

Monash University and Thermo Fisher launch Catalyst PhD programme

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To gain hands-on industry experience while applying research expertise to challenges in healthcare



Australia's Monash University and US-based Thermo Fisher Scientific have launched the Catalyst PhD programme - a new industry partnership designed to apply doctoral-level research skills directly to real-world business challenges.

The Catalyst PhD programme sits under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Monash University and Thermo Fisher Scientific in May 2024, which established a framework for deeper collaboration across research, capability development and industry engagement. The programme represents a practical outcome of that agreement, translating strategic intent into applied, business-focused collaboration.

The Catalyst PhD programme embeds PhD candidates within Thermo Fisher Scientific to tackle complex business, policy and organisational challenges using rigorous research, analysis and critical thinking. Students apply advanced research methods to inform strategy, improve decision-making and support engagement across key business functions.

The inaugural cohort comprises five PhD students whose work spans sustainability, commercial challenges, government relations and corporate communications. Their projects focus on understanding systems, stakeholders and decision environments, translating research insight into practical recommendations that support organisational performance and external engagement.

Professor Nellie Georgiou-Karistianis, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Training), said “Through our partnership with Thermo Fisher Scientific, PhD candidates gain hands-on industry experience while applying their research expertise to challenges in healthcare, clean energy and sustainability – strengthening both their career readiness and the impact of their research.”