

Assistant Professor Polymer and Sustainable
Manufacturing
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Posted Sep. 1, 2024, set to expire Dec. 28, 2024

Job Title	Assistant Professor Polymer and Sustainable Manufacturing
Department	Materials Science and Engineering
Institution	University of Tennessee, Knoxville Knoxville, Tennessee
Date Posted	Sep. 1, 2024
Application Deadline	Dec. 15, 2024
Position Start Date	Aug. 1, 2025
Job Categories	Assistant Professor
Academic Field(s)	Engineering - Other Polymer Science Manufacturing & Quality Engineering
Job Website	https://apply.interfolio.com/152171
Apply Online Here	https://apply.interfolio.com/152171
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Job Description	

The Department of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE) at the Tickle College of Engineering (TCE) of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK), is seeking qualified candidates for a tenure-track faculty position at the rank of Assistant Professor.

This position belongs to a college-level cluster hire in Smart, Sustainable, Energy-Efficient Manufacturing with an emphasis on polymer material processing/manufacturing in the MSE department. This position is for an Assistant Professor to collaborate in promoting research leadership

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and will be in support of two additional new hires at the full professor and associate professor ranks in TCE's other departments. This initiative is in response to the substantial growth in the combined sectors of smart manufacturing and sustainability in the state of Tennessee and the country. The successful applicant would have knowledge of polymer-related science and/or materials engineering, notably in polymer processing or additive manufacturing of polymeric materials and composite materials with a focus on the polymer interactions in these systems. The desired candidate will also have experience in applying smart and sustainable manufacturing to polymer processing, such as processing of stimuli-responsive polymeric systems or the use of machine learning/AI and its application to polymer characterization and/or processing. The successful candidate is expected to promote sustainable manufacturing by reducing energy requirements and material waste as a result of life-cycle optimization, recyclability, and sustainability.

The faculty member with the above skill set will fit well into the university ecosystem, which consists of world-class facilities and researchers at UTK, as well as the Institute for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, the University of Tennessee – Oak Ridge Innovation Institute, and with Oak Ridge National Laboratory through the Manufacturing Demonstration Facility, among others.

About the college: The Tickle College of Engineering is in the midst of an unprecedented period of growth and success including adding over 30 new faculty as part of ambitious cluster hiring campaigns led by Chancellor Donde Plowman and Dean Matthew Mench. The college has set records in research expenditures, enrollment, incoming student GPA, diversity, intellectual property development, and USNWR rank in the past three years. New facilities include the state-of-the art Zeanah Engineering Complex, the University of Tennessee Manufacturing and Design Enterprise (TN-MADE) facility, and the Innovation South building now under construction that will house UTK's Fibers and Composites Manufacturing Facility (FCMF). TCE currently has 185 Tenure/Tenure Track and 67 Non-Tenure Track faculty in its seven academic departments and offers 12 undergraduate, 16 MS, and 15 PhD degree programs. Affiliated with TCE and located in Tullahoma, Tennessee, the UT Space Institute is a hub of aerospace and defense research. The college is also home to eight research centers and three interdisciplinary institutes. With approximately 3,800 undergraduate and 1,150 graduate students, the college sits 29th among public universities in the most recent U.S. News and World Report graduate rankings. Faculty in the college have won 21 early career awards (NSF, DoE, DARPA, AFOSR, and ARO) since 2016. In FY22, the college had NSF HERD research expenditures of \$109 million.

About the department: The MSE department has a vibrant and collegial faculty, working on a variety

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of cutting-edge research topics ranging from high entropy alloys, advanced manufacturing, functional materials, scintillation materials, photovoltaics, to computational materials science. Annual expenditures are over \$6M. The department ranks at 24 among MSE programs in public universities by US News and World Report 2025, and continuously ranks as No. 1 in metallurgical engineering in US institutions by Shanghai Ranking of academic subjects. The Department and University benefit from strong collaborations with the nearby Oak Ridge National Laboratory, which has been bolstered recently by the newly established University of Tennessee-Oak Ridge Innovation Institute (UT-ORII).

Knoxville is the third largest city in Tennessee with a thriving downtown area that UTK campus abuts. This is one of the most beautiful areas of the country, with easy access to miles of inland waterways, pristine state and national parks, diverse cultural opportunities, and a blend of convenient urban and rural settings. UTK is also located within easy driving distance to Asheville, Nashville, Atlanta, Cincinnati, and the Great Smoky Mountains.

Qualifications: Candidates should have a PhD, at time of the appointment, in Materials Science and Engineering, Polymer Engineering, or a closely related field. The successful candidate is expected to establish robust externally funded research programs, produce archival publications in leading scholarly journals, engage in the teaching mission of the department, and proactively serve the discipline and community in support of the mission of UT as the state's land grant university.

Application instructions: The application should be submitted to Interfolio (<https://apply.interfolio.com/152171>), consisting of (1) cover letter articulating the applicant's interest in and qualifications for this position; (2) curriculum vitae; (3) statements describing experience, philosophy, and plans for research; (4) statements describing experience, philosophy, and plans for teaching; and (5) names and contact information for at least three professional references. Review of applications will start on December 16, 2024, and continue until the position is filled. For additional information, contact the chair of the search committee, Prof. Yanfei Gao (ygao7@utk.edu).

All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment and admission without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, veteran status, and parental status, or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law. In accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the University of Tennessee affirmatively states that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or disability in its

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education programs and activities, and this policy extends to employment by the university. Requests for accommodations of a disability should be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Accessibility, 1840 Melrose Avenue Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3560 or oeoa@utk.edu or (865)974-2498. Inquiries and charges of violation of Title VI (race, color and national origin), Title IX (sex), Section 504 (disability), the ADA (disability), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (age), sexual orientation, or veteran status should be directed to the Office of Investigation & Resolution 216 Business Incubator Building 2450 EJ. Chapman Drive Knoxville, Tennessee 37996 or (865)974-0717 or orinvestigations@utk.edu.

EEO/AA Policy

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Contact Information

Please reference Academickeys in your cover letter when applying for or inquiring about this job announcement.

Contact Yanfei Gao

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