



Professor Neil Beattie

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Professor of Energy Innovation elected Fellow of the Institute of Physics

[Professor Neil Beattie](#), a physicist at Northumbria University, has been appointed as a Fellow of the Institute of Physics (IOP), an accolade that signifies the highest level of membership attainable within the institute.

The [IOP](#) is the professional body and learned society for physics in the UK and Ireland, with an active role in promoting co-operation in physics around the world. Founded in 1874, it has a membership of over 21,000 physicists and strives to make physics accessible to people from all backgrounds.

Fellow is a title awarded to those who have made a significant impact on their sector through their accomplishments in physics.

A Professor of Energy Innovation, physics is the educational foundation of Professor Beattie's career, which spans both industry and academia. Over the last decade, Professor Beattie, together with colleagues, has led the creation of a thriving ecosystem of research and teaching excellence in the North East of England.

After completing his PhD in physics at the University of Cambridge, Professor Beattie worked as an Innovation Consultant with household names such as Shell, P&G, Rolls-Royce and Boeing.

He then joined Northumbria in 2009 and led the establishment of physics as a discipline at the University, designing and implementing a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, together with associated laboratory infrastructure.

Passionate about diversity and inclusion, especially in STEM subjects, he is committed to making physics accessible for all, particularly those from traditionally under-represented groups. In this context, Professor Beattie was the founding academic subject specialist for the [NUSTEM](#) programme which has now recorded over 136,000 interactions with children, young people and the wider community.

Individually, his research is driven by an interest in the application of quantum theory using semiconductor devices as well as the disciplinary interface with electrical engineering. His expertise lies in photovoltaics, and as such he leads the [Northumbria University Photovoltaics](#) (NUPV) research group, together with Professor Guillaume Zoppi and Dr Vincent Barrioz.

The NUPV team are currently focusing on the development of new materials and manufacturing processes for the implementation of solar cells in new applications. In particular, Professor Beattie leads a current EPSRC programme of Adventurous Manufacturing to create a new design-led approach to solar cells that allows aesthetic integration with products in the built environment and transport sectors.

Professor Beattie is also Director of the [Renewable Energy Northeast](#)

[Universities](#) (ReNU) Centre for Doctoral Training. Established in 2019, ReNU is a regional partnership between Northumbria, Newcastle and Durham Universities backed by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and a number of industry partners. The Centre is training UK's next generation of innovators in renewable and sustainable energy.

The combination of Professor Beattie's academic track record and industrial experience led him, in 2019, to establish and lead [Energy Futures](#) - a diverse and inclusive community of academics across different disciplines at Northumbria University with the central aim of decarbonisation through research impact. Recent outcomes from this community include a presentation at COP26, industry sponsorship of PhD studentships and high-impact publications, for example in Nature Catalysis.

Professor John Woodward, Pro Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Engineering and Environment at Northumbria University, said: "Neil is an excellent colleague and ambassador for staff and students alike. I'm delighted he has been appointed as a Fellow, an accolade that is due recognition of his contributions to Physics since he joined Northumbria in 2009."

Find out more about Northumbria's research to develop new ways to generate and store renewable energy, to help deliver a cleaner and greener future, by watching the video below.

[View embedded content here](#)

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