



**Title:** Doctoral Studentship

**Application Closing Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Proposed start date:** 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Location:** Hartpury University, Gloucestershire

**Stipend:** £13,000 per annum

**Contract Type:** Full Time (3 years)

**Area of Research:** Reducing risk factors which impact dog welfare through injury in Flyball in the UK

Flyball is gaining in popularity, yet a recent study identified a 39% injury prevalence in flyball dogs, similar to findings for agility dogs. Obstacle collision has been implicated in agility injuries and the biomechanics of agility dogs evaluated. However, no comparable research has been conducted for flyball, where little restriction on the type of box used results in a substantial variation in the biomechanics of box contacts. Consequently, epidemiological work is required to ascertain the impact of specific competitive and training practices on the development of different types of injuries in flyball dogs. If a specific style of box is associated with more biomechanically favourable parameters, industry guidance could be developed to standardise the box design used for training and competition to prevent injury. For the running and jumping surface, flyball competitors favour different types of matting which can vary in its degree of compliance. Given the variation in matting used, quantification of the limb kinetics and kinematics of flyball dogs would enable an evidence based recommendation to be made regarding surface type.

This PhD seeks to explore: i) the epidemiology of flyball injuries ii) the effect of floor surface on the biomechanics of a flyball run; and iii) the effect of box type on the biomechanics of a flyball turn. The goal of this PhD is to generate data that helps flyball dogs to engage in beneficial exercise whilst minimising the risk of the development of injuries that could compromise welfare. Prior experience of biomechanics, multi-variate statistical analysis and confidence in using mathematical or statistical software would be welcomed.

This project is being conducted in collaboration with the British Flyball Association (BFA).

For more information and for an initial discussion please contact [Alison.Wills@Hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:Alison.Wills@Hartpury.ac.uk)

### **Description of studentship:**

Hartpury is pleased to be offering one funded studentship to start on 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. This studentship will be based in the Animal and Agriculture Department at Hartpury University. This is a unique and exciting opportunity to become part of new Postgraduate Community in an idyllic rural setting, with world leading facilities undertaking impactful and cutting-edge practice-based and industry related research. University of the West of England is the awarding body for this degree.

Studentships comprise tuition fees at home / EU rates and a stipend of GBP 13k per year tenable for 3 years. Alongside their research project, the successful candidate will be asked (as a condition of their stipend) to deliver up to 7 hours per week teaching or research support within the Department in which the PhD is hosted.

### **PhD Studentship Selection Criteria:**

The following criteria will be taken into account when considering applications:

- The strength of your professional and academic profile, as demonstrated through previous study and/or professional experience
- The quality, invention and viability of ideas relating to the research project you are applying for
- The contribution you are able to make to the Hartpury research community and your host department, in terms of both research and teaching

Candidates should also be aware of the following:

The normal expectation is that applicants will hold at least a 2:1 or a Masters qualification from a UK university or a degree of comparable standing from a university outside the UK. The candidate's degree relevant to the studentship should demonstrate their potential for practice-led research or alternative evidence of research aptitude.

Applicants whose first language is not English require a recognised English language qualification. The minimum entry requirement is GCSE English at grade C or above or IELTS score 7.0 or TOEFL score 600 (or demonstrable equivalent).

### **Applying for a PhD studentship:**

To apply for a PhD studentship you must send the following documents to [Human.Resources@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:Human.Resources@hartpury.ac.uk):

- A curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages)
- A covering letter outlining your suitability for the studentship
- A recent piece of critical writing you have completed (max 3000 words)
- If English is not your first language, certification of English language qualification

Applications that do not arrive by Midnight (UK time) on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November will not be considered.

If your application is selected you will be invited to attend an interview on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. All applicants must ensure their availability on this date.

### **Key dates:**

13<sup>th</sup> November 2020: Deadline for submission of applications

18<sup>th</sup> November 2020: Interview invitations sent to shortlisted candidates\*

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020: Interviews at Hartpury

4<sup>th</sup> December 2020: Studentships announced

11<sup>th</sup> December 2020: Deadline for accepting studentship

4<sup>th</sup> January 2021: Studentship begins

\* Please note that by submitting an application you are confirming your availability to interview on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020.

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices**

reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks along with other relevant employment checks.

*Hartpury values a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.*

