



Research Centre	School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies, Institute of Education
Post title	Postdoctoral Researcher <i>Outdoor learning and Risky Play</i>
Level on Framework	Level 1
Post duration	11 month Fixed Term Contract, Part time (1 day per week)

Dublin City University

Dublin City University (DCU) is a leading innovative European University. It is proud to be one of the world's leading Young Universities and is among the world's top 2% globally. DCU is known as Ireland's University of Impact, with a mission to 'transform lives and societies' and focuses on addressing global challenges in collaboration with key national and international partners and stakeholders.

DCU has over 20,000 students in five faculties spread across three academic campuses in the Glasnevin-Drumcondra area of North Dublin. Thanks to its innovative approach to teaching and learning, the University offers a 'transformative student experience' that helps to develop highly sought-after graduates. DCU is currently No. 1 in Ireland for Graduate Employment Rate, and for graduate income (CSO).

DCU is a research-intensive University and is home to a number of SFI-funded Research Centres. The University participates in a range of European and international research partnerships. DCU is also the leading Irish university in the area of technology transfer as reflected by licensing of intellectual property.

As a 'People First' institution, DCU is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - a University that helps staff and students to thrive. The University is a leader in terms of its work to increase access to education, and is placed in the world's Top 10 for reducing inequalities in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

Background

The School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies is one of six schools within the DCU Institute of Education. The School contributes to a range of high-quality undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across the education landscape. Through its teaching and research the

School is centrally engaged in transforming the Irish education system and is a significant contributor to knowledge creation and policy development in the field of education.

The Project

The 'Adventurous Play and Outdoor Learning' APOLE project seeks to develop and improve pedagogical competences of primary school teachers, teaching assistants and other staff in outdoor learning and risky or adventurous play and to measure the impacts on children. This will be achieved through collaborations with school partners and their communities, teacher education providers and other stakeholders. The specific postdoctoral project focuses on:

- contributing to the knowledge base on outdoor learning and adventurous/risky play, specifically current understanding and perspectives on these in Ireland,
- identifying the key competencies that primary school teachers, and other staff need in order to facilitate high quality outdoor learning and risky play
- and evaluating the impact of outdoor learning and risky play on children.

This will be achieved through a rigorous research programme involving but not limited to engagement with teachers, parents, school children, initial teacher education students and educators and other stakeholders; and dissemination through peer-reviews journal publications and conference papers.

The Role

The School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies invites applications for a fixed term postdoctoral researcher role in Outdoor learning and Risky Play. The position is available from no later than the 1st October 2023. This postdoctoral position is funded by Erasmus+ KA2. The position is based in Dublin City University and is a part of the 'Adventurous Play and Outdoor Learning' APOLE project as described above, which is a collaboration between Dublin City University and three European partner Universities and 4 primary schools from each partner country. The overall aim of the APOLE project is promoting and integrating the practice of outdoor learning through weekly risky or adventurous play activities in primary schools.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the position include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Conduct collaborative research with the DCU project leads to the highest ethical standards in a variety of settings, including primary schools
- Carry out any administrative work associated with the programme of research
- Attend and present results at project progress meetings
- Recruiting and gaining informed consent from a variety of participants including parents and young children
- Organising and conducting interviews and focus groups
- Managing an online survey
- Analysing qualitative and quantitative data
- Liaising with internal and external stakeholders

- Engage in the dissemination of the results of the research for the relevant stakeholders in the appropriate form, including publishing and disseminating research outputs in peer-reviewed journals
- Carrying out additional duties as may reasonably be required within the general scope and level of the post

Qualifications and Experience

Essential

- Postgraduate qualification in Education at Doctoral level in the area of Outdoor Learning;
- Strong academic background in outdoor learning, risky play and primary education in Ireland;
- Research experience relevant to the position, including experience with research ethics, researching with young children and working with mixed methods, including quantitative and qualitative data;
- Strong communication skills;
- Ability to work in a team and to take responsibility to contribute to the overall success of the team;
- Proven ability to prioritize workload and work to strict deadlines.

Skills

- Excellent written and oral proficiency in English (essential).
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proven ability to prioritize workload and work to strict deadlines.
- Ability to work in a team and to take responsibility to contribute to the overall success of the team.
- Strong problem-solving abilities.

Candidates will be assessed on the following competencies:

Discipline knowledge and Research skills – Demonstrates knowledge of a research discipline and the ability to conduct a specific programme of research within that discipline

Understanding the Research Environment – Demonstrates an awareness of the research environment (for example funding bodies) and the ability to contribute to grant applications

Communicating Research – Demonstrates the ability to communicate their research with their peers and the wider research community (for example presenting at conferences and publishing research in relevant journals) and the potential to teach and tutor students

Managing & Leadership skills - Demonstrates the potential to manage a research project including the supervision of undergraduate students

Dublin City University is an equal opportunities employer.

In line with the Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015, the University is committed to equality of treatment for all those who engage with its recruitment, selection and appointment processes.

The University's Athena SWAN Bronze Award signifies the University's commitment to promoting gender equality and addressing any gender pay gaps. Information on a range of university policies aimed at creating a supportive and flexible work environment are available in the [DCU Policy Starter Packs](#)