



12-18 months Ph.D. student research position in Older Adults' Interaction with Robots

Department of Communication Studies
Department of Industrial Engineering and Management
The Center for Multidisciplinary Research in Aging
Agricultural, Biological, Cognitive Robotics Initiative
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) is seeking outstanding candidates for a PhD student position in *Older adults' interaction with robots*, at The Departments of Communication Studies and Industrial Engineering and Management and The Center for Multidisciplinary Research in Aging. BGU is an internationally recognized research university that attracts outstanding faculty and researchers from around the world with over 19,000 students. The Dept. of Communication Studies includes a multidisciplinary faculty with expertise in new media, audience research, cultural diversity and disadvantaged populations. The Dept. of Industrial Engineering includes faculty experts in human factors and robotics. Advanced innovative multidisciplinary robotics research at BGU is conducted under the auspices of the ABC Robotics Initiative.

SOCRATES

The recruitment is done as part of SOCRATES (SOcial Cognitive Robotic Agents in The European Society), a Marie Skłodowska-Curie European Training Network (ETN) comprising 7 universities/research institutes: Umeå University and Örebro University in Sweden, Universität Hamburg and Fraunhofer IPA, Stuttgart in Germany, CSIC Barcelona in Spain, University West of England, and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. Additional non-academic partners are: Pal Robotics, Adele Robots, Alfred Nobel Science Park, Center for Digital Innovation, UMINOVA, Asea Brown Boveri, S.A, and Fundació ACE.

In total 15 Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) were recruited as PhD students for research on various aspects of social robotics aiming at eldercare. The wide range of projects covers a spectrum from technical design of hardware and interaction methodology, to personalization, user studies, and robot ethics. The researchers receive training in both academic and entrepreneurial spirit and expertise, well suited for a career in both academy and industry. The training includes working on a research project related to older adults' interaction with robots, as well as courses, seminars, and workshops suited for the students' academic interests and progress. As part of the research project and time dependent, secondments at Örebro University, Sweden and/or at Fraunhofer IPA, Germany might be planned.

An overview of the SOCRATES project can be found at www.socrates-project.eu.

About the position

The successful applicant will receive a competitive salary for a period of 12-18 months' full time research, provided that expected study and research results are achieved. No teaching is expected. The salary will be based on the standard Marie Skłodowska-Curie Early-Stage Researcher living and mobility allowances.

Starting date: ASAP.

Who can apply?

1. Excellent MSc students, who already graduated their studies and are interested in exploring the new and exciting field of Human-Robot Interaction.
2. PhD students, who have not yet graduated and interested in extending their work by including a component on older adults. In this case, the students will still be formally registered in their current university, and the time spent at BGU will be considered as student exchange.
3. Excellent MSc students who already graduated and are interested in pursuing a Phd at BGU. The student must have completed a MSc or MA thesis to be able to apply for a PhD at BGU.

The student must obtain a visa and working permit according to the Ministry of Interior requirements.

Admission requirements

Candidates should have interest in understanding aging and human-robot interaction (although should not necessarily have background in such topics), be able to work independently as well as in collaboration with others, and be passionate about learning and developing knowledge in a novel and exciting area. The applicant must be skilled in both oral and written communication in English. Some background in social sciences and/or user studies is a significant advantage but not mandatory.

Once approved by BGU's SOCRATES graduate committee the student must obtain a visa and working permit according to the Ministry of Interior requirements. Applicants aiming to pursue a PhD must be accepted to BGU's graduate school (http://in.bgu.ac.il/en/kreitman_school/Pages/admission.aspx). The PhD candidate must submit a research proposal and go through a Qualification Exam within one year of studies on his/her research proposal. A PhD at BGU is usually 4 years; for funding in the following years the student can apply for BGU scholarships and awards http://in.bgu.ac.il/en/kreitman_school/Pages/Scholarships-and-Awards.aspx.

To promote mobility, the following rule applies: At the time of recruitment, the applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity in Israel for more than 12 months during the last 3 years. Compulsory national service, work in international organizations, and short stays such as holidays are not taken into account. The applicants must not, at the time of recruitment, have spent more than 4 years doing research, and must not have been awarded a doctoral degree.

Application

A complete application should contain the following documents:

- A cover letter including a description of your research interests, your reasons to apply for the position, and your contact information.
- A curriculum vita.
- Copies of degree certificates, including documentation of completed academic courses and grades.
- Copy of completed MA/MSc thesis and other original research publications.
- Contact information for three persons willing to act as references (including your MA/MSc thesis advisor).

Applications must be submitted electronically to the following email by November 30, 2018.

socrates@post.bgu.ac.il

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

For additional information about the position, please contact: Prof. Galit Nimrod - gnimrod@bgu.ac.il

Prof. Yael Edan - yael@bgu.ac.il

For general information about the SOCRATES project, please contact Prof. Thomas Hellström –

thomash@cs.umu.se

www.socrates-project.eu

www.bgu.ac.il

www.bgu.ac.il/abc-robotics