

Collaborative Doctorate

Collaborative Ph. D

The Collaborative Ph.D. program is designed for engineers, executives, scientists, military personnel, state and federal government employees, and educators who want to pursue a Ph.D. degree part-time while continuing full-time employment. The admission and academic requirements are the same as for NJIT's regular Ph.D. programs but the collaborative nature of the program allows participants to draw on the combined expertise and resources of the university and their employer. The dissertation research of students in the collaborative Ph.D. is expected to produce original contributions to science, engineering, technology or management and satisfy all quality criteria set by the dissertation committee. The student's main dissertation advisor is an NJIT faculty member while the research may meet the needs of the student and employer in advancing knowledge in the chosen discipline.

The Collaborative Ph.D. has two tracks: the **Traditional track** and the **Employer-Sponsored track**. The Employer-Sponsored track requires a major commitment by the student's employer that can lead to the signing of a joint IP (Intellectual Property) agreement with NJIT.

To apply to the collaborative Ph.D. program, candidates must have been employed in their specified field for at least a year. NJIT's standard criteria for admission will be applied but prior work-related research activity, publications, and honors will also be considered in evaluating prospective participants.

TRADITIONAL TRACK

Requirements

Any applicant interested in this track should first contact the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies to have an initial discussion of program requirements and expectations. Before applying to the collaborative Ph.D. program, the candidate will seek the employer's commitment in any of the following ways:

1. The candidate will be allowed to use the employer's facilities (e.g., laboratory equipment or computing/IT infrastructure) to carry out dissertation research (NJIT's Ph.D. program director or potential dissertation advisor must be contacted in advance to discuss the suitability of available resources). Should the student leave the employer, a revised study/research plan may be developed.
2. The employer may suggest an in-house researcher to serve on the student's Ph.D. dissertation committee. This researcher, who must have a terminal degree in a relevant discipline, must be an active researcher and may serve as the candidate's dissertation co-advisor; the main advisor will be an NJIT faculty member.

Note: Employers who have a proprietary interest in the student's dissertation research, including patent, copyright and technology transfer rights, are expected to execute formal IP (Intellectual Property) agreements with NJIT, and in these cases the student is expected to pursue the Employer-Sponsored Collaborative Ph.D. track.

The student's Ph.D. dissertation committee and the Office of Graduate Studies determine residency requirements. It is expected that the employer will allow the student to concentrate on dissertation research for at least one year.

EMPLOYER-SPONSORED TRACK

Pre-Qualification Assessment (Conducted by the Graduate Studies Office-GSO)

Any applicant interested in the Employer-Sponsored Collaborative Ph.D. track should first contact the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies (ziavras@njit.edu) to have an initial discussion of program requirements and expectations. If still interested, the applicant must then provide the Graduate Studies Office (GSO) with the following:

1. Verification of full-time employment status.
2. Work portfolio, if available, relevant to the Ph.D. program of an NJIT Academic Unit.
3. A statement of purpose (three pages maximum).
4. Prior degree with transcripts in a related discipline, or in rare cases a degree with transcripts in another discipline plus a portfolio demonstrating adequate professional experience in the field of study.
5. Written commitment from employer allowing the applicant to spend substantial time at work towards Ph.D. studies while also providing on-site research/development resources needed for dissertation research.
6. Written commitment from employer in assigning a mentor who holds a Ph.D. degree in a related-to-the-dissertation-research discipline. This mentor will serve as a co-advisor or as a member of the Ph.D. Dissertation Committee.
7. Letter from employer listing expected IP claims generated by the applicant's dissertation research to initiate the process of negotiating an IP agreement with NJIT.

All material from the employer must be signed by the applicant's supervisor or a higher authorized signatory in the organization.

If the applicant has demonstrably strong work experience, the pertinent Ph.D. program committee will evaluate the submitted portfolio for possible translation into course credits through NJIT's CBP (Credit-By-Portfolio) evaluation process. Ph.D. committee members within the Academic Unit are expected to interview the applicant before making their admission decision.

The Ph.D. committee will conditionally admit the applicant to the Employer-Sponsored Collaborative Ph.D., pending the filing of a plan of study (POS), and an IP agreement normally signed by the start of the first semester. The agreement should mention the IP generated by the student, the NJIT dissertation advisor(s), and the mentor at the employer site advising the applicant. The agreement should also account for the ownership of resources used in the research. It is anticipated that students will conduct most of their research at their site of employment.

Before the start of their first semester and in collaboration with the Ph.D. program director, the conditionally admitted Ph.D. student must file a POS that lists the courses to be taken and the related timeline. Any modification to the POS during the studies must be approved by the Ph.D. program director and dissertation advisor (if known).

For more information about the Collaborative Ph.D. program and to discuss potential paths that can lead to the degree, contact the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies (ziavras@njit.edu).
