

Invitation to Tender:

Community Coach Development

Aim:

To explore how a nationwide Community Coach Development project could help community coaches to feel better connected and supported in their role.

Proposal submission deadline: 5pm, Friday 14th July 2023

Introduction:

UK Coaching wish to work with a university or independent consultant/agency to conduct primary research to understand how in-situ coach development might support volunteer community coaches to positively affect a feeling of connection and support. The wider aim being to encourage a culture of ongoing learning in for coaches in community sport.

In-situ coach development opportunities and communities of practice are increasingly becoming recognised as vital parts of coach learning. However, these opportunities often only formally exist for coaches within a performance pathway.

Notably, both Sport England and Sport Wales have shown the value they put on community coach development in recent strategies and projects.

Similarly, reality based/in-situ coach development is an area growing in prominence among NGBs and coaching organisations. Taking coach development to the coaches is gradually becoming seen as an increasingly important part of a coach's learning.

At this moment in time, NGBs and coaching organisations tend to fall into one or more of these groups:

- Want to support more coaches in-situ but don't know how to.
- Want to support more coaches in-situ but don't have the resource to.
- Are supporting coaches in-situ but at a higher/performance point in the pathway.
- Don't yet see the value of in-situ support for coaches.

Being a coach in community sport can often be a lonely and disconnected place (Cronin et al., 2022). Coaches must often manage many stakeholders, all with varying needs and wants, leaving coaches under pressure as they juggle the breadth of the role. There is a feeling of 'additionality' as coaches find the demands of the volunteer community coach soon become overwhelming, with one NGB recently suggesting their volunteer coaches are "super-saturated".

We know that fewer coaches have access to a mentor now than they did in 2019, and that there is a large discrepancy between male and female coaches accessing support from a mentor (Coaching in the UK survey, 2022). We aim to make it the norm that in the future all volunteer community coaches feel supported and connected in their coaching role.

Research aims:

We would like to develop an action research project running alongside a Community Coach Development pilot that explores four areas:

- a. What it feels like to be a volunteer community coach
- b. How volunteer community coaches would make use of a coach developer
- c. How best to support and enable the coach developer in their role
- d. What the challenges of supporting volunteer community coaches are and how best to solve them in this setting.

The data gathered will be used to inform the creation of a community coach development model for the UK, building on existing experiential insight and Sport Wales research (2022).

Possible research questions include, but are not limited to:

1. Describe to us how it feels to be a volunteer community coach.
2. What have you found the most challenging about being a volunteer community coach?
3. Imagine you had someone supporting you, how would you use them?
4. How would it look and feel if coach support was perfect?
5. What support do you feel you need to assist you in supporting coaches in your community?
6. What training do you feel you need to equip you to support these coaches?
7. What could UK Coaching do to help you in your role of supporting coaches?
8. What can you see as some of the barriers or challenges to supporting coaches?

Methodology

Whilst we have set out some suggestions below, the methodology and research design remain flexible because we welcome alternative and innovative proposals from interested researchers and experts:

Approach

We look forward to engaging in a collaborative approach with the researchers on this project. Our role in this collaboration will be to help direct the impact of the work towards strategic objectives and 'on the ground' priorities. In addition, we welcome researchers to submit proposals in collaboration with others if necessary (i.e., from two or more higher education institutions/agencies).

Context and participants

The research is focused on community coaching, with a view to exploring how community coaches might best be supported by a local mentor/coach developer. Therefore, UK Coaching would assist in the creation of a pilot community coach development project to run alongside this research. Research participants from across a wide variety of backgrounds is important to us (e.g., urban, rural, low/high social-economic backgrounds, child/adult groups of participants, disability participants and coaches, individual and team sports).

Ethics

UK Coaching requests that the researcher(s)/agency conducting the research gain ethical clearance from their institution/company prior to data collection. The timelines outlined at the bottom of this document reflects the needs of this request.

Methods

The research may involve mixed methods, such as quantitative and qualitative surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

Analysis

Analysis is to have a conceptual underpinning that contributes theoretical explanations for practical recommendations.

Outputs/deliverables:

- All data transcripts.
- An executive summary of the research including key findings and recommendations.
- Six case study examples that demonstrate the challenges coaches face (3) and how a coach developer would be best supported (3), from across a variety of demographics.
- A presentation of the findings to UK Coaching internally with implications and recommendations for UK Coaching, key partners (e.g. NGBs, coaching organisations), and policy makers.
- A full written report.

Suggested Timescales:

Proposal deadline	14th July 2023
Awarding of tender	21st July 2023
Pilot start	30th September 2023
Pilot completion	31st January 2024
Findings, summary, and report completed	31st March 2024

Budget:

A maximum budget of up to £15,000 (inc. VAT) is available for this work.

Proposal requirements:

Please submit a written response via email, to the address below, by 5pm, Friday 14th July 2023.

Please limit your response to no more than five pages of A4, detailing:

- Your proposed methodology (including research design; participant sampling method; data collection methods; analysis approach and underpinning theory).
- How you will engage with research participants and maximise response rates.
- The research team (e.g., their experience and expertise conducting relevant research projects).
- A breakdown of fees for undertaking the work.
- A full timetable for completion of the project.

- How you will manage the research and work collaboratively with UK Coaching throughout the project.

Proposals will be considered on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Methodological approach	25%
Experience and expertise	25%
Value for money	15%
Ability to complete project on time	15%
Ability to engage with research participants and UK Coaching	20%

Management:

The project will be managed by a member of the Senior Coach Developer team from UK Coaching.

To work collaboratively and meet deadlines, UK Coaching requests regular updates throughout the project.

Contractual details:

On being awarded the work, the consultant will be required to sign and return a copy of UK Coaching's contractual agreement. This agreement includes terms and conditions applicable to the research project.

Proposals (by email) and any queries should be directed to:

Martin Dighton

Senior Coach Developer, UK Coaching

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