EDGE in Sport & Physical Activity Lab

University of Manitoba

The Environments Designed for Gender Equity in Sport & Physical Activity (EDGE) Lab is seeking an individual who is passionate about gender equity in sport and shares our EDGE Lab mission and values to join our team as a **funded PhD trainee**.

Sports environments are often highly gendered, rife with strong beliefs about 'appropriate' activities for girls and boys. This may impact participation opportunities, but it can also be detrimental to girls' health. For example, girls rupture their anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), a major stabilizer of the knee, up to 6 times the rate of boys. Research to date blames unmodifiable sex-based characteristics (e.g., hormones) for the higher risk of ACL injury but has had little impact on lessening the incidence of such injuries. Our research team conceptualized a novel 'gendered environmental approach' to ACL injury. This approach understands ACL injury to be a biosocial phenomenon, where sporting bodies are situated in social and physical environments that shape the athlete, overtly or not, in highly gendered ways.

In partnership with Sport Manitoba, the purpose of this project is to explore how gendered sport environments may contribute to the conditions for increased ACL injury risk for girls during their adolescent sport development (aged 11-16 years) phase, and to mobilize findings into an online coaching educational resource. Methodological approaches will include document analyses, field observation, and semi-structured interviews with athletes and staff.

The successful candidate will pursue a degree in-person through the Applied Health Sciences PhD program at the University of Manitoba. The student will work alongside their advisor, Dr. Joanne Parsons, and international, interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners through EDGE Lab on this 4-year funded project. The student, supported by their advisors and the Project Manager, will lead qualitative data collection, analysis, and knowledge mobilization activities. This is a unique PhD opportunity to bridge research and practice as the project is embedded in a collaborative partnership with Sport Manitoba.

This position offers support of $30,000/year plus a University of Manitoba top-up of $12,500 for a total of $42,500/year. This funding includes a stipend to support tuition and living expenses, plus potential for additional pay related to research assistant work. The student will be expected to apply, with the support of the research team, to applicable funding opportunities throughout their studies (e.g., Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Doctoral program; Research Manitoba PhD Research Studentship). The student will receive support for conference travel and project-related expenses.

The prospective start date is September 2025.

Qualifications

Required:

- A research-based Master's degree in Health or Social Sciences or related discipline
- Experience with qualitative research methods (e.g., conducting interviews, field observation, and thematic analysis)
- Relevant and/or transferable subject matter academic knowledge
- Knowledge of gender social theory and/or theoretical approaches to gender and health
- Ability to work independently and show initiative

Preferred:

- Previous experience with youth engagement
- Co-production experience with non-academic communities/groups
- Lived experience of sport
- Knowledge of applicable software including Microsoft Office and NVivo

How to apply:

Interested applicants should send the following to Dr. Joanne Parsons at Joanne.Parsons@umanitoba.ca:

- A cover letter describing how your experience and expertise specifically align with the requirements for this position, and the goals and work of EDGE Lab
- A curriculum vitae
- Copies of transcripts (unofficial are acceptable)
- A copy of or link to your Master's thesis and any academic publications
- The names and contact information for 2 academic references

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Only those candidates who are shortlisted for an interview will be contacted.