

RTU and LMT are the First to Launch Cooperation in Industrial PhD Research

Riga Technical University (RTU) and LMT have launched an unprecedented business and research initiative “Industrial PhD” to facilitate innovation for the Latvian economy. The first two industrial PhD students from the RTU have already started working on drone and digital road technology projects for the LMT. Other companies are also invited to join in.

“Industrial PhD” is a part of a grant programme for student innovations. It aims to develop and facilitate ever closer cooperation between businesses and research institutions by involving industry stakeholders in research. During the programme, young PhD research fellows, who focus on issues that are within university’s scientific competences and are needed for the company’s innovation projects, will receive financial support from European funds, the university and the company.

“When we work on exportable innovation projects, it is very important to cooperate with Latvian researchers. At the moment, the cooperation programme focusses on two main aspects. One of them entails a reading processing technology for IoT sensors that could ensure more efficient and safer traffic management in the future. We will also maintain our focus on drone traffic management solutions. I am happy that in both of these projects mobile communications technology, especially considering what 5G offers us, can become a good foundation for new innovations. It is clear that future success lies in a partnership between business and science, and I believe that the new industrial PhD programme will allow creating new innovations for the growth of the Latvian economy,” underlines Juris Binde, D. Sc. (Econ.), President of the LMT.

“Large Latvian companies are ever more interested in highly-skilled professionals with a PhD degree, who could work in their development and research projects. At the same time, PhD students do not always focus on research that is needed in specific industries or the local economy. With the new programme, we would like to ensure that PhD students develop good cooperation with the industry as early as during their studies. We aim to have more companies joining the industrial PhD programme,” stresses Tālis Juhna, Vice-Rector for Research of the RTU.

In his doctoral thesis, Rūdolfs Rumba, a PhD student from RTU, will develop a set of methods to manage and control the autonomous drone traffic eventually making it safer and easier. “My research will contribute to the development of infrastructure, as there is no comprehensive solution for the management and control of autonomous drone traffic yet,” explains R. Rumba.

Jānis Braunfelds, another PhD student from RTU, will develop a universal technology for real-time processing of readings from digital road sensors. As 5G promises to enhance IoT abilities and capabilities, such devices will allow gathering data on such aspects as temperature, pressure, humidity and road deformation. It is needed for more efficient traffic management and safer roads. This sensor processing technology can also be used in other sectors, for example, medicine, building, aviation.