



bright future – shining stars

I was wondering how much opportunity do you have to change between your industry? Between different specialties, once you are in the workforce. Like, in Jennifer's case, with protein and that, if you wanted to look at it with DNA or something else, how much opportunity do you have to look at it like that?

Jenny Martin

I did a Masters degree in an area called Computational Chemistry, which is using computers to look at the structures of drugs and to develop new drugs based on that. And that's a world away from what I do now, which is protein crystallography, which is using molecular biology to make bugs grow the protein and then I crystallize the protein and then I shoot them with X-rays and that's nowhere near like what I started off with. And yet I moved in that direction within about three or four years after finishing the Masters degree and then within that field you can work on different diseases. For example, I work in the area of diabetes, hypertension or high blood pressure and inflammation but of course there's lots of other diseases you could work on as well and it's all about the people you connect with, the people you network with and what their interests are so there is certainly a lot of movement within the field. Probably once you get to my level, it's unlikely you'd want to change too much but you take in new people into your group, so I've got a group of about 15 people and you bring in the technology that you need by hiring people who have a Ph.D in those areas.

Melissa Griffith

Within engineering, there is a lot of room to move around and some people who study an engineering degree don't even end up doing engineering. They go into project management or a lot of people go to the finance area as well because something you're taught in your engineering degree is fantastic problem-solving skills and that's a really transferable skill across lots of different areas, but I mean somebody of I guess my age and experience, I've got about seven years experience out of university, I could go and work in a different area to maritime and coastal engineering within my broad engineering degree and I could also probably leave my company and go and do something completely different but use the skills that I've got, particular project management skills or something that I could use in another area, so there is flexibility within your occupation, I think in all of them.

Miranda Forwood

Definitely. I mean I've been in theory doing the same thing, doing programming and now just starting with project management through the two years that I've been out of uni. But in that time I've worked on heaps of different projects like I started off with the mobile phone games and they were games but they were also just applications that were just stuff. There was also the diversionary therapy, I've just finished a bushfires project so I'm like a bushfires expert now, and I'm actually starting on another fires project, like we're going to represent, we're going to do a training of how to use fire extinguishers using this augmented reality, so this morning I was out at Enoggera putting out fires with a fire extinguisher, which was really quite good. It was research to see sort of how the fire is and what you have to do so we can figure out where the camera needs to go and where the markers need to go and what kind of visualisation you're going to have so and yeah, we have all sorts of different projects coming in so there's heaps of different stuff.

Continued overleaf



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Jenny Martin

But also there's other fields as well, once you've got a Ph.D in science, you can move into commercialisation of research, you can move into industry and work in an industry, a biotechnology industry and there's a lot of those growing in Queensland or some of my colleagues have moved into patenting so they've got the basic science knowledge and they help other people take their science and patent it so that you can get the rewards from that.



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