Kickstart your career with CSIRO’s Industry PhD

Earn your PhD in partnership with industry, Queensland University of Technology, and Australia’s national science agency, CSIRO.

The CSIRO Industry PhD Program (iPhD) is a research training program, focusing on applied research that benefits industry by solving real-world challenges. It aims to produce the next generation of innovation leaders with the skills to work at the interface of research and industry in Australia.

The opportunity
- Admission to QUT’s PhD program
- A four-year scholarship valued at $46,000 per annum (2024 rate)
- A project expense and development package of up to $13,000 per annum
- Supervision by CSIRO, an industry partner and QUT
- A 60-day Industry Engagement component with the industry partner
- A structured professional development and training package

Successful students will receive a PhD on completion.

Eligibility requirements
The student must:
- Be an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident, or a New Zealand citizen.
- Meet QUT’s PhD admission requirements.
- Meet QUT’s English language requirements.
- Not have previously completed a PhD.
- Be able to commence the Program in the year of the offer.
- Enrol as a full-time PhD student.
- Be prepared to be located at the project location(s) that QUT has approved and, if required, comply with the QUT’s external enrolment procedures.

Application process
- Applicants submit an expression of interest (EOI) following the instructions on the QUT’s webpage or directly by emailing the supervisory team. Applications are open until position is filled.
- The EOI is assessed by the supervisory team and shortlisted applicants are interviewed.
- The supervisory team nominates a preferred applicant.
- The application is assessed by QUT against PhD admission criteria.
- QUT will issue a letter of offer for the program if all conditions have been satisfied.

Project overview

Enriching logistics and warehousing work using cobots and robotics, and work design principles

The COVID pandemic has led to a significant increase in demand for warehousing and logistics workers due to the shift to online channels. However, the popularity of working from home has created a serious shortage of workers in the sector. To address this issue, this study explores the potential of robotics (collaborative robots that work alongside human operators) and robotics to increase the attractiveness, productivity, efficiency, and safety of warehouse and logistics work. Work design research has identified factors associated with improved motivation, performance, absenteeism, and safety. The first study will compare traditional warehouses with those where robotics and cobotics have been implemented to understand how this technology affects work design and quality. The second stage will involve interviews with managers and researchers experienced in implementing cobotics to identify alternative approaches and their impact on employee well-being. The studies will build a framework for enhancing the quality and productivity of work and to provide recommendations for improving the design of robotic and cobotics-enhanced work. The framework will be tested for viability through a survey of workers who operate in robotic and cobotics-enhanced warehouses. The research aims to provide insights to support the roll-out of emerging collaborative technologies in workplaces to improve both productivity and worker well-being.

Ideal student skillset
- Bachelor and postgraduate qualifications in relevant fields such as psychology, marketing, and management.
- Interest and knowledge of emerging technologies such as AI and robotics.
- Experience using and interpreting qualitative and quantitative research methods and tools (e.g., NVivo, SPSS, R).
- Strong report and research writing skills.
- A desire to work in applied research and complete an internship with the industry partner.

SUPERVISORY TEAM DETAILS

Queensland University of Technology
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CSIRO
Claire Mason
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A leading retailer
An allocated industry supervisor

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
- Visit the iPhD website
- Contact the Graduate Research School
- Contact the iPhD team

PROJECT LOCATIONS

Primary location
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane City QLD 4000

Industry Engagement component
At premises owned by the leading retailer, located in QLD and NSW

Other potential locations
CSIRO Dutton Park, QLD 4069