

Special Project Grant awards – March 2026

Title of proposal	Scaling and Evaluating Across Institutions an Open-Source System for Supporting Collaborative Work in Computing Education
Name(s) and institution(s) of Awardee	Dr Adriana Wilde & Dr Richard Gomer, University of Southampton
Date of Award	1 May 2026
Amount of Award	£5,000
Description	<p>This project supports the further development, dissemination, and multi-institutional evaluation of an open-source web application for managing group coursework in computing education. The system implements automated team allocation using genetic optimisation to balance self-reported skill profiles, alongside structured mechanisms for coordination logging, peer assessment, and supervisory dashboards. It operationalises collaboration as a data-informed process, enabling aggregation of coordination events and accountability signals to support oversight in large cohorts.</p> <p>The underlying research has been peer-reviewed and accepted at the Computing Education Practice (CEP) conference, doi:10.1145/3772338.3772348, and the software is now publicly available on GitHub, https://github.com/samuelkitson/group-coursework. It has been deployed in a second-year undergraduate software engineering module with 300 students. This project will extend evaluation beyond a single institutional context, supporting cross-site deployment, comparative analysis of process signals, and assessment of adaptability across differing curricular and organisational settings.</p>

Title of proposal	The UK DATA Science Hub (DASH-UK): A Discovery Hub of Data Science Datasets
Name(s) and institution(s) of Awardee	Dr Waddah Saeed & Dr Hossein Malekmohamadi, De Montfort University
Date of Award	1 May 2026
Amount of Award	£4,988.35
Description	<p>Postgraduate taught student numbers in UK higher education remain substantial, with nearly 500,000 awards in 2023/24, according to HESA. Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) courses—and related disciplines—are particularly popular and attract large numbers of applicants. The UK alone hosts over one hundred taught master’s programmes in data science and related fields. Moreover, many universities worldwide also teach data science at scale.</p> <p>The capstone project is a key part of postgraduate study, yet many students spend weeks of their limited 3-month project period searching for authentic data. This leads to significant lost research</p>

time and increases the risk of using unreliable datasets, which can undermine academic rigour.

In response to these challenges, we propose the development of practical guidance for robust dataset selection. Furthermore, we will establish a curated repository of authentic data science datasets, categorized by domain (e.g., security, healthcare). This initiative will significantly reduce unproductive searching and duplicated effort across institutions while enhancing overall project quality. While the primary benefit serves the UK higher education community, the repository will be an open resource with potential global impact.