

## **Workshop K: Strengthening the Management and Performance of Community Sport through National Sport Club Surveys: Global examples and New Possibilities**

### **Aim and Content:**

Organised sport participation opportunities delivered through local sport clubs are a vital part of communities around the world. Yet, community sport clubs perpetually struggle to achieve their full potential given existing capacity constraints, sport funding mechanisms, and shifting political imperatives (Doherty & Cuskelly, 2020). These factors can impact their governance, growth, and sustainability. Clubs may benefit from robust and reliable data to help them understand how to build capacity and overcome particular challenges. Yet, the community sport sector has lacked large-scale, national level data in many countries. Rather, research has often focused on single regions or sports, and lacked consistent measures over time. National surveys allow for multi-sport, nationwide focus on club management and performance and can provide insights into trends in key metrics such as membership size, financial performance, governance, equity, and other themes. Given recent calls for greater alignment among sports and governing levels, it is timely to invest in national surveys as an essential data source to help guide decision-making and policy advancements (e.g., Breuer et al., 2020; Naylor et al., 2022).

While national sport club surveys currently exist in only a few countries, and are at various stages of development, implementation and mobilization, they offer an important foundation for future research. Thus, the purpose of this workshop is to share knowledge and experience related to national community sport club surveys in multiple countries including Canada, New Zealand, and Germany. Through presentations and conversations, we aim to spark interest and insights for research that can strengthen the management and performance of community sport clubs. We will also discuss avenues for engagement with sector practitioners to build sport club capacity in key areas identified through national survey data. The international audience at EASM provides an ideal global forum to discuss this line of research and its future potential for enhancing community sport worldwide.

We believe this session will be of high interest to conference attendees, particularly given the Belfast 2023 conference theme “Forward Thinking in Sport Management: Strengthening Inclusivity, Accessibility and Sustainability in Sport.” A robust discussion of national level instrumentation and data across several countries offers an important step forward for sport management.

### **Format:**

The format of this 60-minute workshop will include three short presentations by panel members who will highlight national sport club survey initiatives and trends in Canada, Germany, and New Zealand. Following the presentations, there will be an interactive and collaborative discussion where attendees will be invited to participate in small and large group discussions about the opportunities and challenges for national surveys and potential new research questions. The workshop will also include a strong emphasis on theory-practice integration through discussions of effective ways to mobilize knowledge gained through national surveys to enhance the management of community sport clubs. Examples will be featured to stimulate discussion about engagement with practitioners and new possibilities for greater theory-practice integration.

No additional abstract submissions will be sought; rather, this workshop will provide an extended time (60 minutes) beyond a traditional conference track presentation which will allow for more in-depth discussion of theory building, methodology, and knowledge mobilization related to national community sport club surveys. This format will also encourage networking and potential new collaborations.

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