

# Global Sports & Human Rights Research Network (GSHRRN): Meeting Summary

## (4 Dec 2023, Geneva)

---

The first in-person meeting of the Global Sports & Human Rights Research Network (GSHRRN) took place on 4 December 2023 in Geneva on the sidelines of the [Sporting Chance Forum 2023](#). It was a hybrid meeting attended by 38 people. The participants enthusiastically supported the idea of a more formal research network. It was agreed that it would be a global interdisciplinary network with CSHR steering the activities of the Network and the [Asser Institute](#) performing a coordinating function as the secretariat of GSHRRN.

Several potential ideas, activities and initiatives for the Network were discussed which are summarized below. The next meeting of the GSHRRN will take place online on 3 April 2024 (1600 - 1700 CET) to discuss the future activities of the Network. Further details and meeting link will follow in due course.

## Reflections from the meeting

### What would a formal 'Global Sport & Human Rights Research Network' look like and what should it do?

- The network should engage with different groups in the sporting ecosystem (athletes, coaches, sponsors, NGOs, lawyers etc). Membership should not be limited to those inside academia, bridging the gap between academia and stakeholders.
- An interdisciplinary network would allow groups in different locations/languages to connect. While a truly global network may be hard to coordinate, breakout groups should facilitate this collaboration. In addition, social media groups could be used to share project ideas and requests for support.
- A flat structure, devoid of hierarchies and academic titles, is vital to the success of the network. However, a public-facing panel/patron will facilitate the network's image and should be considered.
- Transparent and open membership, accessible to many interested parties should be prioritised. Discounts should be available to PhDs and early career researchers. A database of examples of good practice and research should be accessible to both academics and other members.



## What role can the Centre play for the Network?

- The Centre will primarily have an administrative role, enabling collaboration and communication. This could be achieved by creating a peer-support group or a research group to assist researchers and offer networking/mentorship connections. Moderation of emails and communication could be another focus.
- Additionally, the Centre's strategic role could be to actively identify areas where research is needed.
- CSHR can facilitate creating a grass-roots-up structure, possibly providing online training to athletes based on the network's research. However, we should consider how the Centre will structure its information; do we divide information based on geographical area?
- The Centre will be an outward 'face' for the network, raising awareness and connecting them to other stakeholders within the sporting ecosystem. This, in turn, could facilitate funding to facilitate the projects. Holding events (such as a PhD presentation or focussing on regions not well-represented in research) is another way that CSHR could grow the network.

## What role can the Asser Institute play as the Secretariat?

- The Asser Institute could provide physical conference areas and meeting rooms, supporting collaboration. However, the network should be global, so digital conference attendance or knowledge-sharing should also be made available.
- Guiding academic direction, the institute could propose ideas for research and start discussions. While the Asser Institute would be an academic steering body, CSHR could manage outward-facing stakeholder interactions.
- By facilitating events, the Asser Institute could create opportunities for collaboration and increase awareness of the academic network.

As next steps, the Centre is evaluating all feedback and comments and exploring how to implement some of the ideas raised. It was agreed that there will be a follow up meeting in the first half of 2024 to update on the steps that have been taken.

In the second half of the Meeting in Geneva, we hosted two sessions of presentations by researchers in the Network, sharing recently published papers or ongoing studies.

