

Postdoctoral Research Associate - Overcoming Stigma through Paralympic Sport

REQ200617

Project Background

Project overview

Over the next four years (2020-24), Loughborough University will lead on a £1.8million project entitled '**Overcoming Stigma through Paralympic Sport**', which will build on lessons learned from the London 2012 Paralympic Games. This unique research project looks at how representation, education and communication in Paralympic sport can break down barriers to stigma to support access and adoption of assistive technology. A four-pillar approach including: education, athlete development, Paralympic broadcast and cross cutting research will focus activities in Ghana, Malawi, and Zambia. Aiming to increase assistive technology (AT) adoption across Africa, the research project hopes to enhance opportunities, education, and communication of Paralympic Values and Paralympic sport.

Stigma against disabled people is thought to be one of the barriers to the adoption, development and delivery of better AT in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). Stigma around disability is thought to lead to exclusion and poor standards of living for disabled people and as a consequence, creates a barrier to better AT adoption. Specifically, a lack of education about disability and the needs of disabled people creates fear and exclusion. This research project will tackle stigma and discrimination across Africa through education around the Paralympic Values and Paralympic sport to increase AT adoption.

Background

As part of the legacy of London 2012, Loughborough University London has helped to found the Global Disability Innovation (GDI) Hub, an organisation charged with harnessing academic excellence, innovative practice and co-creation to tackle global challenges around disability.

The GDI Hub is leading a £19.8m global programme funded by the UK Department for International Development entitled: 'AT2030 - Life Changing Assistive Technology for All'. The AT2030 programme is made up of 11 sub-programmes, to which Loughborough University London's 'Overcoming Stigma through Paralympic Sport' project is one. Anchored to the objective of increasing access to Assistive Technology in Africa, Loughborough University London is leading this international, interdisciplinary and impactful 4-year project in collaboration with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the University of Malawi.

Research

The programme will use a four-pillar approach towards overcoming the role of stigma in adoption of AT, consisting of education, athlete development, Paralympic broadcast and cross-cutting research activities. Research will span across the other three pillars and will consist of desk research, qualitative, ethnographic and action-based research approaches. This pillar aims to develop:

- a communication for Social Change Toolkit to inform scale-up of education and communication programmes for Paris 2024
- a Para athlete development guidebook
- a research report on Tokyo 2020 (postponed to 2021) broadcasts to inform future Paralympic broadcasts to Africa.

Job Description

Job Grade

Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose

The Post Holder will assist the Research Engine to undertake research relevant to the 'Overcoming Stigma Through Paralympic Sport' project. The research focus of the project includes the core themes outlined below (not an exhaustive list)

- Disability/stigma/culture in Africa
- Communication for social change/Media/Paralympic broadcasting/disability
- Sport and parasport in Africa
- Inclusive education/Paralympic values education
- Sport/governance/participation/infrastructure

Job Duties

The Post Holder will provide research support by:

- Conducting desk research, literature and content reviews
- Supporting and leading key informant interviews and focus groups
- Content analysis of IPC/ broadcast media content
- Data collection, transcription, processing, management and analysis (including using Nvivo)
- Identifying and capitalising on synergies across research themes to ensure cohesion
- Support relationships with project partners
- Coordinate planning and logistical arrangements and research related project administration
- Contributing to academic and non-academic publications and dissemination activities
- Support the communication of project updates

Supervision

Supervision will be provided by: Dr. Jessica Noske-Turner, Lecturer, Institute for Media and Creative Industries.

Special Conditions

All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy & Procedures.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality & Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to explicitly state and evidence how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their application. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Test/Assessment Centre/Presentation
- 3 – Interview

Essential Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Proven solid research background with postgraduate experience in one or more relevant research areas	1, 3
	Experience undertaking research with external collaborators	1,3
Skills and abilities	Ability to collect and to analyse data related to relevant research areas	1, 3
	Ability to work to strict and tight deadlines, proactively and independently	1
	Excellent written and oral communication skills	1, 2, 3
	Self-motivated with ability to meet deadlines	1
	Skills in data analysis software (eg. Nvivo, etc.)	1, 3
	Ability to work well with other researchers and project partners collaboratively both within the UK and outside	1, 3
	Excellent analytical research skills	1,2
Training	Willingness to undertake appropriate further training and to adopt new procedures as and when required	1
Qualifications	PhD qualification completed in an appropriate field of research	1
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times	1
	Willingness to travel and attend meetings related to research projects or similar	1

Desirable Criteria

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience in Paralympic Sport topics	1,2,3

Conditions of Service

This position is **full-time** and **fixed-term** for 18 months (*term length will be reduced if candidate commences role post June 2022 due to funding restrictions*). However, it is expected that the Research Associate would commence their role on 1 December 2020. Salary will be on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6 (£30,942 - £40,322 per annum), plus London Allowance of £3,204 per annum at starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements.

We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>