



Host Institution: Technological University of Shannon, Athlone, Ireland.

PhD student | Marie Skłodowska-Curie Doctoral Network Fellowship

‘The design and evaluation of a harmonized cross-European data collection study for the examination of Physical Activity Behaviours and their determinants in youth’

(Full time/36 months)

Deadline Date: 5pm (CET) 23rd August 2024

The INDEEP Project

INDEEP (INtervention on the DEterminants of, and Expertise in, Physical activity behaviours) is an EU-funded MSCA Doctoral Network that seeks to generate excellence in research and training, providing future graduates that can advance the state-of-the-art in Physical Activity promotion, through a comprehensive understanding of the determinants associated with Physical Activity Behaviours, innovative methodologies, and data analytics. The main aims of the INDEEP doctoral network are ultimately to provide an intervention development toolbox, supporting the integration of determinants of Physical Activity Behaviours, behaviour change theory and intervention co-creation to aid in the development of evidence-based interventions which integrate top-down and bottom-up interventional approaches. Through utilising determinant knowledge gained through state-of-the-art methodologies, and systematically integrating this knowledge with a co-creative methodology, the INDEEP intervention development toolkit will provide researchers and practitioners across Europe with an evidence-based best practice approach to intervention development, taking into consideration the interactions within a complex behavioural system.

About the position

It is internationally accepted that there is need to advance the effectiveness of public health interventions that improve physical activity behaviours across all populations, while youth have been identified as a particularly important group to target for intervention. Knowledge of determinants of physical activity behaviour, gained through state-of-the-art methodologies, is required to enable the systematic integration of this information with a co-creative methodology, providing evidence-based best practice approach to intervention. To date, limited availability of appropriate cross-European datasets with physical activity behaviours and their associated determinants have hindered the development and of such interventional approaches. INDEEP will address this gap by implementing

state-of-the-art methodologies in the examination of physical activity behaviours and their determinants. This project within the INDEEP doctoral network aims to advance the state of the art for the development of a feasible and scalable approach to the multi-site, multi-national collection of physical activity behaviours and their determinants through i) developing best practice standard operating procedures for implementation in a harmonised multi-site data collection and ii) using process evaluation approaches to examine the feasibility, fidelity and potential scalability of the proposed approaches within the INDEEP doctoral network.

Duties of the position

The research will begin with a systematic review of the literature examining existing quality assessment approaches in multi-site evaluations on physical activity behaviours and/or their determinants in youth. A secondment to the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, under the guidance of [Prof Elin Kolle](#), will be undertaken, during which time standard operating procedures for the harmonised collection of physical activity behaviours and their associated determinants will begin to be developed. Simultaneously, a qualitative investigation (via focus groups and interviews) on factors that influence fidelity of measurement approaches in multi-site data collection will be undertaken, resulting in the development of a process evaluation framework for the evaluation of the INDEEP data collection.

The successful candidate will then be involved in the collection of the INDEEP dataset, which will be guided by the standard operating procedures that have been developed and will conduct the process evaluation of the INDEEP data collection in 6 countries across Europe. A second secondment to AUMC, under the guidance of [Dr Hidde van der Ploeg](#), will assist in the interpretation and presentation of the process evaluation findings, providing recommendations for future implementation of the INDEEP data collection methodologies.

Required selection criteria

- You must have a professionally relevant background in human movement science, epidemiology, public health, health promotion or a closely related discipline
- Must not already hold a doctoral degree
- Must comply with the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action mobility rule: not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Ireland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the recruitment date
- You must have a strong academic background from your previous studies and an average grade of a first- or second-class honours degree (or equivalent compared with the institutional grading scale). If you have a weaker grade background, you may be assessed if you can document that you are particularly suitable to undertake a PhD.
- You must meet the requirements for admission to the Technological University of the Shannon doctoral program
- Good communication and collaboration skills and fluent in English

Preferred selection criteria

- Preference that the student has a Masters degree in a related field of study

- Preference to work in an interdisciplinary and international environment
- Previous experience of development of standard operating procedure
- Previous experience in qualitative research.
- Previous experiences of quality assessment and process evaluation

Personal characteristics

In the doctoral candidate selection process, emphasis will be placed on personal and interpersonal qualities. Important elements to be considered are:

- Be scientifically curious and open to new research challenges, demonstrate persistence in addressing technical problems
- Excellent communication and dissemination skills.
- Ability to work independently as well as in cross-disciplinary teams
- Be self-motivated, focused, and goal-oriented, be committed and keep deadlines, be flexible, reliable, and solution-orientated, be innovation-driven, enthusiastic, and ambitious
- Ability to interact and collaborate with actors in academia, public sector, and industry

We offer

- An inclusive work environment
- Access to state-of-the-art training within the INDEEP doctoral network, at an academic, policy and industry level
- Opportunities to collaborate with discipline specific world leading researchers
- A mobility allowance to support relocation
- A family allowance for the relocation of family (terms and conditions apply)

Salary and conditions

As a MSCA DN doctoral candidate, you will receive a monthly gross pre-tax salary of approximately €3,640. This salary will be subject to additional deductions in line with institutional, governmental and European Commission requirements. The period of employment for this PhD is three years (without teaching duties). Appointment to the PhD programme requires that you are admitted to the Technological University of the Shannon PhD programme within three months of employment, and that you participate in a structured PhD programme during the employment period. It is a prerequisite that you are present at and accessible to the University on a daily basis.

About the application

The application and supporting documentation to be used as the basis for the assessment must be in English.

Please note that your application will be considered based solely on information submitted by the application deadline. You must therefore ensure that your application clearly demonstrates how your skills and experience fulfil the criteria specified above.

The application must include:

- Research statement (max. 3 pages) including:
 - A short explanation of the applicant's motivation to undertake a PhD.
 - How the applicant sees their background as suitable for this position.
 - The applicant's view of research challenges for the selected PhD position, as well as their theoretical and methodological approach to the challenges.
- CV and certificates
- Transcripts and diplomas for bachelor's and master's degrees. If you have not completed the master's degree, you must confirm the submission date.
- A copy of the master's thesis (if applicable). If you recently have submitted your master's thesis, you can attach a draft of the thesis.
- Name and contact information of two referees.
- Include copies and evidence of publications or other relevant research work if applicable.
- Include proof of English language skills (if not the first language of the applicant)

If all, or parts, of your education has been taken abroad, we also ask you to attach documentation of the scope and quality of your entire education, both bachelor's and master's education, in addition to other higher education. In the evaluation of which candidate is best qualified, emphasis will be placed on education, experience, and personal and interpersonal qualities. Motivation, ambitions, and potential will also count in the assessment of the candidates.

General information

If you have any questions about the position, please contact Dr Kieran Dowd (kieran.dowd@tus.ie). If you have any questions about the recruitment process, please email INDEEPRecruitment@tus.ie.

If you think this looks interesting and in line with your qualifications, please submit your application electronically via email to INDEEPRecruitment@tus.ie with copies of all requested documentation outlined above **attached directly to the email** (links to shared folders will not be accepted). Applications submitted elsewhere will not be considered. Upon request, you must be able to obtain certified copies of your documentation. **Note:** Please include "INDEEP DC1 Application" in the subject line of the email for all submissions.

Additional Links:

1. <https://sheresearch.ie/>
2. <https://tus.ie/rdi/graduate-school/>
3. <https://sheresearch.ie/dr-kieran-dowd/>