

Invitation to Tender: Duty of Care in Coaching¹ Establishing a Culture of Care in Sport Coaching: Understanding Coaches' Care Needs

Proposal submission deadline: 15 October 2021

Introduction

UK Coaching wish to work with a university or independent consultant/agency to conduct primary research to understand care in coaching with a focus on the coach and their context.

Research has started to recognise coaching as a caring context and connected this to helping athletes/participants flourish. Understandably, much of the research has remained athlete/participant centric, with a consensus that coaches have a 'duty to care'. However, this duty can be demanding and has been connected to detrimental effects on coaches' wellbeing. Despite these effects, it seems that limited work has positioned coaches' care experiences (i.e., of being cared for) as the central focus of investigation. As a result, little is known about the care, advice and guidance coaches require to perform their roles effectively and sustainably. This lack of understanding is problematic when organisations, coach employers, deployers, and those in context (e.g., support staff, performance directors, participants/athletes) have a duty of care towards coaches. Indeed, the role of UK Coaching is to be - here for the coach - therefore understanding the care needs of coaches is a pertinent avenue of research.

Research Aims

The aims of the research are twofold. First, the research aims to re-position coaches in the discourse of care in coaching. In doing so, the research hopes to reconceptualise care responsibilities in coaching contexts. On broadening these possibilities, the research also aims to develop an understanding about care that goes some way towards establishing a culture of care in coaching.

Key research questions include, but are not limited to:

- What are the care needs of coaches?
- How do coaches' care needs differ across different domains (health, recreation/participation, performance/talent, elite, etc)?
- What do those in sporting contexts know about care? (i.e. Do coaches know where to go if they have a problem? Do coaches know what processes/procedures/systems are in place to protect them?)

This research project offers the opportunity to drive the direction of care in coaching, aggregating coaches' voices and developing a proactive approach, through a national organisation with political and educational reach.

¹Coaching is defined as helping an individual to enhance their experience of physical activity and sport by providing guidance and support aligned to their individual needs and aspirations (Coaching Plan for England 2017).

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 (i.e. from two or more higher education institutions/agencies).

- **Context and participants**

The research is focused on care in coaching, with a view to exploring how coaches might be better supported by policy, those in their context (e.g. colleagues), and by UK Coaching. Therefore, the research project would benefit from several contexts and participant groups (e.g. coaches, coach developers/mentors, performance directors/club members/sport development officers, participants/athletes) from across different sporting domains (e.g. participation and performance).

- **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 reflect 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.
- Three to four case study examples that demonstrate caring cultures from different coaching domains (e.g. fitness and health settings, participation sport, performance sport) and reconceptualise sporting roles in relation to care.
- A presentation of the findings to UK Coaching internally and at Regional Expo events (the new UK Coaching conference format), with implications and recommendations for UK Coaching, key partners (e.g. NGBs, leisure service providers), coaches and policy makers.

Timescales

An indicative timetable is provided below:

Activity	Timing
Invite to Tender	1 October 2021
Proposal submission deadline	15 October 2021
Researcher(s)/Institution/agency appointed	w/c 18 October 2021
Initial meeting with UK Coaching	w/c 18 October 2021
Fieldwork completed	30 March 2022
Presentation of Findings	w/c 25 April 2022
Completion of Research	1 May 2022

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 Friday 15 October 2021.

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

- An introduction to the research problem as you see it
- 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 (i.e. their experience and expertise conducting relevant research projects)
- The fees for undertaking the work
- A full timetable for completion of the project.
- How you will manage the research and work 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	20%
Ability to complete the project on time	15%
Ability to engage with research participants and UK Coaching	15%

Management

The project will be managed by a member of the research 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.

Contact details

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

Dr Lauren Downham

ldownham@ukcoaching.org

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