principles will be used for the automatic acquisition of textual entailments.

The project uses methods from computational linguistics and formal semantics.

For a more detailed project description:
http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad/vici/projects.html#5

Qualifications Applicants for a **postdoc** employment hold a PhD (completed at least one month prior to employment), as well as demonstrated capacities as an independent researcher, in the form of publications. You have a PhD in statistical computational linguistics, with specific experience in machine learning techniques.

Applicants for a **PhD** position have a MA/MSc in computer science or computational linguistics, with specific experience in machine learning techniques. Candidates expecting to graduate by 1 September 2010 can also apply.

Terms of employment UiL-OTS features a stimulating, innovative, and internationally oriented research environment which offers opportunities for a broad professional development. Courses are offered by internationally renowned experts, while possibilities for conference visiting are plentiful. We offer excellent experimental facilities and computational support.

For the successful PhD candidate: we offer a 18 month contract as PhD student (AiO) with the possibility of renewal with two years maximum, after a positive evaluation. You will work on the basis of 1.0 fte (0.8 fte is an option) and your monthly gross salary during the first year will be € 2.042,- and € 2.612,- during the fourth year, based on a full-time basis (scale Promovendus according to the Collective Employment Agreement of the Dutch Universities).
The project involves training in research and completion of a PhD dissertation. As part of your training, you will take courses offered by the National Graduate School in Linguistics (LOT).

For the successful postdoc candidate: we offer a 12 month contract as a postdoc with the possibility of renewal with two years maximum, after a positive evaluation. You will work

on the basis of 1.0 fte (0.8 is an option). Assignment of the researcher to a salary scale will depend on knowledge and experience, at a minimum of € 2.977,- gross per month, based on a full-time position (Collective Employment Agreement of the Dutch Universities). Your goal is to publish in international journals and to prepare for a longer lasting career in academia.

We offer a pension scheme, a holiday allowance of 8% per year and flexible employment conditions. Conditions are based on the Collective Employment Agreement of the Dutch Universities.

Further details

For further information, please contact the programme leader at the UiL OTS, dr. Yoad Winter, e-mail **Y dot Winter at uu dot nl**, or the UiL-OTS PhD coordinator dr. Maaike Schoorlemmer, telephone +31-30-2536183, e-mail **M dot Schoorlemmer at uu dot nl**. You may also consult our institute's website: **www.uu.nl/uilots**. The full programme description is available at: **http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad/vici/main.html**

UiL OTS
http://www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/Humanities/research/researchinstitutes/uilots/Pages/default.aspx

Utrecht University
http://www.uu.nl/EN/Pages/default.aspx

Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics (LOT)
http://www.let.uu.nl/LOT

The **VICI program of NWO** (The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research)
http://www.nwo.nl/nwohome.nsf/pages/NWOP_5TTCVA_Eng

Yoad Winter (Principal Investigator)
http://www.phil.uu.nl/~yoad

How to apply

Applications should include
○   a letter of motivation
○   a curriculum vitae including contact and personal details
○   the contact details of two referees (names, affiliations and phone numbers or e-mail addresses).
○   preferably: two reference letters
In addition, **PhD** applicants should include
○   transcripts of academic results
○   an MA thesis or (if the thesis is not available yet) some alternative piece of written work
In addition, **postdoc** applicants should include:
○   PhD thesis
○   one selected publication
E-mail applications (preferred) should be sent in pdf or doc format to **GW_Humanitiesjobs@uu.nl** and should specify the applicant's name and the vacancy number **681018-A or B** in the message as well as in the topic, include a list of attachments in the message, and specify the applicant's name in each attachment's title.

Written applications should be sent to the Personnel Department, Kromme Nieuwegracht 46, 3512 HJ Utrecht, The Netherlands. Please refer to the vacancy number **681018-A or B** as well as to the website where you found this advertisement.

Deadline for application is **May 5, 2010**.

Interviews are planned on **June 8, 2010**.