

What is the PhD@Work programme?

PhD@Work is aimed at engineers and scientists who are carrying out high-quality research in the normal course of their work. Candidates will be jointly supervised by their employer and experts from the National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland, allowing candidates to obtain a PhD education while remaining in their current employment, making valuable and impactful contributions to both academia and their company.

PhD@Work Programme

NMIS
National Manufacturing
Institute Scotland

Web. www.nmis.scot



What is a PhD@Work?

A PhD is the highest postgraduate qualification offered by universities. PhDs are research-based degrees. In the PhD@Work programme, the candidate prepares an original research question/proposal in collaboration with their employer and an academic supervisor at NMIS and explores that topic in depth. NMIS is operated by the University of Strathclyde which allows us to offer PhD@Work as a study option within our institute.

The PhD@Work programme is for those who are currently employed, who are looking to build on what they studied during their undergraduate and/or master's degrees, and wish to carry out research on a particular topic/challenge relating to their field of activity and expertise. Candidates will work with an academic supervisor at NMIS and an industry supervisor, ultimately contributing to knowledge and expanding the boundaries of a particular field of research. Sometimes an additional supervisor from Strathclyde joins the team as well depending on the topic area.

How does the PhD@Work programme work?

Candidates will devise a PhD project, co-created with their employer and academics at NMIS, ideally focused on challenges relevant to them and their company. There is flexibility on the time involved, and candidates undertaking a PhD@Work typically would do so on a part-time basis, allowing the research to progress in parallel and to be blended with the business needs of the employer.

Research projects are usually carried out at the candidate's workplace. Where appropriate, candidates may come to NMIS to use the research facilities, and to interact with supervisors and other colleagues. There may also be the option to undertake formal training in research-related skills and practices as part of NMIS's Researcher Development Programme. Prior experience and employer training and development programmes will also be considered when preparing an individual training portfolio to accompany the PhD research programme.

What are the benefits to the candidate?

A PhD has traditionally been viewed as training and development towards a career in academia. However, the modern PhD is a far more flexible qualification, focused on the development of valuable research and leadership skills, career development and industry-specific training designed to help the candidate communicate and apply their research beyond a university setting. Candidates will also benefit from a "cohort experience", joining other PhD researchers from their own companies, other companies and current full-time students - presenting valuable networking, peer learning and support opportunities. More than 70% of PhD graduates in the UK progress to non-academic careers, and research indicates that PhD graduates have higher earning potential, particularly in engineering.

What are the benefits to the company?

The company will be able to access the valuable knowledge created during the candidates study, with the potential to exploit this for commercial gain, whilst benefitting from publicity and marketing opportunities associated with conducting world-leading research. This will create new opportunities for growth and innovation through the collaboration between NMIS and the partnering company. Employers will also have the opportunity to engage with world-leading researchers and innovators at NMIS who work within their research area(s), enabling knowledge exchange and networking. PhD@Work also improves employee retention: candidates are far more likely to remain with their employer compared to other colleagues, given the investment employers have made. Case studies can be accessed at: <https://www.strath.ac.uk/engineering/workingwithindustry/industrialshowcase/pgrshowcase/>



Why NMIS?

NMIS is driving the future of manufacturing through innovation: we are a magnet for advanced manufacturing in Scotland. Our sector expertise includes: aerospace, defense, wind and green energy, semiconductors and space; our technological underpinnings cover digital & data driven engineering, materials & process engineering, advanced manufacturing and circularity. We strive to deliver impact at scale and at pace, in keeping with our operating University's founding ethos as a "place of useful learning".

NMIS was founded as a resource for Scotland: we work collaboratively with many Scottish HEI and in working with NMIS, employers have a gateway to that network. As a member of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, we are uniquely placed at the nexus of industry, Government and higher education to deliver on innovation and workforce development.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

NMIS are committed to creating collaborative, inclusive and supportive working environments which enable high-quality, innovative and industry-focused research. In the PhD@Work programme, we will focus on ensuring diversity across the programme and will take a proactive approach to ensure equal access to the opportunity for underrepresented groups, those with varying backgrounds and working patterns, career stages, and those with protected characteristics. Our supervisors undergo extensive training not just in supervision but in EDI to give our candidates the best experience possible.

Costs and timelines

The PhD@Work programme has flexible timeline options and fee structures to suit different individual and organisational needs. Candidates would typically join the programme on a part-time basis, spending 50% of their time over six years in completing the PhD. It may be possible to reduce this duration in some cases, and candidates can exercise an option to register initially for a two-year Master's by Research (MPhil) degree, with an option to transfer to a PhD degree being available subject to satisfactory initial progress. Prior learning that may contribute towards a PhD may also be considered in some cases. Current fee levels can be accessed at <https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/feesfunding/fees/> but please get in touch to discuss your specific requirements.

Find out more

To find out more about the programme and to contact us to discuss the options available please contact either Dr Dorothy Evans (dorothy.evans@strath.ac.uk) or Dr Alison Robinson (a.robinson@strath.ac.uk), NMIS Industrial Doctorate Centre Managers.