Alumni Case Study

Anna Stegman

EPSRC & NERC InDustrial CDT for Offshore Renewable Energy

www.idcore.ac.uk

Anna applied to join IDCORE when she was working with a commercial diving contractor, undertaking structural inspections in a marine environment. She had been involved in the deployment of the Oyster wave energy device at the European Marine Energy Centre on Orkney and this got her interested in the potential for offshore renewables.

Her first degree was an MEng in Civil Engineering from the University of Warwick and she had used this in a number of structural engineering consultancy roles prior to joining the diving contractor. She saw IDCORE as an opportunity to extend her skills in a new sector on the cutting edge of the technology solutions needed to decarbonise the economy.

Sponsor

Anna's IDCORE project was sponsored by the Energy Technologies Institute (ETI), a public-private partnership set up to fund and support the delivery of innovative low carbon energy solutions.
She continued to focus on wave energy devices exploring the potential for innovation in the sector to reduce costs and improve performance, work that was subsequently taken forward by Wave Energy Scotland.

Anna started her project at a difficult time for the wave energy sector, just as a number of leading proponents for the technology went out of business. Whilst she successfully delivered her project, it left her questioning the future role for wave energy. The ETI had exposed her to the range of solutions available and made her question where the greatest value could be delivered.
She was, however, convinced by the collaborative approach to innovation adopted within the ETI, the support it received from its funders, and the potential this had for creating impact.

I have never regretted the time I spent at IDCORE. As I had already been working in industry for some time, the EngD model suited me, giving me the time and space to learn research techniques and develop my critical thinking, without becoming disconnected from the more commercial context in which I wanted to apply these skills.

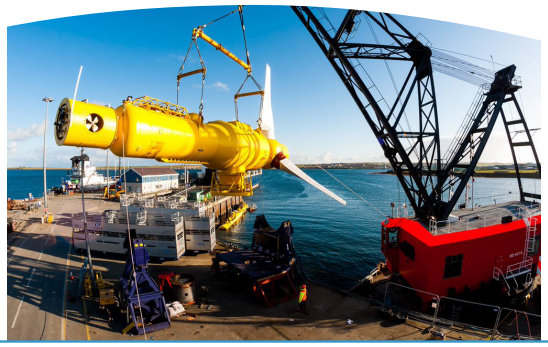
IDCORE didn't require me to come in as an offshore renewables specialist, instead it provided me comprehensive training and the knowledge I would need to operate effectively in the energy sector. It also gave me a better understanding of the capability and resources available within academia. It was a great opportunity to meet and work with a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds building relationships that are still important to me today.

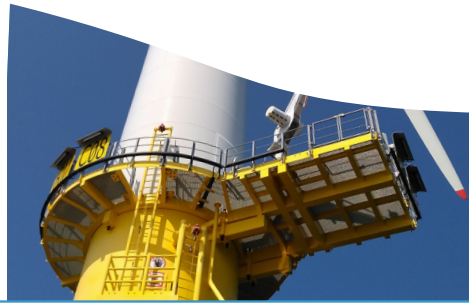
Anna Stegman, Local Energy Transition Advisor, Energy Systems Catapult

A Change of Direction

At the end of her EngD, Anna had the opportunity to continue working with her ETI colleagues as they moved to be part of a new organisation, the Energy Systems Catapult (ESC). Here she moved away from offshore renewables, becoming part of the team that was supporting Innovate UK's 'Prospering from the Energy Revolution' Programme. This programme funded fifteen project consortia around the UK focussed on the delivery of 'smart local energy systems'.

The ESC's role was to understand the common challenges and barriers that these projects were experiencing and to find solutions that supported their delivery. As the work progressed, Anna started to work more closely with Local Authorities, exploring potential business models that they could use and helping to develop a common approach to 'Local Area Energy Planning'. This is still a key part of her role.





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