

Industry PhD Program Rules

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1 Program Overview and Objectives

CSIRO's Industry PhD (iPhD) Program brings together an industry partner, a university and CSIRO to co-develop a four-year industry-focussed PhD project. The program supports a three-way partnership aiming to train new researchers in critical areas and facilitate long-term beneficial interaction between universities, CSIRO, and industry. CSIRO's Industry PhD program is being delivered as part of the Australian Government's support to grow university research commercialisation.

The objectives of CSIRO's iPhD program are to:

- Develop new or strengthen relationships between research organisations and industry
- Provide PhD students with opportunities to develop translational research skills, establish professional networks and increase future career prospects
- Deliver industry research solutions and specialised knowledge to solve challenges and create new products
- Provide universities with a deeper understanding of industry requirements, priorities, and culture
- Enhance innovation and commercialisation through research organisation and industry knowledge transfer
- Support research projects which are aligned to Government priorities to help strengthen Australia's economic growth and productivity

2 Program Requirements

2.1 Research Projects

PhD research projects must:

- Align with CSIRO and Government priorities
- Address industry problems while complying with university PhD program requirements
- Be allocated a primary location, where the student will be based (primarily) for the project. However, all supervisors must provide the student with sufficient access to facilities and infrastructure, if required for the project
- Be up to four years duration, if completed on a full-time basis. However, the project duration can be subject to university candidature policy.
- Include at least 3-months of project related activities under the guidance of the industry partner. This part of the PhD is referred to as the *Industry Engagement Component*.

2.2 Industry Partners

Industry partners must:

- Be an Australian company or an international company with a registered ABN or ACN. Government and not-for-profit organisations are excluded. International companies must

have a substantial presence in Australia (such as research, development, primary production, manufacturing facilities and activities).

- Commit \$12,000 per annum for up to four years. Total commitment of up to \$48,000 (excluding GST)
- Provide a suitably experienced staff member to be part of the PhD student supervisory panel for up to four years (see [Supervisory Panel Agreement](#))
- Guide the student in undertaking a three-month Industry Engagement Component. If the student is required to relocate during the Industry Engagement Component, the industry partner is required to fund travel and living expenses (see [Appendix 2](#))
- Provide access to facilities and infrastructure required to undertake the project.

2.3 CSIRO Business Units

CSIRO Business Units must:

- Provide and fund a suitably experienced researcher to be part of the PhD student supervisory panel for up to four years (see [Supervisory Panel Agreement](#))
- Provide access to required facilities and infrastructure.

2.4 Universities

Universities must:

- Provide and fund a suitably experienced researcher to supervise the PhD student for up to four years (see [Supervisory Panel Agreement](#))
- Advertise, recruit, and enrol the PhD student with support from CSIRO
- Provide access to required facilities and infrastructure
- Provide a fee off-set for the PhD student
- Monitor and assess the student in accordance with the university's Higher Degree by Research policies.

2.5 Supervisory Panel Agreement

The supervisory panel consists of university, industry, and CSIRO supervisors. All parties are required to jointly supervise the student in an agreed capacity. Supervisors should have complementary, relevant disciplinary knowledge with roles and availability discussed and agreed upon before application submission to ensure that the student can be properly supported throughout their PhD.

The Primary Supervisor, allocated from the university, is responsible for monitoring and assessing the PhD student progress in accordance with the university's PhD academic requirements. Industry and CSIRO supervisors may need to meet supervisory requirements of the participating university.

The Primary Supervisor will be allocated a certain amount of time each week to support the PhD student as per university workload conditions. The time commitment for the Industry/CSIRO supervisors will depend on the project, university policy and student location. Supervisor time commitment varies and may range from half an hour to two hours per week. However, this is a generalisation and can vary during the PhD journey, as the PhD students may need more (or less) time in different phases of their research.

2.6 Students

To be eligible, PhD students must:

- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or Australian Permanent Resident
- Meet university PhD admission and English language requirements
- Not have previously completed a PhD
- Not be in receipt of another primary scholarship
- Be able to commence the program in the year of the offer
- Enrol as a full-time PhD student. However, part-time arrangements may be considered if approved by the supervisory team and in accordance with university policy
- Be situated at the agreed project location(s) and, if required, comply with the host university's external enrolment procedures

When enrolled, PhD students must:

- Maintain satisfactory progress in all PhD academic requirements of the university (Confirmation of Candidature, Research Progress Reviews, etc.)
- Participate in the career and professional development training delivered by CSIRO
- Undertake an Industry Engagement component with the industry partner (see [Appendix 2](#))
- Seek approval for Personal Leave longer than that outlined in the [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#) from the host university, CSIRO, and the industry partner.

Additional details for PhD students are outlined in the CSIRO Industry PhD *Program's Scholarship Terms and Conditions* available on our [website](#).

2.7 Reporting and Evaluation

The supervisory team and student will be requested to participate in feedback surveys and evaluations to measure program outcomes and support future improvement of the program. Data collection will occur at various stages throughout the PhD project and will utilise specific evaluation indicators. This may include the supervisor experience, the student experience, level of support received during candidature, direct project outcomes and PhD completion timeframes.

3 Project Funding and Support

3.1 Funding Overview

The iPhD program is funded by the Australian Government and the industry partner for up to four years. Funding for each year consists of three components:

- *Student Scholarship* of \$45,000 comprising of:
 - \$33,000 (2023 rate) provided by the Government
 - \$12,000 provided by the industry partner
- *Project Expense and Development package* of up to \$13,000 provided by the Government for research operating costs and research skill development. All proposed expenses must be jointly approved by the university, CSIRO, and industry partner supervisor. Project expenses may include laboratory consumables, fieldwork and travel costs associated with the project

and/or professional development activities, such as conferences and research training workshops. The package cannot be used to fund items which are not directly related to the project, such as professional association membership fees.

- *Student career and professional development training* funding provided by the Government, and developed/delivered by CSIRO. The training builds skills needed to deliver industry-focussed research including innovation, entrepreneurship, and leadership. This a mandatory component requiring a time commitment of approximately three to five days each year. The training is curated by iPhD Program Office and is delivered alongside the student's PhD program.

3.2 Payment Processes and Conditions

- *Student Scholarship*. The iPhD program transfers \$33,000 (excluding GST) and industry partner transfers \$12,000 (excluding GST) in annual instalments to the university over a period of up to four years.
- *Project Expense and Development package*. The iPhD program transfers \$13,000 (including GST) in annual instalments over a period of up to four years to the supervising organisation where the student is primarily based for the project. Unused project expense and development funds may not be rolled over to the subsequent year. Where costs are expected to be greater than \$13,000 per annum, the supervisors must come to an agreement on how this will be funded. The Project Expense and Development Package funds are an auditable scholarship benefit and must be expended in accordance with the travel and purchasing policies of the organisation at the student's primary location.
- *Student career and professional development training* funding is transferred by the Government to iPhD program to deliver training directly to PhD students.

3.3 Indexation

- *Student Scholarship*. The \$33,000 amount is for the 2023 grant year and *will be indexed* in future years in accordance with Chapter 5 Parts 5-6 of the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#). The \$12,000 scholarship top-up provided by the industry partner is not indexed.
- *Project Expense and Development package*. The \$13,000 provided by the iPhD program is fixed (not indexed).

3.4 Taxation

Scholarships paid to full-time students for educational purposes are classified as exempt income in accordance with the [Income Tax Assessment Act 1997](#). Part-time scholarships are taxable. Any personal taxation circumstances should be discussed with taxation professionals.

4 Project Development Stages

4.1 Expression of Interest

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for iPhD projects are called for each year in February, and can be initiated from either CSIRO Business Units, Universities, or Industry. iPhD Program staff assist with project scoping, partner communication, eligibility checks and support the submission of the formal EOI paperwork. Details such as project title, description, supervisor panel details, student location, initial IP considerations and high-level approvals are required. For access to the EOI form and to commence the EOI process, please contact the [iPhD program office](#).

All EOIs require support and high-level approval from CSIRO, the University and the industry partner prior to submission. Specifically, the CSIRO supervisor must seek support from their Business Unit Research Director; the university supervisor must seek support from their Graduate Research School; and the industry partner must show approval to participate.

4.1.1 Project Selection

All formal EOIs will be assessed against iPhD program eligibility criteria. Should the application round be over-subscribed, the relevant CSIRO Business Unit Research Directors will be consulted to assist with the final selection process. Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- The potential for the project to support deep long-term research-industry collaboration
- Alignment of the research project with Government priorities
- The ability of CSIRO, university, and Industry to support the project
- Projects which involve regional universities and/or indigenous partners may be prioritised.

4.2 Collaboration Agreement

A Collaboration Agreement is required to be established between CSIRO, the university and industry partner. The PhD student is also required to sign a [Postgraduate Student Agreement](#), which aligns to the terms and conditions of the Collaboration Agreement.

The Collaboration Agreement highlights privacy, confidentiality, insurance, funding arrangements, project duration, Intellectual Property (IP) and other legal aspects of the program. Within the agreement there are four different IP options available. To view our Collaboration Agreement template and IP options, please contact the [iPhD program office](#).

Any specific IP considerations should be identified during the scoping of the project, and any new IP created during the Project (other than copyright in the student's thesis, which the student retains) will be owned and licensed through the Collaboration Agreement in accordance with CSIRO's [IP Principles](#) and the Australian Government's [Higher Education Research Commercialisation \(HERC\) Intellectual Property Framework](#).

4.3 Student Recruitment Process

4.3.1 Project Advertising

The university has primary responsibility for advertising projects, however the iPhD program Office will also assist. All projects are advertised on the university and CSIRO scholarships websites. Students must submit expressions of interest through the university website. The university undertakes student eligibility checking against PhD admission criteria.

4.3.2 Student Selection

Eligible students are identified by the university and provided to the supervisory panel. The supervisor panel will shortlist, interview and nominate the most suitable student to formally apply for the scholarship. Selections are based on:

- Experience relevant to the field of research
- Research experience and academic excellence
- Suitability for the project
- Motivation for undertaking an industry-led PhD project.

4.3.3 Student Agreement

The successful student, CSIRO and university sign a *CSIRO Postgraduate Student Agreement*. The agreement aligns with the terms and conditions of the *Collaboration Agreement* and covers IP arrangements, publications rights and other legal aspects. To view our Student Agreement template, please contact the *iPhD program office*. To support a students' development, project publications should be encouraged, but some conditions may be imposed to protect Project IP and Confidential Information of the parties involved.

5 Changes, Disputes and Termination

5.1 Changes to Supervisory Team or Project

Changes to project direction or supervision must be endorsed by the supervisory team and approved by the University. The *Collaboration Agreement* must be amended before any changes come into effect.

5.2 Disputes

Disputes are managed according to the clauses set out in the *Collaboration Agreement*. The iPhD program will offer support to help resolve disputes and is committed to assist the supervisory team and student for the full program duration.

5.3 Termination and Withdrawal

Terminations and Withdrawal clauses are outlined in the [Collaboration Agreement](#). To protect the student, withdrawal of any party under unforeseen circumstances is managed in good faith between the continuing parties to determine alternative project arrangements.

Appendix 1: Project Development Stages

Call for Expressions of Interest for Projects - February 2023

EOI Process

Feb - May 2023

1. **Generate Project Idea** - Project ideas may be initiated by the university, CSIRO or industry partners
2. **Check Project Suitability** - Projects must conform with CSIRO and Government priorities and align with university requirements
3. **Obtain CSIRO Support** - Projects must have CSIRO Research Director support before submission
4. **Progress Project Idea** - iPhD program staff help scope project and work through logistics (student location, supervisor time commitment and roles)
5. **Submit Formal EOI** - CSIRO researcher, university and industry partner mutually agree upon and submit a formal EOI
6. **Gain Formal EOI Approval** - iPhD program staff seek formal EOI approval from CSIRO and the University's Graduate Research School

Collaboration Agreement

May - Aug 2023

7. **Identify Key IP Considerations** - Any specific project IP arrangements are discussed. The iPhD program offers four different IP options
8. **Draft Collaboration Agreement** - iPhD program staff draft a Collaboration Agreement between the university, industry partner and CSIRO
9. **Perform Internal Review** - iPhD program staff share the draft Collaboration Agreement within CSIRO for review
10. **Perform External Review** - iPhD program staff share the draft Collaboration Agreement to the university and industry partner for review
11. **Finalise Agreement** - All parties mutually agree upon the Collaboration Agreement

Student Recruitment

Aug - Dec 2023

12. **Project Advertising** - The university will lead project advertisement with support from CSIRO
13. **Student Application** - The university will manage student application process, ensuring student meets PhD admission criteria
14. **Student Selection** - CSIRO, industry, and university supervisors will nominate a preferred student
15. **Student Enrolment** - The university will issue a letter of offer and manage enrolment

Project Commencement – February 2024

Appendix 2: Industry Engagement Component

The Industry Engagement Component is a requirement of the CSIRO Industry PhD program. It aims to ensure that the needs of industry guide the development, activities, and outcomes of the PhD project. It provides an opportunity for the student to work under the guidance of their industry partner on research and development activities contributing to their PhD project.

Eligible Activities

Activities should provide students with relevant tools and experience to better contextualise and apply research in an industry setting. Potential activities may include:

- Understanding the research needs of the industry partner and/or the broader industry
- Undertaking practical research translation activities under the guidance of the industry partner
- Testing research assumptions and innovations in an industry setting with end-users

Supervision

The industry partner must ensure suitable supervision of all activities at their sites. All industry supervisors must meet requirements as specified by the university and may be required to be registered on the university's system.

Additional costs

If the student is required to live away from the primary location of the project during the Industry Engagement Component, then unless otherwise agreed, the industry partner will be required to fund additional travel and living expenses. If the Industry Engagement Component is likely to include international travel, further details, including how it will be funded, will be required prior to the finalisation of the Collaboration Agreement due to the additional cost and complexity.

Publication

Research output from the Industry Engagement Component may be included in the thesis subject to satisfying publication, confidentiality and intellectual property arrangements contained in the Collaboration Agreement.

Planning and reporting

Specific planning and reporting requirements may be required in accordance with the university's policies. The university is responsible for ensuring that any additional agreements for the Industry Engagement Component are consistent with the Collaboration Agreement.

Location

Ideally, the Industry Engagement Component should take place at the industry partner's premises. However, activities can be undertaken remotely, for example at CSIRO or the university, within reason. A mixture of online and in-person engagement is also acceptable.

Duration

The minimum duration of the Industry Engagement Component is three months (60 full-time workdays). The Industry Engagement Component should ideally be completed part-time or in short blocks strategically placed throughout the PhD to encourage ongoing engagement between the industry partner and the student.

Eligibility under Government RTP Internship guidelines

It is intended that the Industry Engagement Component will support the student to undertake their industry PhD project and will also meet the requirements for the additional weighting under RTP guidelines. Further information is available about what constitutes an eligible internship is available at <https://www.education.gov.au/research-block-grants/research-training-program/faqs-research-training-program-industry-internship-weighting>