

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Physiotherapy



POSITION DETAILS

Position Title	Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Physiotherapy
Classification	Academic Level B
Position Number	7015342
School/Office	School of Health Science
Division	Provost

POSITION PURPOSE

This position is dedicated to advancing research and practice in physical activity interventions for individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI). It plays a pivotal role in designing and implementing evidence-based, community-focused programs, leading multidisciplinary teams, and ensuring rigorous ethical and governance standards. The role contributes significantly to the University's research excellence through high-impact publications, stakeholder engagement, and successful grant acquisition. Additionally, it fosters academic development by mentoring students and supporting knowledge translation that informs policy and improves health outcomes for people with SCI.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The contracted project, Increasing Access to Physical Activity for People with Spinal Cord Injuries: The Train the Trainer Model, is scheduled to start October 2025 to October 2029. The T3 SCI Model is a community-based program designed to improve access to physical activity for people with SC), by training exercise professionals to deliver safe, inclusive, and affordable programs. Co-designed with Spinal Cord Injuries Australia and consumers, it will be implemented and evaluated through a two-phase process: updating and evaluating the program for scalability, then testing it via a hybrid Type III trial in community gyms. The project aims to increase local access to exercise, aid professional skill development, build long-term skills and capacity in community gyms, and assist the development of an adaptable model that can be used for broader disability inclusion.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 1. Research Design & Implementation:**
 - Develop, pilot, and evaluate community-based physical activity interventions for people with SCI.
 - Oversee and perform ethics applications, recruitment, data collection, management, and advanced statistical or qualitative analyses.
- 2. Project Leadership & Management:**
 - Coordinate multidisciplinary teams (clinicians, exercise professionals, consumer advisors) to ensure project milestones are achieved.
 - Maintain compliance with ethics, safety, and governance requirements.
- 3. Knowledge Translation & Dissemination:**
 - Prepare manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals and present at national/international conferences (e.g., World Congress Physiotherapy (WCPT), International Spinal Cord Society Meeting (ISCoS)).
 - Engage with stakeholder workshops, consumer panels, and policy forums to inform practice and policy.
- 4. Grant Development & Funding:**
 - Contribute to successful applications for competitive funding
 - Develop research briefs and reports for partner organisations (e.g., NDIS providers, spinal injury charities).
- 5. Supervision & Mentorship:**
 - Co-supervise Honours, Master's and PhD students and support undergraduate research projects within the physical activity domain.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

Essential Selection Criteria

1. PhD or equivalent in Physiotherapy, Exercise Physiology, Exercise Science, or related field.
2. Demonstrated record of designing and coordinating clinical trials evaluating health interventions, ideally with clinical populations.
3. Proficiency in advanced quantitative (e.g., mixed-effects models, R/SPSS) and/or qualitative methods.
4. Excellent written and verbal skills, with evidence of high-quality publications and presentations.
5. Demonstrated ability to work with multidisciplinary teams and engage consumers/clinician stakeholders.

Desirable Selection Criteria

1. Experience in securing or assisting with grants focused on chronic condition management.
2. Established links with community organisations, NDIS providers, local health districts or rehabilitation networks.
3. Prior teaching experience or curriculum development in physiotherapy or allied health.
4. Background of consumer-led research and co-production methodologies.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

This position reports to Associate Professor Camila Quel De Oliveira, the Director of Academic Program, Physiotherapy.

This position will assist the Director of Academic Program, Physiotherapy in the supervision of HDR students.

Success in the role will be dependent on developing and maintaining positive relationships with:

- The School of Health Sciences Dean, senior leadership, and discipline leads.
- Academic Colleagues in the discipline group, School, and University
- Professional and support colleagues within the School and wider University
- Casual Academic staff
- Research Services and Graduate Research School
- Research Theme Champions

CHALLENGES

- Balancing responsibilities across research, team coordination, stakeholder engagement, funding.
- Aligning goals and expectations across multidisciplinary teams and diverse stakeholder.
- Ensuring timely completion of project in accordance to grant schedule, including timely Ethics approvals and participant recruitment

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

The University expects that all employees are aware of, and comply with legislation and Western's policies and procedures relevant to the position, including but not limited to:

- [Code of Conduct](#);
- [Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Management System](#);
- [Western Sydney University Professional Staff Agreement 2022](#);
- [Western Sydney University Academic Staff Agreement 2022](#);
- Anti-Discrimination principles, Equal Employment Opportunity and staff and student equity.

Approved by: Professor Tony Rossi

Date: 28th August 2025