

Joint PhD Program

Supervisor handbook



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Important dates*

Round 1, 2024

24 November (2023)	Call for projects opens
21 January	Call for projects closes
9 February	Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC) approves projects for advertisement
14 February–17 March	Expressions of Interest (EOI) open
20 March–15 April	Supervisors shortlist and interview applicants
24 April	Academy Joint Interview Panel (AJIP) shortlist applicants for interview
11–16 May	Exam and interviews
24 May	Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC) reviews shortlisted students
3 June	Offers sent to students
10 June	Deadline to accept offers
July	Cohort commences

Round 2, 2024

4 June	Call for projects opens
11 August	Call for projects closes
28 August	Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC) approves projects for advertisement
5 September–3 October	Expressions of Interest (EOI) open
8–30 October	Supervisors shortlist and interview applications
6 November	Academy Joint Interview Panel (AJIP) shortlist applicants for interview
14–21 November	Exam and interviews
28 November	Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC) reviews shortlisted students
9 December	Offers sent to students
16 December	Deadline to accept offers
December	Cohort commences at IITD
January (2025)	Cohort commences at UQ

*Dates are subject to change, and are available [here](#)

UQ-IIT Delhi Research Academy

The University of Queensland (UQ) and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) share a vision for success, and have partnered to deliver global impact through research excellence. This joint venture focuses on a transnational joint PhD program, designed to attract the best global talent to work on goal-directed, cross-disciplinary grand challenges.

Overview

Established in 2018, the UQ-IITD Research Academy is building long-term and mutually beneficial research networks between Australia and India. The Academy aims to attract elite students, academics, researchers, and scientists who are of interest to Australia, India, and the global community, and who align with UQ and IITD research strengths.

Over time, the Academy expects to invite prominent research institutes in and around New Delhi to join as Associate Partners in order to expand research into a broad, multidisciplinary collaboration spanning medicine, biology, biotechnology, agriculture, STEM, humanities, and economics.

The partnership will also support a mobility or fellowship scheme to enable academics and postdoctoral fellows to spend time at each institute, expanding and deepening research collaborations, and offering career development opportunities for early career researchers.

The UQ-IITD Academy will yield significant benefits to both institutions:

- Enhanced research links, enriching the research endeavours of both institutions and enabling interdisciplinary research at grand scales.
- Opportunities to access international research and industry funding.
- Increased industry engagement to support international internships and placements for students.
- Increased number of PhD graduates and greater contribution to national research outputs.
- Increased enrolments from the best and brightest students as a result of attractive program offerings and expanded mobility opportunities.
- Opportunities for UQ and IITD to attract elite students from countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal into the program.
- Elevated institutional profiles nationally and globally for both UQ and IITD.

Joint PhD program

The UQ-IITD Research Academy enables students from both UQ and IITD to enrol in a joint PhD with supervision from academics at both institutions. Upon completion, students are awarded a PhD degree from both UQ and IITD.

The partnership allows for scale and sustainability. Current modelling aims for a steady state of approximately 150 PhD candidates by the 10th year of operation. By the end of the 10th year, the Academy expects to have graduated more than 250 candidates. Alumni will represent a broad range of disciplines and are expected to be well-placed in industry R&D labs and academic institutions.

Student value proposition

Students of the UQ-IITD Research Academy will:

- gain a global joint qualification from two leading institutions in four years
- receive a generous scholarship, including a living stipend and UQ tuition fee scholarship for four years, as well as a travel grant
- benefit from global expertise via dual supervision between UQ and IITD, as well as potential collaboration with industry
- have access to broad research and industry networks in India and Australia.

Industry linkages

Industry partners support PhD students from their second year of the program. The UQ-IITD Research Academy expects one third of students will be supported by industry funding and through direct industry engagement determined by their research projects.

Student types

UQ-IITD Research Academy has two types of students: i-students and q-students.

- **i-students:** Indian nationals and international applicants (with citizenship other than Australia) can be considered for admission as i-students. i-students spend their first year of study at IITD before completing one year (second year) at UQ. They then complete the remainder of their studies at IITD.
- **q-students:** Australian domestic students can be considered for admission as q-students. q-students spend their first year of study at UQ before completing one year (or more) at IITD. They then complete the remainder of their studies at UQ.

Student eligibility

Applicants must meet minimum entry requirements:

- **Minimum qualifications for i-students**
- **Minimum qualifications for q-students**

Candidature

It is expected that candidature will be up to a maximum of four years in all disciplines. Students are enrolled simultaneously at UQ and IITD for the duration of the program, and are considered a student at both institutions. Students are supported by a supervisory team comprised of researchers from UQ and IITD. Students may be required to carry out some coursework as approved by their supervisory team. All students participate in the program as full-time, on-campus students.

Annual milestone requirements ensure the candidate's progress in the PhD program; these should be conducted by an approved panel at the institution where the student is located. All candidature management workflows occur through the UQ Student Portal, which can be accessed by joint PhD students and supervisors from both UQ and IITD.

At the end of the first year, all students are expected to have completed their coursework requirements and have a project proposal that they are able to defend (including a literature review, identification of a gap in existing research, a problem statement, and an initial project plan).

Research team

Each project requires joint principal advisors, with a minimum of one principal advisor from each institution. Where appropriate, a third supervisor can be nominated from industry. Additional associate advisors from IITD and UQ can form part of the supervision team

Intellectual property

The IP model for the UQ-IITD Academy is outlined in the collaboration agreement. It stipulates all IP generated in joint collaboration is vested in the respective institutions and that a Joint IP Protocol will be developed in due course. Students are not a party to the collaboration agreement between the two institutions. Students will, therefore, need to assign their IP to either IITD or UQ through an IP Deed of Assignment. The JV entity then has the ability to transact more easily with industry via a tripartite contract with industry and student IP.

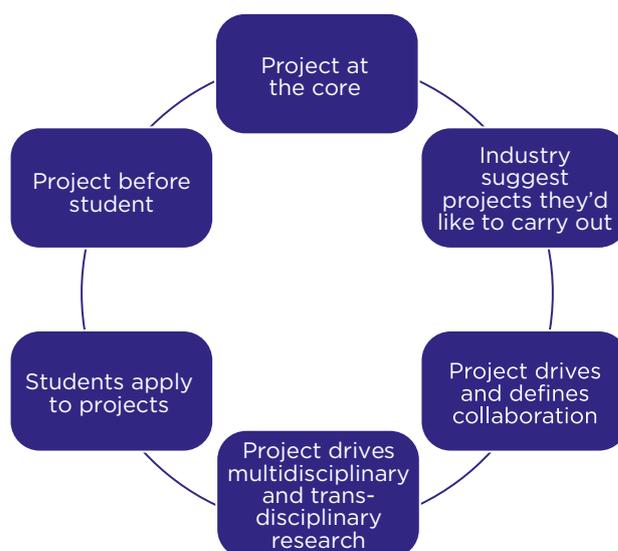
Project creation

Projects and collaboration terms are decided and approved prior to students applying. An 'outcomes orientated' focus on the project ensures:

- faculty collaboration and expertise
- student attachment to project
- student selection (i.e. best fit for project)
- multidisciplinary approaches (where possible)
- focus on problems that need to be solved, as opposed to problems that can be solved.

Projects will align with one or more of the interdisciplinary themes of the UQ-IITD partnership: Healthcare and Biotechnology, Quantum Technologies, Digital Futures and Artificial Intelligence, Societal Transformations and Livelihoods, Clean Energy and Sustainability, and Advanced Materials and Manufacturing.

Figure 1 Projects as a vehicle for wider engagement



Scholarships and funding obligations

UQ-IITD Research Academy is a centrally funded program both at UQ and IITD, however advisory teams are expected to contribute to costs as outlined below.

Scholarships for i-students

Eligible i-students receive a scholarship, which comprises a full tuition fee scholarship at UQ and living allowance while in Australia, a travel grant and a single policy for overseas student health cover (15 months) during this time. i-students will be eligible for a monthly stipend while in India. When considering your ability to participate in the program, please consider the following funding obligations of supervision teams, students and the Academy:

- Project running costs are borne by supervisory teams in each institution.
- The Academy offers a scholarship to cover the costs associated with UQ tuition fees, annual stipend for the year in Australia (AU\$32,192*), relocation grant (AU\$5,200*) and Overseas Student Health Cover (single cover).
- The student will be responsible for the cost of **IITD tuition fees for years in India (Rs 27,000* per semester)** and the UQ Student Services and Amenities fee (AU\$326*) for their year in Australia.
- i-students are to be supported in year 1 (Rs 37,000/month) and years 3 and 4 (Rs 42,000/month) through one of the following mechanisms:
 1. Project funds of the IITD supervisor
 2. Self-supported through an external fellowship (CSIR/UGC etc).
 3. IITD funds if IITD supervisor has vacant institute PhD slots.
- The Academy will provide a top-up of Rs 10,000 to all i-students.
- Scholarships are awarded for a maximum of 4 years.

Scholarships for q-students

Eligible q-students receive a scholarship, which comprises a living allowance and tuition fee scholarship for the duration of the program (while in Australia and India), and a travel grant. When considering your ability to participate in the program, please consider the following funding obligations of supervision teams, students and the Academy:

- Project running costs are borne by supervisory teams in each institution.
- The Academy covers the costs associated with UQ tuition fees, annual stipend (AU\$32,192*), and travel grant (AU\$2,500*) and UQ travel insurance for 12 months.
- The student is responsible for the cost of UQ Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) for the duration of their program but will pay a reduced, remote rate whilst at IITD (Maximum SSAF payable each year AU\$326*).
- Scholarships are awarded for a maximum of 4 years.

Funding for supervisors

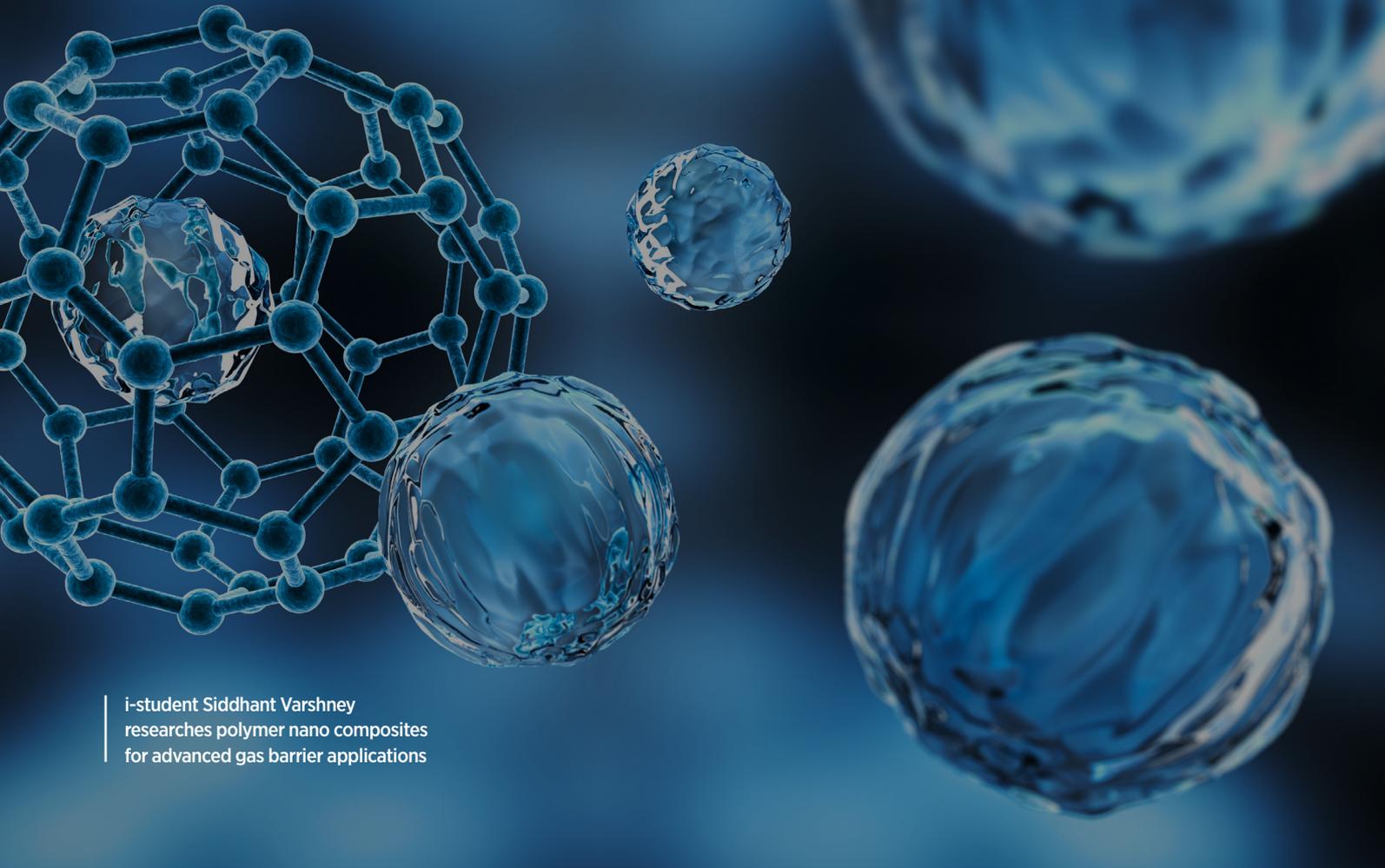
The Academy provides supervisors with funding to support the candidate's project/collaboration. This fund can support costs relating to the project including travel and conference participation (excluding project running costs). The value of the award is approximately:

- Supervisor Fund at UQ: AU\$2,500/year
- Project Development Award at IITD: AU\$1,875/year

UQ transfers the Supervisor Fund to UQ principal advisors bi-annually. IITD supervisors can access the Project Development Award by writing to the Professor In Charge of the Academy (PICA), who will consider and approve requests.

The funds are reported on through the The UQ-IITD Research Academy milestone process. They must be used in accordance with the guidelines, are subject to audit, and supervisors must be able to produce a statement of income and expenditure within a week of receiving an audit request.

**Please note: figures given are approximate, and are based on 2023 figures.*



i-student Siddhant Varshney
researches polymer nano composites
for advanced gas barrier applications

Propose a project

The UQ-IITD Research Academy calls for research projects in November and June each year. Your Head of Department, Head of School, or Institute Director will receive this request and distribute it to staff in your area.

1 Check your eligibility

UQ staff are eligible to supervise PhD candidates through the Academy providing they meet UQ's policy **4.60.01 Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors**.

2 Identify collaborators

Please visit the **IITD** and **UQ Researchers** websites to identify potential collaborators that would be best suited for the proposed project. Faculty members at both UQ and IITD have been made aware of the joint PhD program and we encourage you to connect with any potential collaborators. If you are unable to find a suitable collaborator, please **contact us** and we will connect you with a potential match at either UQ or IITD, or facilitate initial discussions with potential collaborators. Once potential collaborators are established, you should meet online (i.e. through Zoom or Teams) to discuss possible project ideas.

3 Submit project proposal

Please submit collaborative project proposals using the online **UQ-IITD Research Academy project proposal form**. This proposal will flag your interest in participating in the joint PhD program and will also be used to attract students. To attract high-achieving students, projects will need to be goal-directed and address multidisciplinary grand challenges of interest to Australia, India, and the global community.

There are no restrictions on the number of proposals or students per project, however if a project is large enough to admit 2-3 students, we recommend it is to split it into 2-3 distinct projects. This may result in a better pool of applicants to choose from.

Please note that entry to the program is highly competitive. Some projects may need to be re-advertised to identify a suitable candidate. Projects can be advertised up to four times. We are unable to accept late proposals.

4 UQ Head of Operational Unit (or delegate) approves projects

The Academy will contact your UQ Head of Operational Unit (or delegate) to seek endorsement of your project.

5 Academy Management and Program Committee approve projects

Projects are then collated and submitted to the Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC) who review projects and accept them on the basis of the supervisory team, capacity to supervise, the likely impact of the project, funding arrangements of projects including the ability of the group to support the candidate's project, and how well the project has been articulated.

6 Applications open

Approved project proposals are advertised on the **UQ-IITD Research Academy website**. When applications go live, please check the website to ensure your project proposal is displaying correctly and promote your project via your networks.

Prospective students submit applications for their top two preferences via an application form in Student Hub. A link to the application form will be made available on the **Academy website** when applications open.

7 Supervisor shortlisting and interviews

The Academy collates applications and supporting material and send to supervisors for shortlisting.

Step 1: Review Expressions of Interest

Students are asked to complete an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and a copy of their EOI submission will be automatically emailed to both UQ and IITD advisors.

For your convenience, supporting documentation such as copies of transcripts, English Language Proficiency (ELP) test results, graduate aptitude test results etc. will be embedded as a hyperlink into each applicant's EOI form. You are not required to save this documentation.

Students can select two projects and copies of EOI's for both program preferences will be sent to the UQ and IITD advisors for each project.

Step 2: Shortlist applicants

Review applications to shortlist according to your projects requirements, and ensure i-students have any necessary fellowship funding (if required by your project). Please consider applications from applicants who have nominated your project as a first or second preference project.

Step 3: Both principal supervisors interview applicants

Both supervisors must interview shortlisted applicants prior to nominating them to the Academy Joint Interview Panel (AJIP), which comprises senior UQ and

IITD staff. You will be provided with an interview matrix to rate interviewees. If an applicant scores below a three they should not be shortlisted. Competitive students would normally exceed minimum eligibility requirements as listed on the Academy website.

Step 4: Complete 2 reference checks for each applicant you wish to nominate

One supervisor must complete at least two reference checks for shortlisted applicants prior to nominating them to the AJIP. Reference checks can take place via phone/zoom or email.

Please complete this reference report as a part of this process. You will be asked to submit a copy of the reference report template as evidence as a part of the nomination process. (See step 5)

Step 5: Nominate your top two shortlisted applicants

Please complete this nomination form to nominate your top two applicants to the AJIP.

Please note, while the committee will strongly consider advisory team rankings, the committee may elect to make an offer to a first or second ranked applicant based on their performance in the exam and interview.

8 Academy shortlisting, exam and interviews

The AJIP shortlists applicants for interview. This ranking is arrived at on the basis of transcripts, SOPs, scores in competitive exams, the student's research plan and their Zoom/Teams interview with the supervisory team. Shortlisted applicants will then be asked to:

1. Submit a formal application in **UQ's online application portal**.
2. Undergo a written test and a joint interview with the AJIP. For i-students, this will be conducted in person at IITD. Video-conferencing technology will be used for international i-student applicants and q-students.

The AJIP then recommends a shortlist of applicants to the Academy Management and Program Committee (AMPC). The AMPC approve applicants to be made an offer. Advisory teams will be notified of the outcome of interviews and exams prior to offers being made. Please note that entry to the program is highly competitive. Some projects may require re-advertising to identify a competitive candidate.

9 Admission

The PhD program commences at two specific times:

- *January intake:* Late December at IITD, and January at UQ (Research Quarter 1); or
- *July intake:* July at IITD and UQ (Research Quarter 3).

Information for current supervisors

Expectations

You are expected to meet regularly with students via Zoom/ Teams meetings, and have joint meetings with their UQ-IITD counterpart.

Prior to 'year away'

Ensure the project plan provides for the second year at the 'away' institution. You must keep this updated with Academy staff, and ensure paperwork – including visa applications – is commenced at least six months prior to travel. Students will then also receive pre-arrival information and a welcome and induction will be arranged, including supervisors.

Events

To ensure strong collaboration between institutions, UQ and IITD delegations visit the partner institution every year. IITD visits UQ in March each year, to meet current and potential collaborators, deliver presentations on their individual research areas as well as research priorities for their department, and tour UQ facilities. A UQ-IITD research symposium is held when the UQ delegation visits IITD in September each year. The event provides an opportunity to identify research synergies, develop project proposals for the joint PhD program, and meet with prospective and current students. UQ and IITD warmly welcome strategic industry, associate and affiliate partners to present and engage in the joint research symposium. If you are interested in participating, contact us.

Feedback

The Academy distributes a survey to supervisors and students each academic year to seek feedback and facilitate continuous improvement. You are also encouraged to provide feedback during the year by contacting us

Helpful links

-  [UQIDAR website](#)
-  [Project Proposal submission form](#)
-  [Student online application form](#)
-  [Nomination form \(shortlisted applicant\)](#)
-  [UQ Graduate School – procedures for current advisors \(UQ login required\)](#)
-  [PhD guidelines](#)

i-student Vallari Chourasia researches how to convert the fibrous residue from sugarcane farming into aromatics and high-value platform chemicals

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