



Fully Funded Ph.D. Student Positions

Dr. Yifan Xu, Research Assistant Professor in UT-Oak Ridge Innovation Institute at the University of Tennessee, is recruiting highly motivated Ph.D. students to join his research group beginning in **Spring 2027 or Fall 2027**. The selected students will conduct interdisciplinary research at the intersection of **physical AI, robotics, artificial intelligence, and construction engineering**. Interested applicants should email CV, unofficial transcript and your research interest to Dr. Yifan Xu at yfx@umich.edu

Requirements

Applicants should have:

- Academic background in Computer Science, Robotics, Industrial Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or a closely related field
- Strong programming skills in one or more languages, such as Python, C++, MATLAB, or similar languages
- Strong motivation to conduct interdisciplinary and hands-on robotics research

Experience in one or more of the following areas will make you stand out:

- ROS or ROS 2
- Simulation platforms such as Isaac Sim, MuJoCo, Gazebo, PyBullet
- Robot learning, imitation learning, or reinforcement learning
- Computer vision, 3D perception, or multimodal AI
- Previous publications or robotics research experience

About UT-ORII and the Research Group

UT-ORII is a collaborative research institute that combines the expertise and resources of the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory to advance transformative research in AI, robotics, advanced manufacturing, energy, and other strategic areas. Dr. Xu's research group develops intelligent robotic systems that can perceive, reason, learn, communicate, and physically operate in complex built environments. The group's long-term vision is to advance **Automation and Robotics for Construction** by integrating robot learning, multimodal perception, human-robot collaboration, and autonomous construction operations. To know more about research, please visit: <https://yifan-cloud.github.io/>