Industry PhD

Points for Discussion with Industry Partners

Industry PhD value proposition

- Fresh perspectives and innovative solutions
- Ability to connect to Flinders' community, research expertise and our ecosystem
- Support the development of the future workforce, research translation and innovation
- Reputational increase, which could be both corporate social responsibility and evidence-based practices, products and services
- Knowledge, skills and capability of PhD students
- Access to Flinders facilities and resources
- Development of industry partner's employees through knowledge exchange opportunities.

Your College and your research strengths and expertise

Potential industry partners will be interested in your strengths and expertise and how they might complement their own in a way that helps them solve their problems.The following questions can help identify your strengths.

- What are your College and discipline research strengths and areas of expertise?
- What differentiates your research from other universities?
- What is unique to your research?
  What differentiates your research students? What opportunities do they have that other universities' PhDs don't?

In considering these questions, your responses might include:

- Research translation and impact
- Research methodology
- Resources, equipment, facilities
- Research network and community

Steps to engage with a potential Industry Partner and what happens next

1. Refer to the key points for initial discussion with industry partners below.

2. If you and the industry partner determine that there is a good opportunity to collaborate through an Industry PhD, the next steps are:

   - Gain confirmation of support from the relevant industry partner delegate - this could be an email or letter of support to express interest in an Industry PhD.
   - Completion of the Research Collaboration Agreement is developed in consultation with the industry partner.

The Office of Graduate Research and Research Development and Support teams will work with you and the industry partner through this process.

More Information

Contact Office of Graduate Research
+61 8201 5427
hdr.engagement@flinders.edu.au

Key points for initial discussion

To help ensure a successful Industry PhD collaboration below is a checklist of key points and questions to discuss with potential industry partners.

It is important for both parties to discuss in relation to the potential impacts, roles and responsibilities involved in committing to an industry PhD.

Key Points	Discussed
Building a relationship with industry • It is important to build a positive working relationship with your industry partner built on trust • HDR Supervisors who have been successful with industry partners advise that first impressions matter: scope the meeting location beforehand so you can be on time, purchase refreshments, listen, be part of the solution, always give back to industry, e.g. take on some actions from the meeting. • What are the questions industry needs to be answered? This will result in impact and translational research. • Universities and industry use different languages – be mindful of this and take time to explain university-speak/acronyms	
The length of a PhD project – up to 3-4 years:	
The goals/objectives and expectations of each organisation	
The research challenge/problem from an industry perspective including: • Industry context • Potential impact • The broad scope and aims	
Recruiting and selecting a student • Industry partners can be involved in the selection process	
The research project from a university perspective including • Areas of interest and expertise • Research outcomes are not guaranteed, that there may be unexpected outcomes or challenges • Explanation of the criteria that PhD projects must meet regarding originality, contribution of knowledge and scope of the research problem • The overall structure of a PhD, including the importance of limiting changes to the project scope after the confirmation of candidature	
Key stakeholders • Who are the key stakeholders for both organisations? • Who has the authority in the industry partner to approve the partnership, including funding and other resources? • Are there any other organisations who might become a third or fourth party to the collaboration?	
The industry internship • Focus on workplace learning experience of PhD (to meet Fair Work Act requirements) • Minimum of 60 FTE days • An eligible industry internship of 3 months minimum must be agreed in written form with a research-end user within the first 18 months of candidature • Supervision required by industry partner • Part of the thesis project, or an aligned project	
Resources • Funding: Does the industry partner need to consider funding or budget cycles? What is the approval process for the industry partner? • Joint supervision throughout 3-4 years and during the industry internship • Equipment, facilities, materials • Data, access to relevant information or access to a population	

Key Points	Discussed
Intellectual property, confidentiality, the thesis and publications • Unless otherwise specified in a Research Collaboration Agreement, IP is assigned to the industry partner – students generally assign IP to Flinders to assign to the industry partner • Students retain copyright in their thesis • Confidentiality clauses can be included if there are concerns regarding publications or the thesis	
Recruiting and selecting a student • Options include current PhD (prior to Confirmation of Candidature), Honours student, or advertise project with an industry internship opportunity • Industry partners can be involved in the selection process • Students must meet PhD admission requirements identified in PhD Course Rules	
A timeline for the project • Potential start date of thesis project • Major milestones – industry and academic	
Communication • Reporting requirements of industry partner	
Flinders responsibilities • Flinders will supervise, mentor, develop and support students and explain their responsibilities and what is expected • Students are bound by HDR policies, Course Rules and Charter and Research Integrity, which enables Flinders to manage progress and deal with any unexpected issues	
Industry partner responsibilities • Hosting the student on an industry internship and providing PhD supervision as per the Research Collaboration Agreement • Providing a safe work environment • If requested, we can provide a copy of the Research Collaboration Agreement template for more information	