



Case Study

Ajit Pillai

About Ajit

Ajit, a former IDCORE student, is now a Senior Lecturer in Autonomous Systems and Robotics at the University of Exeter. He teaches on modules provided as part of the IDCORE training and is currently on the supervision teams for five different IDCORE projects.

As a mechanical engineer, Ajit has specialised in sustainable engineering, applying machine learning and optimisation across the marine sector, with a current focus on optimising the design of offshore wind turbines and improving access models for their operation and maintenance.



I was first drawn to IDCORE as a student when I was unsure whether I wanted a career in industry or academia. IDCORE allowed me to continue pursuing both options. I have now chosen, but as an academic my interest is in industrially applicable research. IDCORE has been, and continues to be, a key part of my professional career. It continues to help me build relationships with project partners, keeping me more fully aware of the challenges facing the sector and the specific research needs these create. In a busy research landscape the IDCORE model is unique, delivering benefits which are highly valued by project sponsors.



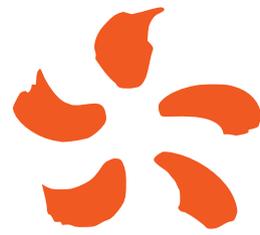
IDCORE Legacy

Ajit still works with colleagues from his IDCORE cohort, project partners who now work across the industry. These relationships were built by 'going through the crucible of IDCORE together' – an invaluable network.

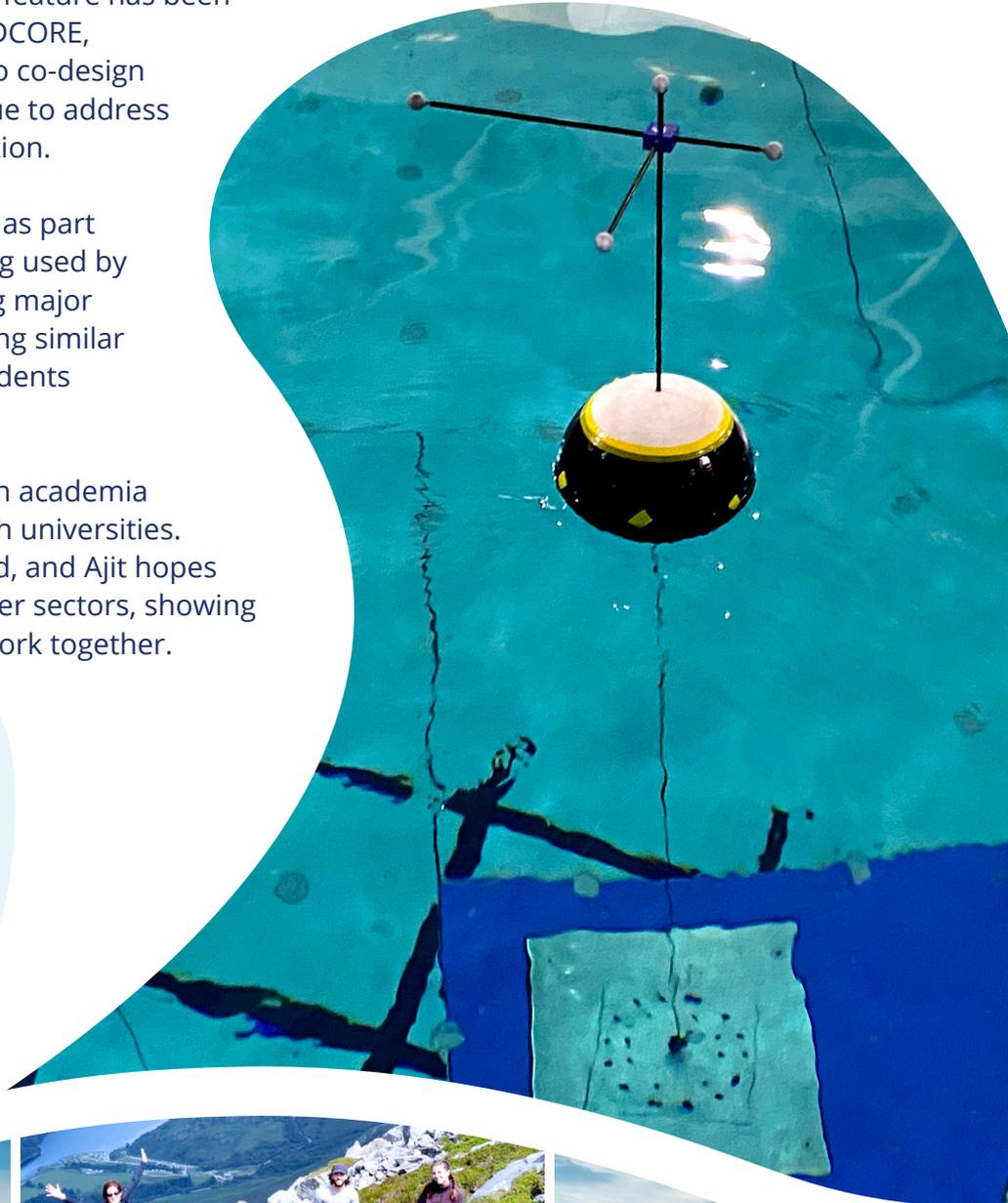
His IDCORE project was sponsored by EDF, and he was based with their Research & Development team in London. There have been a lot of changes in that team since Ajit graduated, but one consistent feature has been their on-going engagement with IDCORE, providing continuity and leading to co-design of research projects which continue to address the specific needs of the organisation.

The code and tools Ajit developed as part of his IDCORE project are still being used by EDF in windfarm design, impacting major development decisions. He is seeing similar impacts from the projects and students he is now supervising.

Not many IDCORE graduates are in academia but most of them work closely with universities. It is the only programme of its kind, and Ajit hopes it will become a case study for other sectors, showing how academia and industry can work together.



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