

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE – Active and Healthy Living

(Full-time; Fixed-term to 30 June 2025)

Job Ref: REQ230055

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to redeployment, please note that this vacancy may be withdrawn at any stage of the recruitment process if a suitable redeployee is identified.

Internationally recognised for its contribution to the study of sport, exercise and health, the School has wide-ranging expertise, encompassing such diverse areas as biomechanics, medicine, molecular and cellular biology, nutrition, pedagogy, psychology, physiology, sociology, economics and sport management.

The School has an active and ambitious plan to grow capacity and influence through developments as part of the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine, Loughborough in London, and StemLab.

The School is extremely proud to hold an **Athena Swan Silver Award** since 2013, recognising the commitment and work of the School in addressing gender inequalities in Science and to improving career progress for female academics. The School is committed to ensuring that female students and staff are able to achieve their full potential; and provides a flexible and open working culture to enable staff to maintain a work-life balance.

We support our Athena SWAN initiatives by investing in:

- Bespoke leadership programmes to encourage and build confidence in women to take leadership roles.
- Working lunches where needed to enable meetings to be held between 10am and 4pm (as per our Silver Action Plan).
- Monthly coffee mornings which provide opportunities for networking and developing a sense of community within the School.
- Extra mile award which recognises the above and beyond contributions of staff from all job families and research students.

Further information about Athena SWAN and the School's commitment to uphold the Silver Award can be found at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ssehs/about/athena-swan/>

Research and Innovation

Research and Innovation within the School is characterised by excellence and breadth, and its quality was recognised in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework where Loughborough University ranked top for research power (GPA x volume) in Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism. Loughborough University has also placed Number 1 in the QS world ranking for sport-related subjects for six consecutive years (2017-2022, every year since the category was introduced). A broad range of social and natural sciences contribute to the School's research and innovation activity which is organised within three overlapping themes:

- **Sport performance**, understanding and supporting the enhancement of athletes' performance in competitive sport;
- **Lifestyle for health and well-being**, encompassing research across several disciplines with the common goal of facilitating healthy living and ageing across the lifespan; and
- **Sport, Business and Society**, exploring how individuals, communities and organisations engage with and facilitate sport and exercise opportunities.

The School's research themes articulate in particular with the Sport and Exercise Beacon and the Health and Wellbeing Global Challenge which are key elements of the University's CALIBRE (Collective Ambition at Loughborough for Building Research Excellence) framework.

Further information about the School's research themes can be found at:

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ssehs/research/> and about the University's CALIBRE framework at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/calibre/>

Project Summary

The Active and Healthy Living Project is part of the wider Town Deal funding awarded to Charnwood Borough Council, Loughborough to enact public realm improvements. This Town Deal funding represents a £17 million investment, with £2.5 million being awarded to Loughborough University. Active healthy living promises benefits not only for public health but also for the economy and the environment. The project will look at how to increase opportunities for physical activity in order to improve health - for example, measures that promote walking over driving, stair over lift use, and active recreation over television watching. The Active and Healthy Living Project aims to understand participation in active healthy living among diverse Loughborough Town residents and to co-develop and test ways of increasing physical activity across different resident groups. It will achieve this through three key phases 1) Scoping work, 2) intervention design(s), and 3) intervention delivery and evaluation.

The post holder will join a project team of three senior investigators on the Active and Healthy Living project, and a wider team linked to the Connected Loughborough Project specifically and the Town deal more broadly. The post-holder will work closely with Charnwood Borough Council, local residents, communities and businesses and government departments to deliver the aims and objectives of the project.

Job Description

Job Family & Grade: Specialist and Supporting Academic (Research) Grade 6

Job Purpose: To manage and conduct the Active and Healthy Living research project in the wider Loughborough town community.

Job Duties:

- Develop, organise and conduct research using the citizen science framework to support all aspects of the project including a real-world, theory-based Active and Healthy Living intervention.
- Recruit citizen champions from the local community including those from different age groups, gender mobilities, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to facilitate design and delivery of the research project; and manage their involvement in the project.
- Arrange and deliver regular community workshops and events with citizen champions to promote the Active and Health Living project and facilitate project success.
- Develop project materials (information booklets, educational materials, posters, focus group and interview guides, questionnaires, standard operating procedures, etc.).
- Recruit participant groups and conduct interviews, focus groups, observations and surveys in all phases of the project – from scoping work to intervention implementation and evaluation.
- Collect data movement and activity data by deploying and maintaining wearables and other technologies.
- Process and analyse all data collected from participants and present findings for reports, academic papers, community and professional publications.
- Report research progress and discuss project issues with the Co-Leads, Co-Investigator and external project partners.
- Collate and present latest academic science and real-world practices on Active and Healthy Living initiatives in communities' settings.
- Work with other members of the research team and doctoral researchers involved in the Loughborough Town Deal project and maintain good working relationships with the research team, the participants and all research partners.
- Contribute to the writing of scientific research papers and to publish the outcomes of research in high quality journals.
- Collaborate on research initiatives and contribute ideas for new research projects to move forward the area of research.
- Travel to locations necessary for data collection, intervention implementation and research-related meetings.
- Work five or six early mornings and early evenings and two or three weekends for data collection and intervention implementation
- Uphold high ethical research standards, maintain confidentiality, and ensure that data protection requirements are met at all times.

- Engage in training programmes in the University (or elsewhere) that are consistent with the needs and aspirations of the project and those of the School, including any training relevant to the administration of the proposed project.
- Undertake other duties as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and Grade of the post.

Points to Note:

It is anticipated that the post-holder will work in the field in Loughborough most of the time, and then 'dynamically' between the Loughborough campus and home for the rest of their time. Day-to-day interaction with the project team will be a mix of in-person and MS Teams video meetings, MS Teams chat and emails. WhatsApp messaging or another form of instant communication will be employed when in the field.

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

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.

Successful completion of probation will be dependent on attendance at the University's mandatory courses which include Respecting Diversity and, where appropriate, Recruitment and Selection.

Organisational Responsibility:

Reports to Professor Fehmidah Munir (Co-Lead) and Professor Stacy Clemes (Co-Lead).

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed with respect to meeting the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Your application will be reviewed against 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

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of planning, conducting and evaluating physical activity and/or active travel interventions in community settings	1,2,3
	Experience of recruiting participants from workplace/community settings	1,2,3
	Experience of utilising objective methods for measuring physical activity and/or sedentary behaviour	1,2,3
	Experience of analysing and interpreting quantitative data using relevant statistical packages, eg. SPSS, R.	1,3
	Experience of conducting focus groups and/or interviews	1,3
	Experience of working as part of a team	1,3
	Experience of preparing research for publication in scientific journals	1,3
	Skills and abilities	Ability to effectively communicate with individuals and organisations to aid recruitment for research projects
	Ability to keep up-to-date with knowledge and understanding in the fields of physical activity and health and social outcomes	1,3
	Good time management	1,2,3
	Ability to work remotely and flexibly and use initiative, within project requirements	1,3
	Competence in IT skills including data input and data analysis packages	1,3
	Ability to work as part of a team and to collaborate with others	1,3
	Good track record in original research publications in the field of physical activity and/or health-related interventions	1,3
Training	Willingness to undertake appropriate further training and to adopt new procedures as and when required	1,3
Qualifications	PhD in behavioural science, human biology, sports science, public health, or a related subject	1
Other	Commitment to observing the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times	3
	Must be willing and able to travel across Loughborough	1,3
	Willing to work outside of normal working hours (9.00am-5.30pm) within the local community, on occasion	1,3

DESIRABLE

Area	Criteria	Stage
Experience	Experience of public engagement and/or involvement in research with various stakeholders	1,2,3
Knowledge	Understanding of the different communities and businesses in Loughborough	1,3

	Understanding of local transport infrastructures and green/open leisure spaces	1,3
Skills and abilities	Skills in objective measurements of physical activity and/or sedentary behaviour, including the processing of such data	1,3
Other	Valid licence for driving in the UK	1,3

Conditions of Service

This full-time post is offered on a fixed-term contract to 30 June 2025 within the *Specialist & Supporting Academic (Research)* job family at Grade 6 (£32,348 to £37,474 per annum); starting salary to be confirmed on offer of appointment.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for staff employed at Grade 6 and above, details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which are available at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/family-leave-policy-and-procedure---page.html>.

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

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/>

Loughborough University is committed to allowing its employees to **work dynamically** with a combination of working on campus and remotely, where possible. This has been identified as a role that could work dynamically and, if successful, your line manager will discuss these informal arrangements with you. Please note that there is a general expectation that the successful candidate will spend the majority of time working on the University campus (further information is available [here](#)).