



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK

O L L S C O I L L U I M N I G H



Funded MSc by Research in Sport & Exercise Sciences

Connacht Rugby Player Retention & Volunteer Recruitment Research Programme

TITLE OF POST: MSc by Research in Sport & Exercise Sciences

LOCATION: University of Limerick

REPORTS TO: Project Leader

CONTRACT TYPE: Specific Purpose



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Data on youth rugby players in the province of Connacht suggest that dropout is particularly severe between the ages of 16 and 20 years. Continued participation in sport at this age is viewed as an important avenue to promote physical, mental and social health. Decisions about sport participation arise from the complex interaction of a broad range of factors. Although some of these factors are likely to underpin continued participation irrespective of context (e.g., enjoyment; quality relationships), context-specific investigations are required to identify the specific barriers to and sources of support for continued participation. The project will examine ways in which Connacht Rugby could support the underage player pathway to better facilitate the playing experience, reduce drop out and ultimately see more players continuing to adulthood as participants in rugby at all levels.

JOB DESCRIPTION

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degree in a health science field (2.1 award or higher).

OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The successful candidate will support a project examining ways in which Connacht Rugby could develop the underage player pathway to better facilitate the playing experience, reduce drop out and ultimately see more players continuing to adulthood as participants in rugby at all levels.

The successful candidate will work closely with the principal investigator (PI) to ensure the smooth operation of the project. The successful candidate will be based at the University of Limerick with time also spent in Connacht Rugby sites as required to support participant recruitment and other project related tasks.

The successful candidate will enrol upon the structured MSc by research programme run by the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences, and must complete research integrity training and GDPR training if not already completed. During this time, you will be given the opportunity to contribute to undergraduate modules; this will be agreed by your supervisor and managed to ensure that it provides necessary continuing professional development alongside the opportunity to meet your research requirements.

TERMS OF THE AWARD

- The scholarship is held for up to two years, subject to available funding and the student's continued satisfactory academic progress.
- The scholarship recipient is expected to work on a full time basis on their programme of research and will enrol on the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences structured MSc programme.
- Scholarship recipients are expected to contribute a specific amount of hours per academic year to PESS-related tasks (e.g., teaching, demonstrating, organisation of events) for the duration of their scholarship. The expectation is 36 hours in year 1 and 72 hours in year 2 of study.
- The successful applicant must be a new research student (i.e., are not currently registered as a postgraduate student in UL).
- Panel decisions will be final, and not open to review. Student applicants will be given two weeks to decide whether to take up the scholarship when offered. Scholarships not taken up will be re-allocated on the basis of points to the next highest applicant. The panel will have the right to agree that low quality applications can be judged non-fundable, and a scholarship will not be offered in this instance.
- Scholarships are offered subject to continued funding of the project by the external funding partner. Should such funding not be maintained, scholarships may be withdrawn, subject to three months' notice.
- Receipt of externally funded scholarships or stipends will not affect the value of this scholarship provided that this does not exceed €5,000. Scholarship recipients must inform the PESS Research Committee and the project Steering Group (consisting of representatives of the University of Limerick, Lifes2good Foundation, and Connacht Rugby) of receipt of such additional funding in writing.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Research

- Assist the principal investigator to conduct the study.
- Conduct literature and database searches and interpret and present the findings of the literature searches as appropriate.
- Support the recruitment of study participants and the participant journey through the project.
- Support the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of results.

Research Management

- Plan and manage own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed project. For example, create and maintain a workplan and daybook, meet agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs.
- Manage personal research/project resources within own control appropriately.
- Keep appropriate records as directed and in line with funder/university policy.

Research Outputs - Write Up and Dissemination

- Write up results from own research activity (e.g. as project report) for review by PI.
- Provide input into the research project's dissemination, in whatever form (report, papers, presentations, social media) as directed by the PI.
- Present information on research progress and outcomes e.g. to bodies supervising research; steering groups; other team members, as agreed with the PI/Project Leader.
- Support the writing of research papers and project related presentations.

Supervision

- Support the work of undergraduate students (e.g., final year project students).

Policy & Standards

- Knowledge of, and adherence to, the University's policies and procedures relevant to role as advised by the PI.
- Knowledge of research ethics as applied to the relevant discipline.
- Knowledge of GDPR.

Essential Criteria

- Bachelor's degree in a health science field (2.1 award or higher).
- Evidence of excellent communication skills.
- Evidence of excellent organisational skills.
- Evidence of excellent IT skills.
- Car owner and full driving license.

Desirable Criteria

- Evidence of research report writing.
- Evidence of experience using qualitative research methods, particularly in relation to focus groups.
- Coaching experience within a youth sport context.
- Demonstrated experience of working effectively in a research team as well as independently.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Potential candidates are encouraged to contact Dr Philip Kearney, Principal Investigator, for further information – via email philip.kearney@ul.ie or telephone 061 202844.

Host Department: <https://www.ul.ie/pess/>

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit 1) a letter of interest, 2) a current Curriculum Vitae, and 3) two academic/professional references to maeve.gleeson@ul.ie by Thursday 17th October 2019. Short-listed applicants will be invited for interview.

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. Letter of interest (80%)

This should include information on the following points:

- Why do you wish to pursue a research degree?
- Why are you particularly suited for the proposed research field?
- How do you see your career unfolding after you have completed your postgraduate degree?
- Provide any further information which you might feel captures your abilities, skills and potential for postgraduate research.

2. Curriculum Vitae

Your curriculum vitae should support the statements made within your letter of interest.

3. Academic/Professional references (20%)

These should include at least one reference from an academic at the institution where you have completed your most recent degree.

For any enquiries relating to the application process, please contact the PESS Senior Administrator Maeve Gleeson maeve.gleeson@ul.ie