
Study with Us

A really important aspect of PEDAL's work is the research being undertaken by the PhD students in the Centre.

If you're interested in studying at PEDAL, you can find out more about the process of applying and finding funding [here](#).

Current PEDAL supervisors

PEDAL team members supervise undergraduate, Master's, and PhD-level students undertaking projects both within the PEDAL Centre and as part of the wider Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge.

Below, you can find out more about the supervisors in PEDAL and their main topics of interest.



[Prof Paul Ramchandani](#)

Paul is Director of the PEDAL Centre and conducts research on play in the early years and children's mental health. He is happy to consider potential students for PhD study. Get in touch by email, ideally with a brief written idea for a proposal and a CV to discuss further.



[Prof Sara Baker](#)

Sara is Professor of Developmental Psychology and Education and heads up our Play and Learning in Schools team. For more information about Sara's current projects and availability, please visit the Faculty of Education website.



[Prof Jenny Gibson](#)

Jenny is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and Education, and Chief Scientific Advisor at Nesta. Her work at PEDAL focuses on investigating the role of play in children's social development, and the rigorous development of meaningful & reliable ways to measure play. For more information about Jenny's current projects and availability, please visit the Faculty of Education website.



[Dr Christine O'Farrelly](#)

Christine is a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow and Senior Research Associate at PEDAL. She currently works as Principal Investigator and Co-Chief Investigator across various projects in the Centre that aim to support children, families, and communities in the earliest years of children's life. For more information about Christine's current projects and availability, please visit the 'Meet Our Team' page on our website.



[Dr Zhen Rao](#)

Zhen is a Research Associate in the PEDAL Centre and co-supervises a PhD project with Prof Paul Ramchandani. Her research focuses closely on the role of pretend play in children's and families' lives. Zhen does not currently have any free slots to take on new students.



Dr Elizabeth Byrne

Elizabeth is a Research Associate in the PEDAL Centre and supervises Master's students in the Faculty of Education. Her research focuses closely on the role of play-based educational interventions for children, and cognitive development. Elizabeth does not currently have any free slots to take on new students.

Find out more about studying for a PhD at PEDAL

It's common to have lots of questions about what studying for a PhD involves. We've answered a few commonly asked questions below to try to give you more information about the PhD experience at PEDAL. You can also reach out to our current PhD students to find out more.

○How do you apply for a PhD?

You submit an application through the University of Cambridge Postgraduate Applications Portal, which you can access [here](#).

Typically, you will be asked to upload a copy of your CV, submit a proposal for your PhD project, and describe any relevant research experience that you may have.

There may also be some additional steps if you are applying for a studentship, either through PEDAL or another organisation, to fund your PhD studies.

○Where are PhD opportunities advertised?

You can find out about PhD opportunities at PEDAL on our website (<https://www.pedalhub.net/>), our social media ([Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)), or websites such as jobs.cam.ac.uk.

We recommend that you get in touch with a prospective supervisor to discuss your topic(s) of interest/proposal in advance.

You can find more information about PEDAL supervisors and principal investigators on our website.

○What funding options are available?

It is possible to self-fund a PhD, but there are also many scholarships and studentships that you can apply for.

Studentships are advertised on our [website](#) and jobs.cam.ac.uk.

Other independent entities such as government or charitable organisations, or Cambridge colleges, may also have funding available - the [Postgraduate Funding Search](#) is a great place to start.

○What experience do you need to apply for a PhD?

The experience that you need will depend on the work that you plan to complete for your PhD.

PhDs at PEDAL often involve working with children and families in various settings, so experience relevant to those areas could be important for you to have. It is also valuable to have had experience working on or leading research projects, which you may have gained through your undergraduate degree or other postgraduate study (such as a Master's degree).

You may find it helpful to contact your prospective supervisor or current PEDAL PhD students in advance of applying to discuss your experience and its suitability for the PhD work that you plan to do.

○How do you choose your supervisor?

You can find out more about PEDAL's supervisors/principal investigators above, and on the [Meet Our Team](#) page on our website.

It is important that you find a supervisor with interests and experience in the topic that you plan to pursue in your PhD research.

○How does the College system work?

Cambridge is a collegiate university. This means, as well as being a member of the overall University of Cambridge community, you will also be a member of a college.

Each college has something different to offer but they predominantly aim to provide students with academic and pastoral support. You may also be able to secure accommodation and funding through your college.

You can find out more about the Cambridge Colleges here: <https://map.cam.ac.uk/colleges/>



[Watch more!](#)

You can find our PEDAL PhD series - short videos where current PEDAL PhD students answer frequently asked questions - on our YouTube channel, Instagram and Twitter!

Have a PEDAL PhD question that you would like answering?

Send us an [email](#) or leave us a comment.

[Find out more about PEDAL's current students](#)