



L-R Colin Allen, Dr Sarah Partington, Dr Matt Sutherland, Dr Dimitra Skoumpopoulou, Marie Foalle, Dr Longzhi Yang

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Northumbria strengthens its support for business

Northumbria University, Newcastle, has announced it has secured three new Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), as its collaboration and support for businesses continues to grow.

In the first of the new KTPs, Northumbria will be working with leading charity The SportsAid Trust. Academics and PhD students from the University will also partner with Newcastle-based business services specialist CheaperGroup, and Belfast construction experts ESS Modular.

All three projects will run for two years and have received financial support from the Government's KTP programme. KTP aims to help businesses improve their competitiveness and productivity through the better use of knowledge, technology and skills that reside within the UK knowledge base. These successful KTP projects, funded by UK Research and Innovation through Innovate UK, are part of the Government's industrial strategy.

SportsAid helps promising young athletes in the UK with financial support, recognition and personal development opportunities during the critical early stages of their careers. Taking a multi-disciplinary approach, Northumbria academics from subject areas including Business, Health and Life Sciences and Computer Science will work alongside colleagues at SportsAid to develop new ways to support these athletes, and new processes for monitoring performance.

Project lead Dr Matthew Sutherland, Senior Lecturer at Northumbria's Newcastle Business School, said: "SportsAid already provides a hugely valuable service for these talented young athletes, some of whom can also feel vulnerable and a little lost, as they find their way in such a highly competitive environment. Through this KTP we can help take this support to an even higher level – and by involving academics from multiple disciplines we can ensure we take a holistic view to improve and innovate around the full range of services provided."

Colin Allen, Company Supervisor from The SportsAid added: "This is an extremely exciting and timely project. The sport sector is waking up to its duty of care for athlete welfare and wellbeing, this new athlete monitoring system could be 'game-changing', helping to facilitate a genuine cultural change. We are looking forward to once again teaming up with Northumbria University to deliver this innovative initiative."

Dr Longzhi Yang, Associate Professor in Computer and Information Sciences at Northumbria, said: "The partnership with SportsAid provides us an ideal platform to apply and further advance our research in the field of Artificial Intelligence; this project will innovate the athlete monitoring system using modern Information and Communication Technologies, and thus allow athletes to gain an extra edge from the services delivered by SportsAid".

Dr Dimitra Skoumpopoulou, Senior Lecturer at Newcastle Business School and Co-Supervisor on the KTP said: "The new system will enable SportsAid to

provide improved support to its young athletes while it will equip them to better understand the challenges athletes face in this highly competitive environment”.

Northumbria has a track record of excellence in KTPs across many different industries and sectors. For more information on KTPs with Northumbria please visit: www.northumbria.ac.uk/business

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Contacts



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

Head of Corporate Communications (interim)

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Ruth Lognonne

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk