



FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER  
UNIVERSITÄT  
ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG

PHILOSOPHISCHE FAKULTÄT  
UND FACHBEREICH THEOLOGIE

Open Position – 3-year PhD, full-time, at the Department of Sport Science and Sport, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany), as part of the

## MSCA Doctoral Network – SUPER

‘Sustainable Sports and Physical Activity for Equity and Resilience’

Fellow 9 – Sustainable sport events

### Title

PhD position | MSCA Doctoral Network | SUPER | ‘Sustainable Sports and Physical Activity for Equity and Resilience’

*SUPER is a MSCA Doctoral Network funded by Horizon Europe [grant number 101226793] and SERI [REF-1131-52304]*

SUPER will train 17 Doctoral Fellows as transdisciplinary leaders to develop and promote sustainable, equitable physical activity and sports that prioritise both human and planetary health in the face of world finite resources and a changing climate. The network will bring together sports and physical activity industries, organisations and practitioners with leading researchers and experts across fields such as sports & behaviour sciences, human health, education, social science, planetary health, circular economy, environmental sciences and sustainable development to conduct empirical research and cascading skill-building with the following objectives:

Objective 1: Establish the theoretical and evidence base as well as a research roadmap on the impact of sports and physical activity on planetary health, resources and climate and, conversely, the impact of climate change on sports and physical activity. This, to support policy, practice and novel solutions.

Objective 2: Develop novel solutions for sports and physical activity policy, infrastructures, equipment, practices and promotion that bring co-benefits by simultaneously increasing population resilience to climate change equitably and lowering the impact on the planet and planetary limits.

Objective 3: Test and demonstrate these novel solutions in key sectors through living labs: Health Care, Professional and Amateur Sports, School/Education, Urban Design, Workplace/Occupational Health.

Objective 4: Provide evidence-based guidance and scientific support to future generations and all stakeholders who promote, manage, or use sports and physical activity: industry, practitioners, organisations, policymakers, funders, and the public, on making sports and physical activity sustainable and equitable.

Objective 5: Build capacity for future generations and among the sports and physical activity industry, organisations and practitioners for developing innovative, sustainable and circular solutions and practices and become planetary health, climate and equity advocate, educators and actors through an integrated open cascade training programme.

## **SUPER - Doctoral Candidate Research Project (Fellow 9 – Sustainable sport events)**

The position is based at the Department of Sport Science and Sport in Erlangen, Germany, and requires regular on-site presence. Remote work is limited to a maximum of one day per week.

The main objective of the research project of the doctoral candidate is to engage in transformative research to create and implement solutions for more sustainable grassroots and professional sport events. The research project is expected to strengthen the evidence-base on the negative environmental impacts of sports, in particular by focusing on travel distances to nature sport sites or to participate in league play. By doing so, the project might potentially confront sport federations with the high greenhouse gas emissions that they cause. Potential solutions shall target structural changes within Sport Federations (e.g. optimizing game schedules/formats) in order to reduce travel distances in sport. To achieve this, the fellow will:

- 1) Investigate the drivers of the negative impacts of sports on planetary health
- 2) Inquiring how sport federations make decisions on the future of sport, game formats, and game schedules
- 3) Supporting one sport federation to try to reduce the negative impacts of their sport on planetary health

The Doctoral Candidate will be expected to:

- Report on findings by publishing scientific articles, resulting in a PhD dissertation;
- Present findings at (inter)national meetings/conferences;
- Contribute to the wider work of the SUPER project
- Contribute to educational activities of the department and within the consortium.

### **Supervisors**

- 1) PD Dr. Karim Abu-Omar, karim.abu-omar@fau.de
- 2) Prof. Dr. Heiko Ziemainz, heiko.ziemainz@fau.de

### **Requirements**

#### **Essential**

- Eligible applicants must possess or be finalising a Master's degree or an equivalent degree in a relevant discipline for SUPER. Possible disciplines for this position include: environmental sciences, social sciences, computer sciences, public health, sport sciences
- Knowledge or practice skills in transformative/transformational or action research or co-production/design methodologies

- First hand experiences in grassroots activism for issues of social and climate justice
- Excellent English language proficiency, also in writing
- Applicants must be available full-time to start the program in October 2026

### **Desirable**

- Open-minded, critical thinker, team player, committed, strong academic writing skills

### **Eligibility Conditions**

- Applicants do not already hold a doctoral degree.
- Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of recruitment (Germany) for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before the recruitment date. Compulsory national service, short stays such as holidays, and time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not taken into account.

### **Application Deadline**

Sunday 19th April 2026

### **We Offer**

The MSCA programme offers competitive and attractive working conditions. The successful candidates will receive a monthly salary in accordance with the MSCA regulations for doctoral candidates:

- Living Allowance: €4010 (subject to [a country correction coefficient](#))
- Mobility Allowance €710
- Family monthly ([if applicable](#)): €660

All amounts are subject to tax, employer, employee and pension contributions.

The research project should result in a PhD thesis.

### **Selection process**

Our selection procedure is open, transparent, merit-based, impartial, and equitable, in line with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2005/251/oj/eng>).

The selection procedure will consist of the following steps:

- Eligibility check: The Recruitment Committee will check each application is complete and that applicants fulfil the eligibility criteria described in the previous section.

- Screening: Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and suitability based on the criteria listed for each position.
- Online interviews: The short-listed candidates will be interviewed by a Selection Committee that will include the recruiting Principal Investigators. Selection committees will bring together diverse expertise and competencies and have an adequate gender balance.
- The recruiting institution will notify the selection outcome after the interview.

### **Additional Comments**

For more information about this position, you can contact PD Dr. Karim Abu-Omar ([karim.abu-omar@fau.de](mailto:karim.abu-omar@fau.de))

We are hosting two information sessions on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 for those interested in applying for a PhD fellow position with SUPER. The session will start with a 15-minute presentation and then there will be a Q&A. We are running two sessions to ensure maximum global reach. Both sessions will be the same so you should only attend one. Sign up here:

[Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026, 10am UK time – sign up here](#)

[Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026, 6pm UK time - sign up here](#)

### **How to apply?**

Send your motivational letter (1-2 pages), BA/MA transcripts and CV (as pdfs in one file) to [emilia.kaflovska@fau.de](mailto:emilia.kaflovska@fau.de)

Please, do not write your motivational letter by using AI tools.

For any further questions, please contact [karim.abu-omar@fau.de](mailto:karim.abu-omar@fau.de)

**Closing date for applications is April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026**