



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Chair "Transforming the Lives  
of People with Disabilities, their Families  
and Communities, Through Physical Education,  
Sport, Recreation and Fitness"

## UNESCO Chair

### Transforming the lives of people with disabilities, their families, and communities through Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness

The UNESCO Chair was officially launched on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015 by President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins. The establishment of the UNESCO Chair reflects the long term commitment of the Institute of Technology Tralee to the area of social justice particularly as addressed by Article 30 of the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (1978). The core purpose is to Mainstream Diversity through Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness.



Sport, as a mirror of society, has been proven through history to have the capacity to mobilise change. Benefits of sport extend from an individual to a societal level, across; human flourishing, health, gender equality, social integration, social capital, peace building & conflict resolution, economic development, and as a mobilising agent for social change.



In working towards Mainstreaming Diversity the UNESCO Chair has designed a brand logo that indicates UniversAbility. The brand indicates Universal Accessibility, recognising this ability as a dynamic and continuous process.

The Chair holds a global monitoring function for dissemination and advisory purposes. The mission centres on changing minds through influencing policy and changing lives through innovative practice and partnerships. The Chair leads a global partnership working in the domains of quality inclusive Physical Education, Sport, Recreation and Fitness as part of a broader intersectional human rights agenda. This focuses on the social inclusion of marginalised groups in keeping with the goals of the United Nations and specifically those of UNESCO. The Institute of Technology Tralee, with the establishment of the UNESCO Chair, is reinforcing and internationalising its commitment to the fields of inclusive practice and universal access. In Ireland, the Institutes partner on Campus, the CARA National Adapted Physical Activity Centre, will continue to provide a lead nationally in facilitating, coordinating and advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities; while the UNESCO Chairs national and international remit and partnership commitment will work to complement, support and showcase the work of the CARA Centre.

IT Tralee's UNESCO Chair builds bridges between academia and civic society, policy makers, legislators and society as a whole. The Chair encompasses the Institute's staff and students, its partner network, and is





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guided by its Chairholder, Dr Florian Kiuppis. Chair activities focus on the CRAFT strategic components i.e. Communication, Research, Advocacy, Funding, Training and Education. The Chair has cultivated meaningful partnerships between a variety of key stakeholders, and leads on a flexible planning process which is aimed at bringing policy and practice closer together. The Chair will help to inform policy decisions, establishing new teaching initiatives, generating innovation through research initiatives and actions.

## Current Projects and Initiatives



The objective of the UFIT project is to refine and transfer resources for Vocational and Educational Training (VET) trainers. It equips fitness professionals and managers with a toolkit for Universal Management and Practice that aims to provide them with sufficient knowledge, competence and skill to work with people with disabilities in fitness environments. UFIT draws together a Sector Skills and Knowledge

Alliance to maximise the impact of the programme and to ensure responsiveness to labour market needs.

[www.justdoufit.com](http://www.justdoufit.com)



The UNESCO Chair participated in a European project led by The Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA) in collaboration with other partners. The Project is called "Recall – Games of the Past – Sport for Today" and it aims to use Traditional Sports and

Games (TSG) as a vehicle to encourage universal participation in the daily lives of young people. The role of the UNESCO Chair in this project was to work towards mainstreaming diversity by *inclusivising* each of the TSG. <http://recallgames.com>



The European inclusive Physical Education Training Project launched in 2009 and was adopted internationally by many higher education teacher training institution and by many allied professionals for in-service training or lifelong learning. It is currently undergoing complete review to encompass the scope

and international remit of the UNESCO Chair. This will embrace UNESCOs quality PE guidelines and will have relevance in school and out of school contexts and into post/-conflict, post/disaster and developing regions. Website will soon be available.





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## EWOS ABILITY LINK\* KIT

The EWOS ABILITY LINK\*KIT PROJECT is an initiative developed in close cooperation between the European Paralympic Committee and SPIN Sport Innovation. The project is undertaken in the light of the European Week of Sport (EWoS) 2015 and it is key to sustainably connect the Para-Sport sector to this new European flagship event for sports promotion. The vision is that the kit will help national and local disability sport stakeholders to contribute to future EWOS events and that local events will also create sustainable higher day – to – day participation in sports and health enhancing physical activity for and with people with a disability. <http://www.europaralympic.org/>



The UNESCO Chair is designing and piloting a knowledge growth programme encompassing Disability Awareness and Disability Inclusion training in Togo and Ethiopia that provides an understanding of disability and hands/on practices to include children with a disability in sport and play activities, and ultimately to encourage mainstreaming inclusion in development and humanitarian programming. Partners in this project are: CARA, Plan International, Togolaise Paralympic Committee.



The Chair joined the Global Partnership for Children with Disabilities Task Force on Physical Activity and Sport and also the Task Force on Inclusive Education. Both are global multi-stakeholder coalitions with the secretariat held by UNICEF. <http://www.gpcwd.org/>



The Chair is a founding member of Commit to Inclusion International – a global campaign aimed at Increasing physical activity and sports for children with disabilities acknowledging the societal, not just an individual responsibility that demanding a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary, and culturally relevant approach. The Campaign calls on the sector to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are realized and that its work is inclusive of everyone.

<http://committoinclusion.org/international/>

