

**DETAILED  
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PHD PROGRAMS:  
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**MICHEL DONEGANI**  
**MATHEMATICS 1991**  
**CEO PRISMINVEST**  
**GENEVA**

For Michel Donegani, a doctoral degree at EPFL was a unique opportunity to work with Stephan Morgenthaler, then recently arrived from MIT and Yale. Michel found himself “standing at the beginning of a new territory: computer intensive statistical methods”. New results came rapidly for Michel, with

seven research papers published in three years.

Michel’s PhD led him quickly into the Swiss banking sector, where he found his degree to be a decisive advantage. Michel formalized the concept of multi-style asset allocation and delivered the risk-return and diversification benefits that investors were looking for. With the new millennium, Michel was part of the creation of Prismoinvest. He continues to develop his research, and maintains links with teaching and supervision at EPFL.

**An EPFL PhD really can take you anywhere. Over 60% of our alumni work in the private sector, from senior positions in major multinationals to entrepreneurs in their own start-ups. EPFL prepares just as much for an academic career, and today you’ll find EPFL PhDs working as post-docs, senior researchers and professors in the world’s top universities.**



**PING REN**  
**CIVIL ENGINEERING 1995**  
**DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING**  
**SPX COOLING TECHNOLOGIES**  
**BEIJING**

Ping Ren wanted to leave her home country of China to see and learn more of the world. She found what she came for at EPFL, where she worked with Manfred Hirt, an international expert on fatigue and fracture mechanics of steel structures. For Ping, to be a successful doctoral candidate means having passion for innovation in your research field, and being ready to pursue knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

Ping soon found that the EPFL PhD was “well-regarded and recognized throughout the world”. Her degree took her first to the industrial sector as a civil engineer and technical manager in Luxembourg, Holland and Belgium. In 2004 she returned to Beijing with her employer, where she now works as chief engineer and director of engineering for SPX Cooling Technologies.



**JEREMY RAMSDEN**  
**CHEMISTRY 1985**  
**CHAIR OF NANOTECHNOLOGY**  
**CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY UK**

Jeremy Ramsden jumped at the opportunity of a doctorate at EPFL and research with Michael Graetzel, one of the ten most highly cited chemists worldwide and winner of the 2010 Millennium Technology Prize. At EPFL, Jeremy found “a wonderful, formative haven for four years”.

After receiving his PhD, Jeremy moved to Princeton to work on the structure and dynamics of heme proteins – a very different area to his doctoral research in nanotechnology. After stays in Hungary and Basel, Jeremy joined Cranfield University in the UK in 2002 as Chair of Nanotechnology.



**MARC TORRENS**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**  
**2002**  
**FOUNDER OF STRANDS**  
**BARCELONA**

For Marc Torrens, the EPFL PhD was “the best thing I ever did”. It was the opportunity to be part of an international team of researchers working on artificial intelligence with Boi Faltings. The PhD, says Marc, offers a unique freedom to explore opportunities, new paths, make mistakes and learn different things – and not just in science and engineering.

With Boi Faltings and other EPFL researchers, Marc was able to commercialize part of his research and build a start-up company which was eventually bought by German company FAO. After finishing his doctorate while working with FAO, Marc went on to create a new start-up company offering personalized services and recommendation technologies for music on the Internet. After three years in the US, he moved back to Barcelona where he runs his company, Strands. Marc remains closely connected to academic research, co-chairing conferences that bring together academia and industry.