

St Petersburg Practical Technical (Technological) Institute of Emperor Nicholas I, graduate badge, late 1890s-1917.

Brass, silver plating, gilt; measures 59.5 mm in height, 45.0 mm in width and about 16 mm thick (not including the screw post). The Imperial double-headed eagle and the crossed wrench and hammer emblem are separate parts superimposed on the wreath of beautifully detailed oak and laurel leaves. The eagle is likewise nicely detailed with fully discernable provincial coats of arms on its wings.

In very fine to excellent condition. All parts of the badge are tightly held together by the intact original wires. Raised details of the artworks are perfectly preserved including the highest points of the eagle and crown. The original silver finish is still clearly visible on the obverse in recessed areas of the wreath and on the tail of the eagle, as well as on the reverse of the badge. A good amount of the original gilt is present on the hammer and wrench emblem. There are some areas on mild tarnish and verdigris, mainly on the lower portions of the wreath, but the toning is generally uniform and attractive. The screw post is original and full length, nearly 25 mm. The badge includes scarce original washer and wing nut.

This badge was originally authorized in 1896 exclusively for the graduates of St. Petersburg Practical Technical Institute. Now known as St. Petersburg State Technological Institute (or alternatively, Technical University), this venerable engineer school was established in 1828 by the reigning monarch Emperor Nicholas I. In 1898, the right to wear the badge was extended to graduates of the Kharkov Technological Institute and in 1903, graduates of the Technological Institute in Tomsk. The badge is differentiated from other graduation badges with a similar design by the crossed hammer and wrench immediately below the eagle. [We would like to point out that Robert Werlich illustrated this badge pattern as "Fig. 704" in his popular 1983 book, *Badges of Imperial Russia*. He identified it as belonging to the "Technical Institute of Peter the Great (also referred to as Gorny Institute)". The research of Patrikeev and Bojnovich, actually done in archives in Russia, is much more recent and we believe that their identification of this specific badge is more accurate. The large size and impressive construction of this award frequently leads many to incorrectly assume that it was awarded by one of the military academies.]

/Patrikeev, Bojonovich / *Badges of Russia*, Vol. 1, p. 102 fig. 2.4/

Please note, penny in our photo is for size reference.

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