

Neil Young

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PhD Physics (2007), MSci (Hons) Physics (2004)

Since leaving Birmingham with an MSci in Physics and a PhD obtained from the Nanoscale Physics Research Laboratory in 2007 I have worked at the Department of Materials, University of Oxford. I began my career here as a research fellow, working on the characterisation of nano-particles using advanced transmission electron microscopy techniques. During this time I developed skills in facility management, teaching and also interaction with industrial partners. During 2010-2011 I worked as a consultant applications specialist at a world-leading microscope manufacturer. Then in 2011 I moved to a new role within the department, as the member of faculty responsible for research support and training in electron microscopy. I now lead a team of scientists involved with supporting research within the department that uses electron microscopy. I also give lecture courses to students, supervise a PhD student and final year undergraduate student projects as well as continue my research in nano-materials.

What is the best thing about what you are doing now?

My job brings me into contact with a wide variety of academics and researchers, often working in fields that are new to me, but connected through the common aspect of nano-characterisation via electron microscopy. I have made many new research contacts and friends during my recent work, as well as branching out into new fields, such as nano-bio applications. Being invited to present my work and also lecture at international conferences and workshops is also a highlight.

How has your PhD helped you in your Career?

Yes my PhD is essential in my career. Having a good grounding in physics from a research-led university such as Birmingham is very useful in my everyday work.

What advice would you give to current PhD students?

Explore and make the most of all the opportunities that are available to you. As a PhD graduate you have a lot of skills, not just in your academic specialism, so make sure you present these to potential employers.