Recruitment/Internship Opening

PhD Student Opening: We are hiring multiple PhD students for Fall 2025 with full scholarships. For more information, please visit the PhD program website: USC PhD Program.

Semester and Summer Internships Opening: We are also opening to research interns in Fall/Spring/Summer semesters, which can be either in-person or remote.

Interested students should send an email to mengyuanli.usc@gmail.com with the subject line: [Prospective PhD/Or Intern Student], and include the following materials:

1. Resume
2. Personal statement detailing your research interests and experience

Recruitment Requirements:

1. Self-assessment of possessing excellent qualities as a PhD student or researcher. This is crucial for enjoying your PhD or research journey. Prospective PhD students should carefully evaluate whether they are suited for a PhD program and if they would like to devote the next few years primarily to research. Excellent qualities for PhD students include, but are not limited to: passion and interest in research, self-motivation, critical and analytical thinking, resilience and perseverance, maintaining a positive attitude in the face of challenges, curiosity, time management skills, academic integrity and responsibility, proactive communication, and teamwork skills.
2. In terms of research, applicants should have a solid foundation in computer science and mathematics, strong programming skills, and some research experience, such as participating in research projects or publishing papers.
3. Bonus, but not required:
    - Proficiency in C language and assembly language
    - Participation in programming or CTF competitions
    - Research experience or coursework in security, systems, or hardware
    - Internship or work experience in related fields

About Me

Mengyuan Li (https://people.csail.mit.edu/mengyuanli/), will join the University of Southern California (USC) as an Assistant Professor in the CS department in August 2024. Before joining USC, he was a postdoctoral researcher at MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL). He holds a PhD from Ohio State University and a bachelor's degree from Shanghai Jiao Tong University. His research interests include system security and privacy, with research topics covering, but not limited to: cloud computing, trusted execution environments, hardware security, enhancing system security and performance through hardware-software co-design, GPU security, system security, side-channel attacks, privacy protection, and AI security.

He has published around 20 papers at top-tier security and privacy conferences, including IEEE S&P, Usenix Security, and CCS, and holds multiple technology patents. He discovered real hardware vulnerabilities in commercial CPUs that have been confirmed and publicly disclosed by vendors through hardware CVEs and multiple security bulletins. Additionally, he collaborates closely with industry teams from AMD, Intel, Alibaba Cloud, Baidu Security, WolfSSL, and others to develop mitigation measures and design commercial trusted hardware systems. He maintains close ties and collaborations with universities worldwide, offering students opportunities to collaborate with global security experts from institutions such as MIT, Cornell University, Technical University of Berlin, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Zhejiang University, and Southern University of Science and Technology. Students may also be recommended for internships at major industry labs in the U.S. during their PhD programs.

About the University and Department

The University of Southern California (USC), founded in 1880, is a top private research university located in Los Angeles, California. USC is renowned for its academic excellence, rich research resources, and diverse campus life. Its engineering, business, and public policy programs are globally acclaimed. Situated in downtown Los Angeles, USC offers excellent weather, geographical advantages, and employment opportunities, ensuring a memorable work-life balance during your PhD journey. USC provides abundant internship and employment opportunities and has a robust alumni network with graduates holding significant positions across various industries. USC is dedicated to nurturing students with a global vision, innovative spirit, and leadership skills, making it an ideal place to pursue excellence and achieve dreams.

USC Computer Science Department: In the latest US News rankings, USC is ranked 28th. Its computer science program is ranked 20th in CSRankings, with the systems field ranked 17th and AI field ranked 14th, featuring numerous renowned scholars and researchers. The newly established School of Advanced Computing and its new building, set to open in August 2024, signify USC's commitment and confidence in the development of its CS program, with rankings expected to steadily rise.

CSRankings: Computer Science Rankings

CSRankings is a metrics-based ranking of top computer science institutions around the world. **Click on a triangle** (▶) to expand areas or institutions. **Click on a name** to go to a faculty member's home page. **Click on a chart icon** (the after a name or institution) to see the distribution of their publication areas as a bar chart. **Click on a Google Scholar icon** to see publications, and **click on the DBLP logo** to go to a DBLP entry. *Applying to grad school? Read this first.* For info on grad stipends, check out CSStipendRankings.org. **Do you find CSrankings useful? Sponsor CSrankings on GitHub.**

Rank institutions in USA by publications from 2014 to 2024

All Areas [off | on]

AI [off | on]

- ▶ Artificial intelligence
- ▶ Computer vision
- ▶ Machine learning
- ▶ Natural language processing
- ▶ The Web & information retrieval

17	▶ Columbia University	7.0	60
18	▶ Princeton University	6.7	63
19	▶ New York University	6.4	74
20	▶ University of Southern California	6.2	69
21	▶ Univ. of California - Los Angeles	6.0	46
22	▶ University of Chicago	5.9	53