

## Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

<b>Institution:</b> Durham University
<b>Unit of assessment:</b> 24. Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism
<p><b>Section 1. Unit context, structure, and research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Context and Vision</b></p> <p>Sport and Exercise Sciences research at Durham has been transformed within the assessment period. Identified for strategic institutional growth (see Institutional Environment Template: IET/1.1), and underpinned by ambitious investment (c.£1.2M to date), the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences (DSES) was formally launched in August 2018. This brings Durham, a world-leading (QS Global Ranking 76) and research-driven (Russell Group) institution, into UoA24 for the first time.</p> <p>Originally a research group (five FTE) within a wider School of Applied Social Sciences (returned to Social Work and Social Policy in REF2014), we have a long-standing reputation for excellence in social and health-oriented research (e.g., 4<sup>th</sup> most cited in Europe in sport sociology, 2008-2018). The research group, and now department, have delivered outstanding research-led teaching for over 20 years (top ten ranked in UK's Complete University Guide annually since 2008).</p> <p>Building on this platform, our research vision positions DSES as a global leader in understanding how sport and physical activity promote health and social justice. We focus on underrepresented groups, developing methods to diversify participation in research. We engage in meaningful partnerships, co-creating and -producing research driving inclusion and equality. Critical, ambitious work is prized, and we adopt a moral imperative to positively impact our local, national, and global communities.</p> <p>As an overview, over the assessment period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Research-related staffing has more than doubled</b> (five to 12), alongside a <b>three-fold increase in postgraduate research students</b> (PGRs: now equivalent to over two per FTE).</li><li>▪ Our <b>research laboratories have been upgraded and relocated to a £30M development of Durham's Sport and Wellbeing Centre</b>, complemented by c.£700k of strategic investment in new research equipment.</li><li>▪ <b>We have won over £1M of research funding</b> (over a 1000% increase on £82k awarded in the 2014 cycle), including £230k from RCUK and c.£560k from UK Government; <b>c.40% of research income came from stakeholders who use, and directly benefit from, that research.</b></li><li>▪ Our staff have published six books, 41 book chapters, and <b>over 260 peer-reviewed journal articles</b>. International co-authors span 21 countries, on 28% of outputs.</li><li>▪ Our research has resulted in more equitable sport and health-related policies, used by <b>international and UK governments</b> (e.g., Canada, Botswana, Mauritius; Parliamentary Select Committees, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and <b>transnational organisations</b> (Commonwealth Secretariat, World Health Organisation (WHO)).</li></ul> <p><b>1.2 Structure</b></p> <p><b>1.2i Research Themes</b></p> <p>Our academic, research staff, and PhD students (PGRs) are psychologists, physiologists, sociologists, nutritionists and political scientists. We coalesce into two thematic research groups providing intellectual stimulation and transdisciplinary discussion. Our themes are:</p> <p><b>Sporting Lives – ‘Transforming Sport, Transforming Lives’:</b> Research addresses inequalities in sport participation, following, and governance (cf. UN Sustainable Development Goals 5 Gender</p>

Equality, 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). We work with campaigning groups (e.g., Kick it Out; Disability Rights UK) to identify new solutions for exclusion, widening sport's transformative potential. Core members: POULTON, POPE, RANKIN-WRIGHT, RODERICK, HIND, and SMITH.

Signature research areas include:

- race and anti-Semitism (POULTON, RANKIN-WRIGHT)
- disability rights (SMITH)
- female fandom (POPE)
- lifelong athlete health (RODERICK, HIND).

**Healthy Communities – ‘Moving, Growing, Thriving’:** Research addresses sport and physical activity policies and interventions with respect to health inequalities (cf. UN Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities)). We work with governments (e.g., UK, the Commonwealth) and lobbying groups (e.g., UK Food Poverty Alliance) to promote equitable interventions. Core members: DODD-REYNOLDS, LINDSEY, OLIVER, PHOENIX, SUMMERBELL.

Signature research areas include:

- childhood obesity (SUMMERBELL, DODD-REYNOLDS)
- ageing (PHOENIX, OLIVER)
- sport for development (LINDSEY)
- physical activity prescription (DODD-REYNOLDS, OLIVER).

Themes benefit in terms of mass, reputation, and intellectual stimulation from Honorary Fellows and Professors in Practice, (e.g., KEAY, Endocrinologist; HARLEY, Head of Sport Science, Newcastle FC), international visiting scholars (four in cycle), post-doctoral staff (eight awards in cycle), and PGRs (over 30 trained this cycle). Professors in Practice sharpen the relevance of our work, connecting us to key impact stakeholders. Themes have workload-supported academic leadership, administrative support (.2 FTE), and benefit from extra-institutional perspectives of world-leading funded advisors, from the UK (HOULIHAN, KAY, ALLEN-COLLINSON) and international institutions (BIDDLE, BUTRYN).

## **1.2ii Governance for Research and Impact**

Strategic leadership within the Department is provided by the Research Committee (RC), comprising a Director of Research, Impact Officer, Theme Lead, Director of Postgraduates, Research Staff Representative, and Research Ethics Chair. All role-holders are networked with their Faculty counterparts and Research and Innovation Services (RIS; see IET/2.5).

All roles are workload-supported, held for three years (to enable new ideas to emerge), and democratically elected to provide responsive leadership; elections are staggered to provide continuity. The RC leads annual research planning and investment, reporting to the whole-department Board of Studies to ensure our research strategy is collectively endorsed.

Impact strategy is led by an academic work-loaded impact officer (13% FTE) supported by an impact development officer (50% FTE), a Faculty-wide Impact and Engagement Manager, and RIS to share best practice, broker strategic partnerships and leverage funding.

## **1.3 Impactful Research Strategy**

### **1.3i Delivery of REF2014 Research Objectives: 2014-2020**

Combined within a UoA22-focused School in REF2014 and, when established as a department from 2018 onwards, DSES has delivered on stated aims by:

- Prioritising output quality over quantity, evidenced by: national and international scholarship prizes (Section 4); **nearly a fifth of our outputs (19.6%) are in the top 10% of journals**

**by CiteScore percentile; 13% of publications are in the top 10% most cited worldwide within the field.** Our books are commissioned by high-quality publishers (e.g., Routledge, Taylor and Francis, Sage). Promotion at all levels is on the basis of the four strongest outputs.

- *Major new theoretical, methodological, and empirical developments*, including: theories of female fandom (POPE) and motivational dynamics (OLIVER), approaches to qualitative research (PHOENIX; SMITH), and a landmark Cochrane review of childhood obesity prevention (SUMMERBELL).
- *Increased income generation* REF 2021 period: **£88k spend per FTE (more than 5x the REF 2014 period of £16.5k awarded per FTE)**, and expanded funder portfolio (2014 cycle: 4 funders; 2021 cycle: 14 funders). We secured PI-led funding from three research councils (£230k; MRC, ESRC, and AHRC), UK Government (£560k), and prestigious funders (e.g., the Leverhulme Trust: £95k). **Six sequential grants** evidence successful delivery in these relationships.
- Advancing *interdisciplinary collaboration*. For example, combining our political science, physiology and psychological expertise to critique childhood obesity policies (SUMMERBELL, DODD-REYNOLDS, LINDSEY, OLIVER), resulting in c.£180k from the School of Public Health's Children and Young People programme.

### 1.3ii Research Objectives and Strategic Initiatives: 2018–2028

Our research and impact strategy is a 'living' document, reviewed three times a year (e.g., at strategic 'away' days) and underpinning resource allocation and planning. Achieving department status in 2018 enabled us to create an ambitious strategy for growth over the next ten years, with three key objectives:

RO1: To produce world-changing sport and exercise sciences research challenging inequalities and informing progress towards social justice, health and wellbeing.

RO2: To strengthen partnerships with research funders and policy- and practice-based users, enabling sustained income streams and progressive impact.

RO3: To lead the development and use of inclusive research and impact practices within and beyond sport and exercise sciences globally.

We are delivering on these objectives via investment in strategic initiatives (SIs):

#### **SI1: Building critical mass in identified areas of excellence.**

We are enacting a staffing strategy investing in specialised talent. We have made **8 strategic hires (including 5 expansion posts)** this cycle, recruiting staff from other major universities (e.g., PHOENIX from Bath, SMITH from Birmingham). Appointments bolster research leadership (e.g., SUMMERBELL, from the School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health); our staffing strategy now progresses to building future capacity (Section 2). Appointees are required to demonstrate world-leading research (e.g., via output reviews) and thematic alignment (e.g., strengthening expertise on ableism, ageism, racism). Appointments have been complemented by: (i) investment in infrastructure for cross-council funding bids; and (ii) expanded research capacity via participation in major bids, funding postdoctoral and postgraduate researchers (Section 3).

## **SI2: Structuring research support to drive innovation and collaboration.**

Research support is aligned to our research themes which, in turn, align with inter/national funding priorities (e.g., sustainable development, discrimination, obesity). Targeted investment (e.g., external advisors) has created an environment for stimulating transformational ideas within, across, and between disciplines. **Strategic divestment** in areas lacking critical mass or replicated in other institutions (e.g., performance enhancement) has liberated funding and time.

**Building theme groups on the basis of shared and challenging aspirations** (e.g., reducing health inequalities), rather than narrow disciplinary foci, prevents inertia and enables engagement with wide-ranging stakeholders invested in change (e.g., campaign groups). Using our compact size as an asset, theme groups rapidly share and develop ideas. This is already delivering interdisciplinary outputs, for example, concerning evidence use in physical activity policy (OLIVER, DODD-REYNOLDS, LINDSEY) and redefining energy deficiency syndrome (KEAY, HIND).

## **SI3: Supporting a culture of inclusive research and research integrity.**

We are strengthening our reputation for developing inclusive research practices, ensuring we attract, retain, and deliver partnerships ethically. Examples include:

- **Leading debate and establishing guidelines** (e.g., co-production, DODD-REYNOLDS, 2019 and SMITH, 2020; researching criminal activity in sport, POULTON, 2014; inclusive digital research infrastructure for the Canadian Government, SMITH, 2020).
- Beyond compliance with REF open access policy and the concordat on open research data, **since 2016 all non-embargoed research is deposited on acceptance in Durham Research Online** (open access repository). When not built into grant capture, we draw down RCUK funding (since 2014 over £8k, **31% of publications meet 'gold' criteria**). We use non-proprietary software (e.g., DUBox for classified data). Durham is **4<sup>th</sup> globally in terms of % of open access outputs** (CWTS Leiden Ranking, 2019).
- Registering or publishing protocols (e.g., PROSPERO; Open Science Framework), and **sharing deidentified data** via funder repositories (e.g., ESRC's ReShare) or Durham's online repository (DRO-DATA, accessible internationally through British Library's DataCite).
- **Providing specialised peer review** of ethical applications (e.g., relating to human tissue), supported by the University's legal team (6% of applications received MoD or NHS scrutiny). **Ethics training is mandatory** for staff and PGRs; standardised templates and annual training are provided for best practice data management.
- Funding engagement with disciplinary-aligned professional organisations to develop best practice. In Spring 2020 we initiated and led the first alliance of inter/national sport and exercise societies (over 25) to develop consensus guidelines on inclusive research and impact practices.

## **SI4: Strengthening impact-related culture and practices.**

Since 2018 **we have secured and invested over £100k** to strategically enhance impact. The three pillars of our approach to enabling impact are:

**Pillar 1: Developing sustainable partnerships for systematic and progressive impact generation.**

**Pillar 2: Ensuring work is accessible and translatable.**

**Pillar 3: Using research to engage in advocacy and activism for change.**

1. We prioritise theme-level partnerships to collaboratively plan and deliver impact over time. For example, in 2020 **we invested £25k in developing a shared strategic action plan with the local authority-led Active Durham Partnership; and £27k on creating the 'Inequalities in Sport' stakeholder network.** Partnerships have been supported by impact-related funding from HEFCE (c.£87k) and RCUK impact acceleration awards (e.g., AHRC, RODERICK; ESRC, SMITH).
2. We ensure work is accessible and translatable to stimulate engagement and use. **We have invested £12k in templates** to facilitate production of policy, press and practitioner-facing briefing, blogs, and visual graphic material. Altmetrics demonstrate the success of this approach (e.g., SUMMERBELL's childhood obesity review ranks #5 out of 11,412 Cochrane Database outputs).
3. We consider it essential to engage in advocacy and activism, particularly when work can inform a social justice agenda. We invest in:
  - (ii) producing briefings and recommendations to lobbying organisations (e.g., UKActive), independent think-tanks (e.g., The Sports Think Tank), and policy makers (e.g., All-Party Parliamentary Groups on Obesity and Disability);
  - (ii) publishing consultation responses, and publicly supporting policies (e.g., 2019 Scottish Parliamentary Inquiry on Social Prescribing for Physical Activity); informing guidelines (e.g., 2019 UK Government Physical Activity Guidelines; 2018 Surveillance of NICE guideline PH54); and policy (Section 4 and case studies);
  - (iii) partnering with campaigning organisations (Section 4) and lobbying for change via international, national, and local media, facilitated by our strong alumni presence in key outlets (e.g., BBC Sport).

#### 1.4ii Our Impact Strategy in Action – Case Studies

Our case studies benefitted from: mentoring from RIS, funding for impact acceleration (c.3.5k), cross-department PhD supervisions translating ideas in new contexts, institutional impact funding (c.£11k), and support from our Impact Officer. These investments have enabled long-term partnerships with trans-national research funders and users (Commonwealth Secretariat; WHO), as well as advocacy and activism (e.g., SUMMERBELL's work as co-founder of the charity 'First Steps Nutrition Trust', producing food resources for those most in need (endorsed by UNICEF)).

#### 1.5 COVID-19

Plans outlined in this document are accurate at the time of writing, with recruitment continuing; further details are available in the 'Institutional-level statement on COVID-19.' The pandemic has reinforced the importance of research tackling health and social inequalities, aligned with our expertise, and enabled us to 'road test' our responsive research support with notable successes:

- PHOENIX secured Wellcome Trust funding (June 2020) to produce the pandemic-focused reflective exhibition piece '*In Memoriam*' with artist Luke Jerram, touring Europe and the UK.
- LINDSEY was commissioned via our partnership with County Durham Sport to research how organisations address physical activity inequalities exacerbated by Covid-19.
- SMITH expanded his work on inclusive digital methodologies, co-producing physical activity resources for disabled people during times of crisis (ESRC and Disability Rights UK-funded).

## Section 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

#### Staffing Strategy and Recruitment:

DSES comprises 14 FTE permanent academic staff (12 Category A) and 5 post-doctoral researchers. This cycle we built critical mass in areas of research excellence to produce a high concentration of talent (SO1; e.g., SMITH 84<sup>th</sup> most cited sport and exercise researcher, 2019; SUMMERBELL, 461 most cited globally in General and Internal Medicine, 2019). This was supported by **generous start-up research funds for new appointments (average £80k)**.

Recruitment included targeted promotion (conferences, international media), support for flexible working to encourage diverse applicants, and intensive pre- and post-application engagement with candidates (e.g., multiple informal and formal interviews per person). All appointed staff were required to possess an established record of grant capture to strengthen funder links (RO2). **All candidates offered positions in cycle accepted.**

Since 2014 **our sustained recruitment has secured 8 strategic hires (including 5 expansion appointments)**: 2014: OLIVER; 2015: DODD- REYNOLDS, LINDSEY; 2019: PHOENIX (Associate Professors); 2018: RANKIN-WRIGHT, HIND (Assistant Professors); 2019: TIPTON, SMITH (Professors). Appointments have outstripped student growth, **reducing our staff:student ratio (29:1 in 2014; 16.5:1 in 2020)**. It has resulted in an increase in research capacity and the strengthening of research themes (e.g., In Sporting Lives: HIND adds expertise at the intersections of nutrition and physiology, supporting athlete health research. In Healthy Communities PHOENIX brings new perspectives on physical activity in ageing, working with OLIVER and linking the department to Geography and Medical Humanities). Our recruitment has also advanced our international reputation (e.g., SMITH and SUMMERBELL are global research leaders in their fields).

Our staffing strategy progresses to succession planning and strengthening expertise. We appointed an additional Assistant Professor (Grade 7) in 2020 and have two further expansion posts approved for 2021. **As part of strategic institutional growth (IET/1.1), we will expand into a specialised medium-sized unit by 2028 (18 Category A FTE; 1.5 FTE increase in support staff).**

#### Staff Development Strategy:

Principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (italicized below) are embedded in our research environment, developing and retaining researchers (4); **in this cycle only three staff left, and all appointed for over two years have been promoted.**

Our processes encourage staff to proactively develop their careers (3 and 5), including:

- **Progression:** In 2017 Durham revitalised its progression and promotion process, removing the onus on self-nomination. **All staff** receive annual review of a standardised CV by DSES' committee (membership ex officio, including an external advisor, all EDI trained), followed by written and verbal feedback from the Head of Department. **There are tailored Academic and Research tracks - benchmarks span outputs, PGR supervision, income generation, leadership, and impact.** Progression is supported by mentoring and one-to-one support (HoD). All CVs contain a section for contextualisation.
- **Since 2014, 7 staff have been promoted (compared to none in the previous cycle).** This healthy progression has shifted the department demographic to one of a strong, mid-career base, providing an excellent resource for mentoring and leadership. This informed staffing strategy to recruit Assistant Professors in 2020 and 2021.
- Wider performance rewards include exceptional contribution payments, research leave, and additional research support funding. We celebrate and recognise success publicly (e.g.,

quarterly research newsletter).

- **Independent Mentoring.** All staff have a research mentor (10% outside the department). Mentors focus on confidential personal support concerning research quality, wider career aspirations, work-life balance etcetera. All staff meet frequently with the Director of Research for advice and planning.
- **Dedicated research time:** We use a **standardised workload allocation model to provide 36% of time for research** and related CPD. A minimum of one teaching-free day/week is automatically timetabled, teaching and administration is clustered to facilitate fieldwork or travel, and major administrative roles rotate every three years.
- Staff are eligible for **research leave every seventh term (2.3 years; 90% awarded in cycle)**; additional awards are made after parental leave (1 term) or serving as HoD (3 terms). Our generous research leave system attracts and retains talent and rewards success.
- **Targeted support for Early Career (ECR) and Postdoctoral (PDRA) Researchers.** Assistant Professors have a one-year probation period, including **protected workload time for research (42% FTE)**. Probation is monitored (by HoD), and involves regular mentoring support. **No staff have failed probation in cycle.** Fixed term researchers have mentors, targeted career support, and are integrated to themes and governance (RC).
- **Access to a wide range of development and training opportunities.** All staff receive £1k and workload allocation (100hrs) annually for research development and training. In addition to centralised training (IET/3.3), DSES offers to all staff, free of charge: grant, writing and publication strategy masterclasses, leadership, impact, outreach and public engagement training, formal grant review tailored by scale and funder, shadowing opportunities, and support for fellowships and secondments (in cycle: Public Health England; UKActive).

## 2.2 Research students

### 2.2i Recruitment and Funding:

The Department offers: PhD, MPhil, and MSc or MA by Research (the latter launched in 2018 as a strategic pipeline to PhDs: 2 progressions to date). We support pre-application engagement with staff to discourage misaligned applications and to proactively support high calibre applicants to seek funding. **From an average of two per year from 2014-2018, applications increased to 29 in 2019. Our growing international profile is reflected in a cohort that is over 30% international.**

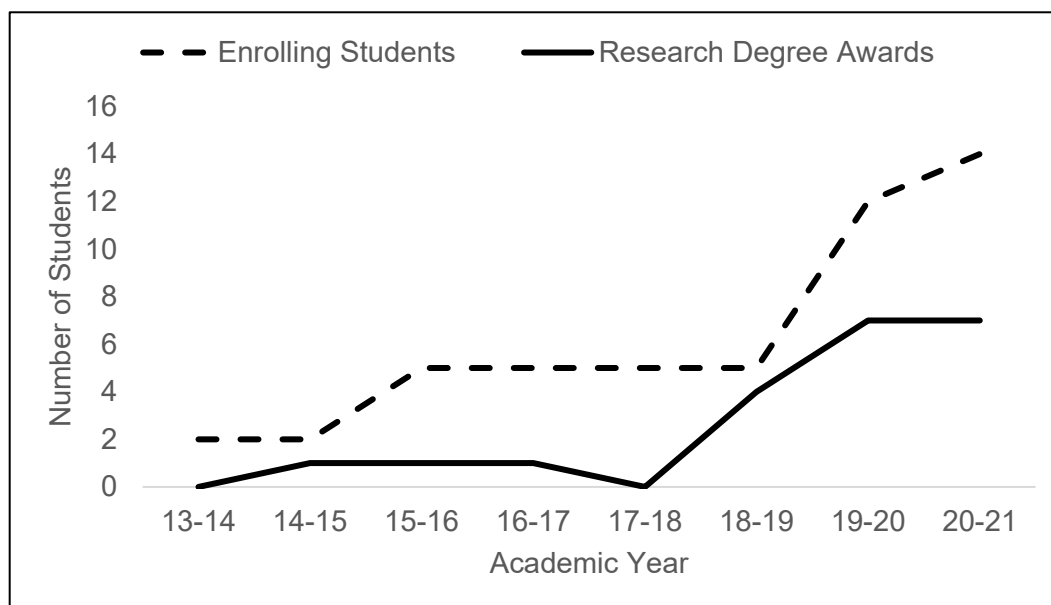
**Since 2014, 82% of enrolling PhD students have secured competitive studentships (55% external)**, compared to a sector average of c.30%. As well as a marker of department, student, and research quality, our track record of supporting students to find funding widens participation and strengthens the student experience (e.g., via funder-led development opportunities).

We secured studentships from diverse funders, including: RCUK (n = 8), governments (e.g., China, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom n = 4), non-academic partnerships (n = 3), institutional investment (n = 3; **Durham receives £4Mpa quality-related funding for research degree supervision**), and as start-up packages for new staff (three in cycle). Since 2014, via the ESRC **North East and Northern Ireland Doctoral Training Partnership (NINEDTP)**; funded to 2022), DSES have secured **seven studentships at a total value of c. £504,000.**

**PhD enrolment has demonstrated rapid growth coinciding with achieving departmental status (2018: Figure 1).** The changing landscape is demonstrated by considering that no DSES-supervised research students graduated in 2013/14, six between 2015 and 2018, and 20 are projected to graduate from 2018-2022. **We enrolled more PhD students in 2018 and 2019, and in October 2020 alone, than in the whole of the last REF cycle (2008-2014: 9).**

Our PGR FTE figures undersell the size and vibrancy of our community given **69% of our PGRs this cycle were co-supervised with leading experts in other departments** (meaning only 0.5FTE is captured in UoA24 data). This demonstrates our transdisciplinary research and broadens scholarship funding routes. Currently we supervise 24 PhD students and c.5 Masters by Research students/year.

*Figure 1: Postgraduate Research Student Enrolment and Completion: July 2013 – Oct 2020*



Note: 20-21 figures demonstrate future vitality of this cohort, using actual enrolment, and projected completion, data.

We plan additional strategic growth in PGRs but, crucially, in conjunction with staff recruitment ensuring capacity to provide excellent training. We target two to three FTE PGRs per FTE, focusing on quality (intellectual, and the student experience) rather than quantity.

PhD numbers will continue to increase through:

- Staff recruitment and increase in unit profile, attracting students with secured funding.
- Winning studentships via membership of funded consortia (Section 4).
- Increasing provision of match funded studentships, provided from institutional incentivisation funding linked with grant capture (10% of direct cost returned to the department; IET/3.3).
- Strengthening the pipeline of talent through expanding our Masters by Research pathway.
- Creating a departmental pathway within NINEDTP at its renewal (2022).

### **Monitoring, Support and Development**

PGRs are supported via:

- Formal induction by the PGR Director, an online PGR module, and Faculty. Supervisory teams complete annual needs analyses and identify courses provided by the Institution's Postgraduate Research Training Programme (see IET/3.5; 90% trained in cycle). **We have a mandatory workshop programme for Year 1**, including: data management and research integrity, and impact generation.
- At least two supervisors, and integration into theme groups. A further two staff form a review team, monitoring progression via written submission and panel at nine, 21 and 33 months



(FTE equivalent). Recommendations are approved by the PGR Director (or HoD) and Deputy Executive Dean (Postgraduate).

- Dedicated offices; administrative (DSES, 0.5FTE), pastoral (college), and institutional (CPD) support.
- Students audit research methods modules; **since 2014 10% of our students completed a Masters or Certificate in Research Methods** (RCUK-funded 3.5 or 3+1 year studentship). Durham's Research Methods Centre provides dedicated training; we support PGRs through mentoring to achieve postgraduate teaching qualifications.
- **There is a dedicated PGR development budget, to support conference attendance, research or training-related travel.** Students access funding for internships, conferences, UKRI-funded placements (two in cycle: Policy Internship, Public Health England; and Canada Globalink Doctoral Exchange).
- PGRs nurture leadership skills and contribute to research governance via representation on Board of Studies and devolved Committees, a Staff:Student liaison committee, and leading theme seminars, meetings, and conferences.
- A **cross-discipline journal club** encouraging critical discourse; **The Theory Lounge** for philosophical discussions; **The Dugout** for peer-supported writing; informal pizza-based **'Research Slices'** events (funded by DSES).

### 2.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are formally embedded in departmental governance, led by an academic (13% FTE workload) and reinforced in all committee terms of reference. **We were awarded an Athena Swan Bronze in 2017.**

As a unit that is currently small but expanding, our demographic profile is challenging to interpret. From 2014, women comprised 57% of category A staff (one of four Professors), and six of seven of promoted staff. **Our senior management team has never fallen below 50% female.**

Of staff declaring ethnicity, none are BAME and 7% originated from outside the UK. Diversifying our faculty is a particular focus over the next cycle. Already we have:

- Proactively targeted recruitment campaigns using international media (28% of applicants in 2020 were internationally-based (50% non-UK country of origin)).
- **Waived bench fees for visiting international staff and postdoctoral scholars (five in cycle),** to raise our profile.
- Invested in our research leadership relating to race, and disabilities, including **partnerships with anti-discrimination organizations.**

DSES policy and practice supports equality and diversity (6) through:

- **Flexible working and focused support, including:** flexible working enabling child/elder care, caring costs as expenses; flexibility in clustering research leave; adjusted workload models for acute pressures, and reduced teaching and administration following extended leave (e.g., for ill-health). We campaigned for and adopted a University commitment (IET/3.3) to provide an additional term of research leave following parental leave; all staff who have taken parental leave (two in cycle) have returned to work.
- **Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of its staff and research students.** Above University policies (IET/3.3), we engender a healthy environment, by: core hours for

meetings (10am-3pm); clustering events to help part-time members engage; allocating five working days/yr for volunteering (25% engaged), and funding informal interactions (e.g., Family Days, 'Scholarly Steps' walks), awareness-raising campaigns (e.g., National Mental Health Day), and targeted training (e.g., Aurora Women in Leadership course, 3 in cycle).

**Equality and Diversity in our REF Submission:** Adhering to Durham's Code of Practice (IET/3.6); our process was piloted (2019) and approved by Board of Studies. The audit committee were all EDI-trained; where outputs of comparable quality encompassed the inclusion threshold, representativeness informed strategic selection. Output distribution/FTE is broadly comparable by gender and career stage (outputs/FTE: assistant (2), associate (2.83), and full (2.75) professors; male (3); female (2.1)). The number of outputs selected is not a metric that impacts on progression, contractual status, or performance management.

## Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

### 3.1 Research Funding and Strategies for Generating Research Income

#### Overview:

Over the census period we secured **over £1M of external research funding (over a 1000% increase on £82k awarded in the 2014 cycle)**. There was a notable increase in research council funding in particular (c.£7k from 2014–2016 to c.£216k from 2017–2020).

Funders were prestigious sources including major UK research councils (ESRC c.£500k; AHRC, c.£200k), UK Government (e.g., National Institute of Health Research (NIHR): c.£500k), EU sources), and charities or trusts (e.g., Leverhulme (c.£95k), British Academy (c.£15k), and the Wellcome Trust (c.£15k)). These diverse relationships provide resilience against dynamic funding landscapes.

During the cycle, **80% of staff secured external research funding**. Given that half our current research-active staff were expansion appointments during the cycle, and the historical early-mid career demographic of the department (only one Professor until 2019), our overall increase in income *per capita* **(2008-2014 cycle (awards): £16.5k per FTE; 2020 cycle (spend): £88k per FTE)** is notable. As predominantly social scientists, funded projects have low equipment costs, therefore proportionately more income bolsters departmental human resources.

Institutionally, Durham's performance and research-intensive status results in considerable quality-related (QR) funding (c.£24.4Mpa); this provides reliable investment sources for growth areas, which included establishing the department (c£1.2M to date).

#### Strategies for generating research income.

- **Participation in large research consortia.** Notable examples include Fuse – the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, part of the NIHR School for Public Health Research. Founded in 2008, Fuse ([www.fuse.ac.uk](http://www.fuse.ac.uk)) is a partnership of the five North East Universities, and one of eight centres with excellence in applied public health research that comprise the NIHR-funded School for Public Health Research (SPHR). **The consortium was awarded £2.25M from 2017–2022, £490,501 of which has come to the Department to date.** SUMMERBELL is a Co-Investigator and the Deputy Director (strategic commitment of 20% FTE), DODD-REYNOLDS sits on the communications group, OLIVER leads the Public Mental Health programme, and five staff are Associate members.
- This approach has been replicated for the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Applied Research Collaboration, awarded **£8.9M for distribution to bid members from 2019-2025**. SUMMERBELL, DODD-REYNOLDS and OLIVER were co-investigators in this bid.
- **Relationships with targeted funders**, via successful grant delivery, review boards, and executive committees (e.g., MRC, NIHR, UKRI commissioning panel; ESRC peer review college; UKRI and Sport England roundtables). Notable repeat funders include NIHR (**funding received every year during the cycle**) and the ESRC (eight awards in cycle). Our strategic recruitment of major research leaders has strengthened these links.
- **Offering high quality support for grant application development.** The restructured Research and Innovation Service (RIS; see IET/4.4) provides expertise supporting applications to major funders, including reviews and an application repository. All staff have engaged in specialised training. Developing our theme groups has bolstered capacity aligned with major social challenges (and funder priorities); their compact size allows us to convene and respond rapidly to emerging calls, offering early-stage multidisciplinary input.

- **Incentivising staff to engage in grant applications. We reward success by providing 10% of the net overhead income on research grants to investigator's individual research funds** (IET/3.3), and, an amount equivalent to 10% of net overheads on research awards to the department, allocated to general research support. Automatic allocation of funding to staff creates 'bureaucracy-light' (application-free) processes for supporting research development (e.g., collaborator visits).

We have a **strong record of delivery** in terms of high-quality outputs and impact from major awards; examples include:

1. An AHRC Standard Award (Open Call: 2015: £243k). POPE is the Principal Investigator on this interdisciplinary (history, sociology, gender and cultural studies) research on female fandom. This has resulted in: an output in a world-leading journal (Sociology), in the top 10 most-read in 2018 (downloads c.5k), editorship of a book series (Routledge), public exhibitions and educational training with cultural heritage partners (National Football Museum), follow-on funding via an AHRC-funded studentship (2018: £153k), and ensured female fans are prominent in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (2018) evidence review of stadium environments.
2. Ten awards from NIHR for projects valuing over £1million, including SUMMERBELL's major Cochrane Review for preventing childhood obesity, downloaded 15,663 times (4th highest of 19,274 articles) in the year of its publication, impacting international policy and practice (see case study 2). This enabled subsequent research funding from NIHR for: Diabetes Prevention Services, Pharmacy-led interventions, and using Islamic religious settings to prevent childhood obesity.

In addition to traditional research funding sources, we engage in **commissioned and consultancy work to strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders and translate research into impact**. For example, SUMMERBELL worked with ECORYS UK on a Department for Education-funded project exploring interventions to ameliorate 'holiday hunger', and OLIVER with Durham County Council on their Older Adults Physical Activity strategy. We have captured c.£80k worth of income, including two PhD studentships, this way.

### 3.2 Infrastructure supporting research and impact.

#### Organisational infrastructure to support research and impact:

We have invested substantially in scholarly infrastructure linked to research themes, including:

- **Five additional academic positions** comprising two Professorships, one Associate and two Assistant Professorships. Institutional funding for three further expansion posts, and an additional replacement post, appointed by 2022, has been secured (2 Professors; 1 Assistant and Associate Professor).
- In addition to recruiting new staff to the unit with a history of research leadership (SUMMERELL, Deputy Director of Fuse; SMITH – DoR), we have created **new research and impact leadership roles with associated workload allocation**, including Research Theme Lead (POPE) and Impact Officer (IO: LINDSEY). Impact-generating activities are coordinated by the IO, assisted by the Faculty's Senior Impact and Engagement Manager (IEM). Working with the DoR, the IO is responsible for the unit's strategic approach to impact, mentoring and supporting grant applications.
- Non-academic support for impact has also been enhanced, through provision of PDRA support for impact acceleration (c.£5k), and a PGR impact support officer (200 hours a year).

Restructuring into themes supports research quality and impact generation via: discursive seminars, 'scholarly steps' walk-and-talk events, hosting visiting speakers (from 5 different countries in cycle), strategic stakeholder networking events (e.g. Active Partnerships), mentoring, reviewing and feedback, funding prioritisation, and collective publication, dissemination (e.g., SL: Political Studies

Association; HC: International Society for Physical Activity and Health), and impact strategies.

We develop talent via **our annual 'Pathways to PI' programme**, supporting early and mid-career staff to undertake specialised training for grant applications. **This supports staff to progress from Co-Investigator to Principal Investigator roles**; successes include first prestigious grants as PI for POPE (AHRC) and RANKIN WRIGHT (British Academy), as well as progression to leading larger-scale programmes of research (e.g., OLIVER, NIHR-funded CO-I 2017; PI 2020).

*Research Governance and Support structures are outlined in Sections 1 and 2.*

### **Operational Infrastructure supporting research and impact:**

Durham has strengthened institutional research and impact support (see IET/2.5) and committed specific strategic investment in UoA24 (£1.2M to date). Key unit-level investments include:

### **Technical and research and impact support staff:**

- **We have expanded from 1FTE of research-related support to 2.2 FTE**, including: a full-time Department Manager, a 0.5FTE Operations Administrator, a 0.5FTE Senior Research Administrator, designated centralised finance hub support (0.2FTE in the department) and from RIS supporting grant development, operations, and research environment activities.
- Durham's central hub for Research and Innovation support enables tailored yet broader horizon scanning for funding and opportunities to integrate with cross-departmental bids. Our **IEM brokers strategic partnerships and advises on leveraging funding to maximize impact (e.g., Research Impact Fund and RCUK Impact Acceleration Accounts)**. The department's Impact Officer works closely with The Policy Hub in particular, who have supported the establishment and management of stakeholder relationships with national and local government (see case study one) and the four UK legislatures.
- **Technical support has increased** from 0.52FTE in 2014 to 0.75FTE in 2019, to provide additional capacity for staff and PG research, operation of radiation-based equipment and facilitating applied research and performance-focused testing.

### **Estate and facilities:**

- A new suite of research laboratories built as part of a **c.£30M investment into Durham's Sport and Wellbeing Centre, more than doubling our research-related floor space**. Housed alongside performance and community engagement teams, three new laboratories expand our research capabilities and have improved accessibility (vital for themes' work with participants with disabilities, clinical groups, and older adults):
  1. **Human Performance Laboratory (200m<sup>2</sup>)** – for applied sport and health research, contributing principally to *Sporting Lives*-housed research exploring adaptive responses of muscle hypertrophy, and functional outcomes of nutritional and exercise interventions.
  2. **Phlebotomy Laboratory (15m<sup>2</sup>)** for sub-clinical sampling and storage (e.g., muscle biopsies), contributing to research exploring effects of concussion and dietary alterations.
  3. **The Truscott Imaging Suite (40m<sup>2</sup>)** – for 'gold-standard' body composition assessment, HIND's partnership with global medical imaging company, GE Healthcare secured installation of a new state-of-the-art dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA) scanner. The DXA will be used to underpin methodological developments (advancing clinical scan applications) and identifying new models of athlete and patient risk.
- DSES is a formal partner in the **cross-department Durham Centre for Imaging**. This facility provides a range of high-precision scanning equipment, is shared between the University

and South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust, and is used by the *Healthy Communities* theme for inter- and multi-disciplinary research with clinical colleagues.

- Our previous teaching-focused laboratory (200m<sup>2</sup>) has been **converted to specialised postgraduate research space** with capacity for over 30 students. We have simultaneously invested £82k in refurbishing staff offices to accommodate growth.

#### Equipment:

Since becoming an independent department in 2018, **capital equipment investment has increased year-on-year:**

*Table 1 Capital expenditure*

Year	Spend
2018	65k
2019	256k
2020	605k

Indicative investments in equipment strengthening natural-science capacity include match-funding a formal research partnership with GE Healthcare, resulting in the Truscott Imaging Suite and a Lunar iDXA (worth c.£120k), and securing an Echolight Portable Qualitative Ultrasound that resulted in successful seedcorn grant capture from the N8 (partnership of eight research-intensive northern universities) for assessing bone strength in children (c.£10k).

Institutionally, the department lobbied for enhanced access to major archives and collections (IET), including the Telegraph Historical Archive (1855-2000), supporting our research exploring sporting histories and discrimination in media over time.

#### 3.3 Further strategic investment secured (see IET4.2):

- In the next cycle, staff offices will **relocate to Mill Hill Lane (currently Durham's Business School), as part of a £5.5M refurbishment**. We will be co-located with the Department of Sociology and the School of Government and International Affairs, to facilitate interdisciplinary solutions to global social challenges. Additional laboratory space has been allocated within Engineering's Christopherson Building, **enabling 24-hour technical support and sharing of key resources for human tissue management**, underpinning our work on chronic health outcomes of sporting engagement.
- The new offices will include space for staff, PGRs, visiting faculty, and flexible areas for partner organisations and themes to work together (to strengthen impactful relationships). Open social spaces (e.g., café) are embedded for supporting staff well-being.

## **Section 4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society.**

### **4.1 Building strategic partnerships:**

Building partnerships is a strategic mechanism expanding the reach of our contributions. We target partners who fund and use research, investing both in initiating collaborations and participation in major research networks, attracting funding to our research areas.

Since 2014, DSES has strengthened collaborative relationships through:

- Strategic underwriting of staff leadership in major research networks (e.g., 20% of SUMMERBELL's FTE to Deputy Directorship of Fuse – awarded £2.25M from 2017–2022);
- Workload allocation for external roles (average 1.7/FTE) shaping funder priorities (e.g., grant review boards; trustees; governors; UKRI Commissioning Panel);
- Match-funding initiatives (c. £150k invested since 2018);
- A Masters by Research pathway (Section 2) enabling new partners to fund smaller-scale projects (e.g., Durham County Council).
- Mobility funding for secondments to, or hosting of, collaborators (£1k/FTE/yr, 50% uptake; 'virtual' residences available to widen access);
- Leveraging Durham's prestigious internal fellowships (e.g., Institute of Advanced Studies) to host visiting researchers for a term (including accommodation);
- Formalising relationships with long-standing partners (e.g., Honorary Research Fellows);
- Our flexible working policy supporting engagement in *pro bono* work with charitable partners (c.£80k of staff time since 2014), resulting in funded partnerships (e.g., OLIVER's mental health research with The McPin Foundation).

Collectively these strategies have broadened our collaborative networks (**since 2014, 27.5% of outputs feature international collaborators, and 55.9% national collaborators**). Successful collaborations facilitated by our research environment include:

- Building on HIND's global research collaborations (e.g., Oxford University Bone Health and Athlete Weight; the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, Olympic Athlete Bone Health; trans-national Global Rugby Health Project), the department secured a 4-year research partnership with GE Healthcare (industry partner) via investing c.£70k in a match-funded PhD and specialist ethics support, alongside upgrading general technical support capacity.
- Work with local authorities (LINDSEY, OLIVER) to reduce regional health inequalities, via Durham County Council's Executive Leadership Panel for their Strategic Implementation Framework for Physical Activity, and Northumberland's Rural Health Advisory Commission. The partnerships have involved: an employer-funded PhD studentship; a shared strategic action plan (£25k investment); and commissioned research to inform strategy.
- Collaboration with the Universities of Toronto and British Columbia (2019-2020; SMITH), funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, produced best practice guidelines for open science in qualitative research. This was supported by a virtual collaborator visit, grant development support and workload for research development.

### **4.2 Major Research Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships:**

Our staff lead and participate in large-scale, multi-institution research partnerships, including:

- **Fuse – the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health** and the **NIHR School for Public Health Research (Section 3)**.
- **North East and North Cumbria Applied Research Collaboration (funded to £8.9M from 2019-2025)**, founded with a vision to promote "better, fairer health and care at all ages and in all places". DODD-REYNOLDS, SUMMERBELL, and OLIVER were co-applicants, providing

sustainable access to funding opportunities into the next cycle. OLIVER sits on the National Cross-ARC Mental Health Collaboration, shaping funding priorities within the consortium.

- **North East and Northern Ireland Doctoral Training Partnership (NINEDTP) – funded to £2M/yr from 2107–2022.** This ESRC-funded doctoral training centre is a partnership across seven institutions. RODERICK has served as Chair of the NINEDTP Management Board. Staff can access previous applications and receive feedback on drafts during the submission process.
- **N8 Research Partnership**, a collaboration of eight research-intensive universities in the North of England. The AgriFood programme has funded pilot work (c.£12k) on food insecurity and obesity (SUMMERBELL) and milk and bone density (DODD-REYNOLDS, HIND).
- **The Matariki Network**, an international group of nine research and impact-intensive universities developing research and global social responsibility. Emergent partnerships span exercise referral (with Otago - OLIVER), bone markers (with University of Western Australia - HIND), and a guest edited journal (with Upsala, Otago, Ulster – DODD-REYNOLDS).

#### 4.3 Research Institutes

We have strong links with Durham's Research Institutes (IET/2.2), enabling interdisciplinary knowledge exchange (e.g., 7 RCUK-funded cross-department studentships). The institutes funded new networks and pilot work (c.£18k in cycle), establishing research in physical activity policy translation (with Geography, Anthropology, Education), and untold sporting histories (with Sociology, History).

Notable institutional leadership:

- DODD-REYNOLDS and OLIVER co-direct the Physical Activity special interest group within the **Wolfson Research Institute of Health and Wellbeing** (WRIHW), spanning psychology, nutrition, physiology, business, anthropology and sociology.
- DODD-REYNOLDS (Co-Director) and SMITH (Fellow) contribute to **Durham's Research Methods Centre**, established in 2019 to enable innovation and training.
- PHOENIX (Academic Management Group) and OLIVER (ESRC-funded studentship) collaborate within the **Institute of Medical Humanities**. Founded with a £1M Wellcome Trust grant in 2018, the IMH is a nexus of research improving human health. **PHOENIX's research on weather and movement is funded through a further IMH £1M Wellcome Trust grant (2020–2024).**

#### 4.4 Relationships with key research users, beneficiaries or audiences.

Paid and voluntary roles provide insight into emerging policy environments and challenges 'on the ground' and facilitate rapid translation of research findings. Examples include;

- **Governments and Policy makers.** *Consultancy for:* Commonwealth Secretariat, Organisation for Economic Development, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK), Ministry of Youth and Sports (Bangladesh), Sport England. *Advisory work for:* All Party Parliamentary Groups, UEFA, NICE, UNICEF, Barca Foundation, Public Health England. Repeated funding (e.g., from NIHR, ESRC, Durham County Council, Sport England) is indicative of successful delivery.
- **Lobbying and Campaigning Organisations.** *Advisory roles:* The Sport and Recreation Alliance; The Sports Think Tank (LINDSEY); Disability Rights UK (SMITH), UKActive; The International Longevity Centre (OLIVER); *Research Partners:* TrainBrave (HIND, KEAY), Women in Sport (POPE), UK Food Poverty Alliance (SUMMERBELL), Kick it Out (POULTON), Headway (HIND).
- **Delivery Organisations and Professionals.** Including: Laureus Sport for Good Global and European Summits (supporting over 100 sport-based projects), Talented Athletes Scholarship



Scheme, Osteoporosis Essentials Course (to clinicians), British Association of Sport and Exercise Medicine training modules.

Given our explicit research focus on inequalities and underrepresented groups, DSES engages with a range diverse communities and publics via:

- **Patient/public interest groups** (e.g., National Osteoporosis Society Patient Interest Group; Disability Rights UK co-production and impact group).
- **Media**, creatively (e.g., livestreamed workshops), and both printed (e.g., BBC Sport, Daily Mail, Guardian, The Herald, The Huffington Post, International Business Times, Reuters, South China Morning Post, Telegraph, USA Health and Fitness, New Zealand Herald) and broadcast (BBC One, Two, 5 Live, World Service, Radio 4; TV5 France; Sky Sports News). Our research stimulates widespread interest (e.g., HIND Conversation article >40,000 reads, translated into five languages and training materials in India). HIND's work has featured in two feature-length primetime documentaries ('The Truth about Menopause'; 'Trust me, I'm a Doctor – Bones').
- **Museums and Outreach teams**. Including: Exhibitions, workshops and resources (e.g., POPE: National Football Museum; PHEONIX: New Walk Museum).
- **Educational resources**. Including: podcasts and factsheets for UK Coaching and the Sport and Recreation Alliance (RANKIN-WRIGHT), a MOOC (LINDSEY), web-resources for families managing low food budgets (First Steps Nutrition Trust, SUMMERBELL) and athletes and coaches (e.g., KEAY, HIND).
- **Working with partners in developing areas**. Including: Newton Funding (classed as Official Development Assistance) with the Universities of Colombo and Sri Jayewardenepura in Sri Lanka (OLIVER); Leverhulme Trust grant with University of Ghana, University of Development Studies, Ghana, and the University of Dar es Salaam (LINDSEY).

#### 4.5 Wider influence, contributions to and recognition by the research base:

- **Journal editorship and reviewing**. Over this REF period we served as Editors (International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics; Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health), and Associate Editors (10 additional journals) of high-quality international journals, and as editors of book series (Palgrave, Routledge). We provide regular peer review for over 100 journals (average eight/FTE). Our reviewing activities are available on Publons.
- **Service on grant committees, learned societies, and for funding bodies**. Our research leaders serve as the President of the International Society of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise (SMITH), Deputy Director of Fuse (SUMMERBELL), and on major funding boards (e.g., NIHR's Public Health Research and Health Technology Assessment Programmes; the cross-RCUK-funded UK Nutrition Research Partnership). All staff engage in grant reviewing (e.g., NIHR; RCUK; Hong Kong Government Health Bureau; European Cooperation in Science and Technology; Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada).
- **Notable Committees, Prizes, Fellowships, and Honorary Appointments**. Seven International Honorary Fellow- or Professorships (including in Seoul, Ireland, South Africa, and Greece), and notable committee memberships (e.g., expert members of the Policy UK forum and roundtables for the European Union Committee of the Regions, and Public Health England; Chair of the UK-Ireland International Society for Clinical Densitometry; Chair of the Disability and Physical Activity working group for the 2019 Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) Guidelines; Appointed Core Member of the CMO Physical Activity Expert Group for Communications).

Notable prizes include: Staff - Celia Brackenridge International Research Award (2018: RANKIN-WRIGHT); Best Paper, *Spinal Cord* (2018: HIND); Paper of the Year, *Sociology* (2014: RODERICK); PGRs - Portugal's Order of Merit Medal (2020: BENNETT); Fellowship, University

of Moscow (2019: GEMAR); Young Researcher Award, European Association of Sociology of Sport (2018: METCALFE); Presentation Awards, European Federation of Sport Psychology, British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (2016, 2017: HODGE).

- **Hosting and participating in conferences.** Since 2014 we have presented at an average of two conferences/yr/FTE, delivered invited keynotes (c.20 UK, five International), and to a wide range of organisations (e.g., Belgian Football Doctors' Association; British Dietetic Association; British Library; Senate House Library; Sri Lankan Physiological Society). We hosted the 2015 Political Studies Association 9<sup>th</sup> Sport and Politics Conference, and in 2021 will host the Covid-delayed 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise.

#### **4.6 Wider influence and contributions to the economy and society:**

**In addition to our case studies**, wider contributions of our research to society include:

- **Raising public and policy-makers' awareness of the need for inclusive stadia.** POPE's AHRC-funded work has reached a media audience of over 1 million, informed stakeholder workshops (with the National Football Museum, 100 attendees to date) and is cited in the DCMS-commissioned (2019) Standing at Football Evidence Review Report. She is developing more inclusive policy via invited an expert roundtable for UEFA (2018) and the advisory board for the UK Government's Sports Ground Safety Authority (2019).
- **Changing health policy, commissioning, and practice**, via our work on exercise referral schemes (DODD-REYNOLDS, OLIVER). Our research: featured as national best practice (Public Health England, 2014); informed amendments to national guidelines (NICE, 2018); reversed decommissioning and informed Northumberland's Physical Activity Strategy (2017); and trialled embedded technology in Wales' National Exercise Referral Scheme (2014-2017).
- **Improving industry and public health collaboration:** work on nutritional environments (SUMMERBELL, HILLIER-BROWN) informed Public Health England guidelines, resulting in the co-development of a toolkit for local councils and food businesses to promote healthier take-away food. Portion boxes sold over 0.5 million in North England and Scotland in 2017 alone.
- **Creating the first physical activity guidelines for disabled adults.** SMITH's evidence synthesis, funded by Public Health England, was used to create the UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines for disabled adults (2019). SMITH co-produced an infographic to communicate these recommendations, subsequently translated and used in Spanish, Finnish, South Korean, and South African dialectics. The work informed the 2020 South African Policy Framework on Physical Activity and Health for Children and Adolescents.
- **Campaigning for and developing more inclusive research methodologies.** Funded by Sport England, in 2020 SMITH worked with Disability Rights UK to produce, deliver, and test evidence-based co-production workshops and webinars. The research resulted in Sport England embedding for the first time co-production principles into their new policy strategy.

DSES' strategy, investment, and approach to collaboration reflects our unifying research and impact philosophy that the long-term and complex challenges currently facing sport (e.g., athlete welfare, discrimination) and wider society (e.g., obesity, poor mental health) can only be addressed by working together to challenge ingrained disciplinary, methodological, and practice-based conventions. Building on our work thus far, DSES will be at the forefront of these developments throughout the next cycle, creating transformational ideas that can be translated into action.