

The Research Unit “Learning & Talent in Sport” – LET’S
Institute of Sports Science and Clinical Biomechanics
Strategy 2017-2020

Introduction

The Research Unit for Learning and Talent in Sport (LET’S) builds on the Institute’s original foundations of human movement. Today the unit focuses on applied research in three principal areas (see Figure 1).

First, the unit has a focus on innovative approaches to teaching and learning particularly with emphasis on practice aspects, such as activated learning. LET’S challenges the assumptions and theories underpinning the status quo on these subjects, and investigates the potential for change and improvement of methods of teaching human movement through action research.

Second, with the growing interest in elite sports, the unit has a solid research focus on sports psychology, predominantly in the field of talent development. LET’S takes a holistic approach to look at social relations and their influence on athlete development and performance, and particularly on successful talent development environments.

Third, with the University of Southern Denmark’s increasing emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship, LET’S is encouraging new ways of thinking and learning through its research in entrepreneurship education for practitioners involved in human movement. Inside that a major research interest is "Human Movement Computer Interaction" which seeks to obtain an understanding of the human who moves and learns through interaction with computers and at the same time study the design process of developing such concepts.

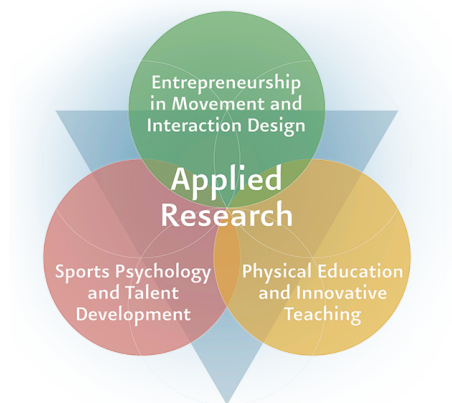


Figure 1. The three research areas in the research unit Learning & Talent in Sport

LET’S researchers have background in sport science, pedagogy, psychology, and interaction design. We work in collaboration with researchers and practitioners both inside and outside the University to address key research questions in our three research areas. We collaborate with relevant end-user groups in the development of innovative approaches to applying knowledge to the areas of human movement practice. The description, understanding and explanation of each of these areas of movement

practice are documented through qualitative research methods. A substantial proportion of the practical elements of our research work are undertaken with practitioners in their professional settings or in the Lab for Play and Innovation at the Department of Sports Science and Clinical Biomechanics.

LET'S Mission

- LET'S develops and tests innovative strategies in teaching human movement and sport psychology to enhance participation, learning, performance, and talent development.
- LET'S exposes students, partners, and the public to the latest theories and practices of teaching and learning human movement and facilitating talent development in sport.
- LET'S stimulates entrepreneurial thinking in the fields of teaching human movement and sport psychology to equip practitioners with the skills to implement innovative ideas.

Vision

The research unit is recognised across Denmark and internationally as *'the place to go'* for the latest innovative thinking and research, in talent development, pedagogy, and entrepreneurship of human movement.

Values

The following values help us towards accomplishing our mission and fulfilling our vision:

- We are open and respectful to our partners and to each other
- To create reliable knowledge, we work as an independent research unit
- To gain the most innovative knowledge we challenge ourselves and step-by-step raise our research standard
- Focus of our applied research is serving practitioners – educator, coach, and students – in sport and health.

Definition of success

Our major recent accomplishments and current activities include:

- **Funding:** Building on its identified competencies and strengths, the research unit has received external funding for projects in its three main research areas by at least writing one application in each research area every year:
 - Pedagogy of human movement
 - Talent development and sports psychology
 - Entrepreneurship and innovative technologies for learning and movement.
- **Staff:** To strengthen the profile and research power of the unit we work to increase the number of staff with research privileges.
- **Publications:** We have a well-established publication culture with a focus on co-publication, cooperation and feedback.
- **Cooperation:** We operate as a cohesive group through knowledge sharing and collaborative activities.

- **Talent development:** We operate from a solid talent identification and development (TID) strategy, which is visible in recruitment and retention of members for the unit and in the way, we support junior researchers.
- **Internationalization:** We work to establish and maintain international relations. We collaborate on research projects and publications with international universities, and LET'S is represented in international networks in its three research areas (e.g., Nordplus).
- **Outreach:** We have developed successful collaborations with private enterprises to develop new technologies for pedagogy of human movement, talent development, sports psychology, entrepreneurship and innovative technologies. We have ongoing dialogue with our end-users.
- **Public relations and dissemination:** We have a national and international reputation for our contribution to innovative applications of research, as evidenced by our popular publications, seminars, and entries on web pages, blogs and social media.
- **Results** of our research and education are evident through the uptake of new practices in Danish contexts of the pedagogy of human movement, talent development, sports psychology, entrepreneurship and innovative technologies.

Key External Influences

We have identified some key factors in our operating environment that influence LET'S strategy development and implementation (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Key contextual factors considered when developing LET'S strategy



Figure 2, The logo and slogan of LET'S