Special Project Grant awards – September 2024

Title of proposal	Empowering Software Engineering Educators: A Large Language Model Toolkit for Advanced Learning and Teaching
Name(s) and institution(s) of Awardee	Cigdem Sengul, Rumyana Neykova and Giuseppe Destefanis, Brunel University London
Date of Award	11 November 2024
Amount of Award	£4,280
Description	This project focuses on integrating Large Language Models (LLMs) into software engineering (SE) education to address challenges posed by the evolving AI-driven industry. It aims to develop an open-source toolkit for AI-based SE labs, providing LLM prompting guides and activities tailored for requirements engineering, software design, and collaborative modeling. Expected outcomes include a reproducible toolkit for SE educators, empirical data on the effectiveness of LLMs in SE education, comparison of various LLM platforms, and best practice guidelines for their responsible and transparent use. These resources aim to support the integration of AI tools into SE education, particularly in the underexplored area of modeling, aligning teaching practices more closely with the needs of an evolving AI-driven industry.

Title of proposal	Cultivating Collaborative Networks for Individual Computing Projects and Dissertations
Name(s) and institution(s) of Awardee	Stephen Riddle, Newcastle University and Mark Zarb, Robert Gordon University
Date of Award	16 December 2024
Amount of Award	£5,000
Description	The project brings together educators, researchers and policymakers in higher education institutions, and employers in the computing industry, with a shared interest in the development and assessment of individual "final year" projects. Inspired by the Disciplinary Commons (Fincher and Tenenberg, 2011) approach, we will share and reflect on practice, and explore evolutions in the way such projects are managed, supervised and assessed. In the face of challenges provided by generative AI and increasing cohort sizes, the goal is to identify where innovations to practice are desirable, as well as sharing, borrowing and adapting successful practice both within the Computing discipline and elsewhere.

Title of proposal	Computer Scientists: Beyond the Spotlight
Name(s) and institution(s) of Awardee	Zoe Tompkins (PI) and Amaninder Singh, The Open University. Lee Clift, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. Atm Shafiul Alam, Queen Mary University of London

Date of Award	16 December 2024
Amount of Award	£5,000
Description	The project is exploring the viability of reforming and decolonising the UK's wider Computer Science Higher Education sector. Through a collaboration with the University of Strathclyde and Queen Mary University of London, we aim to showcase relevant, lesser-known, non-western-centric computer scientists and pioneers; those who are 'beyond the spotlight'. By curating the profiles of these hidden voices, we will build a library collection that moves away from the Euro-American framework so to reflect a wider worldwide knowledge base that celebrates those who have for too long remained on the margins. The repository of these resources will be co-created with students and will be freely available for academics and students via an open-access shared platform.