

David Hardman, PhD

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I'm a Henslow Research Fellow in robotics at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. I also hold an EPSRC Doctoral Prize Fellowship, working in Cambridge's Bio-Inspired Robotics Lab. I have a significant background bringing complex mechatronics projects to reality; in addition to my hands-on research building tactile skins for soft robots, I've previously developed and fabricated numerous physical prototypes for commercial, startup, academic, stage, and personal projects.

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & PRIZES

Junior Research Fellowship (Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge, current)	2024 – 2027
EPSRC Doctoral Prize Fellowship (Department of Engineering, Cambridge, current)	2024 – 2025
Georges Giralt Award for best European PhD in Robotics: Finalist	2025
Soft Robotics TC Excellence Award	2024
CSAR Award for “ <i>outstanding research with real world application.</i> ”	2023
IET Diamond Jubilee Scholarship	2016 – 2020
David Maull Prize for engineering	2019
Dewhurst Award for academic achievement	2019
Langdon Dowsett Scholarship	2019
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Craythorne Scholarship	2017 – 2018
Latymer Award for academic achievement	2017
Arkwright Scholarship for “ <i>outstanding potential as a future leader in engineering.</i> ”	2014 – 2016

KEY PREVIOUS POSITIONS

- Visiting Researcher, CREATE Lab, EPFL Lausanne** June 2024 – September 2024
- Conceptualised & led a project on automated tool-change mechanisms for soft sensors (in preparation), while also bringing technical expertise & fabrication experience into ongoing tactile sensing international collaborations.
 - Acted as an external examiner for EPFL's Masters theses in robotics.
- Engineering PhD, Bio-Inspired Robotics Laboratory, University of Cambridge** October 2020 – June 2024
- My thesis on soft robotic skins was based upon 17 peer-reviewed publications, which are listed [here](#). Many gained significant attention in the press, including first author works ([link](#)) & talented students who I directly supervised ([link](#)).
 - Over 300 hours of undergraduate teaching during PhD, including mechanical engineering, structural mechanics, 3D printing, machine tools, and Python.
- Consultant (Health Tech), The Technology Partnership** March 2023 – June 2023
- Added value to multidisciplinary engineering teams bringing skills in prototyping, data generation & analysis, product development, and laboratory work.
 - Developed solutions to highly technical surgical and medical imaging issues faced by clients.
- Undergraduate Researcher, Bio-Inspired Robotics Laboratory** July 2019 – September 2019
- Developed an open-source MATLAB simulator to be used in the teaching of robotics, including demonstrations of key concepts such as inverse kinematics and Kalman filtering.
 - Wrote a first author conference paper from scratch within the 10 week placement: using motion capture to optimise robotic gaits.
- Engineering Intern, Densitron Technologies Ltd** July 2017 – September 2017, December 2017
- Created and tested graphical interfaces using Qt software, C++ haptic code, and single-board computers running Linux.
 - Personally developed an interactive automated platform to be showcased at the 2017 International Broadcasting Convention.

EDUCATION

Engineering M.Eng., Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge 2019 – 2020
First Class, with Master's thesis exploring applications of high-resolution 3D printing.
Specialisation in mechanics, materials and design.

Engineering B.A.(Hons), Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge 2016 – 2019
First Class, specialisation in mechanics, materials and design.
Logistics Officer for 'Corpus May Ball': a 1000-guest overnight event.

The Judd School, Tonbridge 2009 – 2016
5 A Level A*s in Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Product Design.
11 GCSE A*s including Mathematics, Further Mathematics, English.

TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

Presentation at UK Parliament as part of annual [STEM for Britain](#) event, March 2024.

East of England Runner-Up in [FameLab Science Communication](#) Competition 2025.

Invited lecture, UCL Department of Computer Science, February 2025.

Invited talk at Cambridge Society for the Application of Research, June 2024: "[Sensorised Skins for Soft Robots](#)".

Conference presentations/demonstrations at TAROS 2020 & 2023 Embodied Intelligence 2021, 2022, 2024 & 2025, RoboSoft 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 OHMC workshop 2022, Soft Robotics for Mixed Reality 2022, Soft Robotics for Food and Home Applications 2023, Embodied Artificial Intelligence and Evolutionary Soft Robotics 2024, UK Manipulation Workshop 2025.

Invited talks at St Catharine's [John Ray Society](#), March 2023 & Fitzwilliam College, November 2024.

Invited talk at Soft Robotics workshop: "Learning-based Sensing for Soft Applications," April 2023.

Invited talk at MathWorks Cambridge: "Towards Growing Robots," November 2019.

Led & hosted research public livestreams: UK-RAS Robot Lab Live, [2021](#), [2022](#).

Podcast interview: "Bioinspired Robots: learning from nature," UK-RAS [Robot Talk Episode 17](#), 2022.

Outreach panel member at [EI Workshop](#), April 2021 & Fitz+, November 2024, February 2025.

Subject masterclasses for prospective students: at Corpus Christi College (x4), Christ's College (x1), AIOS Cambridge Winter School (x2), March 2022 - January 2024.

INTERESTS & SKILLS

Outside of engineering, my motivated personality shines through: I'm a member of the world-famous Magic Circle, where I have won multiple awards for stage magic performances, and I hold a British Record in long course finswimming. I'm also a keen badminton & tennis player, and regularly play in local leagues as part of my club's team.

References are available upon request.