

## Case Study 1 – Institute of Directors (IoD)

### Developing a relationship with the Institute of Directors to support our postgraduate and early career researchers.

Recognising the range of potential career paths that postgraduate (PGRs) and early career (ECR) researchers will follow, and the importance of ensuring access to a range of professional environments, the Doctoral College has since October 2016 provided the opportunity for PGRs and ECRs to apply to become student members of the Institute of Directors (IoD). Uniquely, the University of Surrey is the only university that has forged links with the IoD specifically to benefit researchers; it pays for fifty annual memberships per year.

The initiative is led by a postgraduate and early career researcher committee, with active support from the Doctoral College.

#### The benefits of membership include:

- The opportunity to meet Surrey business leaders and potential employers
- Access to regional and national IoD events at reduced rates
- Bespoke workshops and events delivered at the University of Surrey
- Access to an exclusive LinkedIn area
- Exclusive internship and work placement noticeboards

One of the key messages promoted by the committee and Doctoral College to secure engagement is that IoD membership is a mechanism to make connections, build networks, and develop networking skills in a supportive environment.

Each year there is a launch event, followed by three further joint Doctoral College–IoD Surrey events. By working closely with IoD Surrey we have been able to secure excellent speakers, and audiences include students, researchers and professionals. This past year, two of our ECR student members were recognised at the IoD Director of the Year Awards, being Highly Commended in the Student Director of the Year Category.



**Dr Geoff Nott and Dr Sarah Campbell receiving their Highly Commended Awards from Sir Trevor McDonald**

As a postdoctoral researcher and scientist at heart, I always felt the need to broaden my horizons outside of academia. I joined the IoD to learn more about how leaders and businesses think and work. I've learned how to view things from a more pragmatic and focussed viewpoint, with an eye to business outcomes of projects. Overall, I'm glad to have been involved with IoD. Feedback from an ECR student member