MuSkLE
PhD programme
Building, maintaining and repairing the functional locomotor system

Co-funded by the European Union

PhD Position 07 job vacancy

Reference:	**PP07**
Title:	**Study of Physical Deconditioning During the Doctorate**
Hiring institution:	**Lyon1**
Location:	Lyon 1 Université, Villeurbanne, France.
Start date:	As from 1st September 2027
Duration:	36 months
Application deadline:	15th January 2027

Job description

Objective:

The recruited doctoral fellow will develop a research project on physical deconditioning and health behaviours throughout doctoral training.

State of the Art: Evidence indicates a decline in healthy behaviours among university students, characterised by increased sedentary time and reduced physical activity, with adverse consequences for physical and mental health. Early-career researchers often report irregular routines and limited institutional support, which contributes to physical deconditioning. Although peers and supervisors may influence health habits through role-modelling, this area remains poorly documented. No study has yet quantified physical deconditioning across the doctoral curriculum or identified the barriers, facilitators, and sociocultural factors shaping doctoral students' health behaviours.

Hypotheses: Physical deconditioning increases throughout the PhD due to workload and unhealthy behaviours (elevated sedentary time, low activity).

Peers' and supervisors' attitudes and role-modelling influence doctoral students' work-life balance and engagement in health behaviours.

A participatory, co-constructed health-promotion program can improve healthy behaviour and limit deconditioning.

Originality: The project will constitute the first national-scale assessment of physical deconditioning among doctoral students. It will integrate quantitative, qualitative, and objective measures of physical activity and conditioning. It will also examine, for the first time, the influence of peers and supervisors on doctoral students' health behaviours and will co-develop an intervention adapted to doctoral training.

Methodology and Work Plan:

National Survey: Large-scale quantitative assessment of physical activity, sedentary time, and perceived physical condition among doctoral students.

Qualitative Study: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups to identify barriers and facilitators of healthy behaviours, with specific attention to peer and supervisor role-modelling.

Objective Characterization: Cross-sectional comparison between early-stage and late-stage doctoral students, using measures such as activity monitoring, questionnaires, and fitness tests.

Co-construction of a Health-Support Program: Participatory workshops with doctoral students from the MuSkle project, involving peers and supervisors to develop an intervention promoting physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour.

Collaborations and co-supervisions:

The PhD project will be co-supervised by Prof. Marc Lilot in collaboration with Sophie Schlatter and Mathilde Mura.

Supervisors:

Main supervisor: Marc Lilot - marc.lilot@chu-lyon.fr
Supervisor 2: Sophie Schlatter - sophie.schlatter@univ-lyon1.fr
Supervisor 3: Mathilde Mura - muramathilde.phd@outlook.com

Place of work:	RESHAPE Laboratory - Faculty of Medicine Rockefeller, 8 avenue Rockefeller 69008 Lyon
Required degree	Master's degree or equivalent in public health, health psychology, or sport sciences.
Skills/Experience:	Previous experience in the analysis of physical activity, sedentary behavior, and/or physical condition—using either objective methods or subjective methods (questionnaires, qualitative data)—will be an asset for the application. As the doctoral student will need to be in close contact with participants, a good working level of French will be an asset for the application.
Keywords	Physical activity, sedentary behaviour, PhD students, health behaviour, qualitative and quantitative study, doctoral well-being, physical condition

Mandatory requirements

Eligibility:	The doctoral fellow: - should not have resided or carried out his/her main activity (work, study) in the country where he/she is being recruited, i.e., France, **for more than 12 months in the 3 years before the application call deadline,** unless this time was part of a compulsory national service or a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention. - **must be in possession of a master's degree** at the date of the call deadline. Applicants who have completed their cursus but not yet been awarded the formal master's degree by that date will not be considered eligible. - must be **a doctoral candidate** (not already in possession of a doctoral degree at the date of the application call deadline).
Languages:	Oral and written skills must meet the standards of academic English used in international research.

Job details

Type of contract:	Full time position
Gross salary:	The monthly **living allowance, including employer and employees' social charges, is €3,500.** This amount corresponds to a gross monthly salary estimated to €2,440 and to an estimated net monthly salary before income tax of approximately €1,976. On top of the monthly salary, the doctoral fellow will receive a **mobility allowance,** including employer and employees' social charges of €4,752 over the 36 months of the working contract. This amount corresponds to a gross monthly allowance estimated to €92 and to an estimated net monthly allowance before income tax of approximately €74.
Other benefits:	**Social Protection**: The fellow will benefit from **full social security coverage**, including health insurance, unemployment insurance, and pension contributions. He/she will also have access to occupational health services (*médecine du travail*), as required by French labour law. **Additional Insurance**: The fellow may choose to subscribe to complementary health insurance plans, at affordable rates (approximately €70 *per* month), of which 50% is paid by the employer. **Paid Leave**: The fellow is entitled to up to **33.5 days of paid leave annually** (for 35 hours worked per week), in accordance with national labour law, and will enjoy the same employment rights as other public-sector employees. **Transport**: The fellow benefits from significantly **reduced fares on public transport**, available in all partner cities. Additionally, the host institution will cover 50% of the monthly transportation costs. **Sports and culture:**The fellow will enjoy the cultural environment provided by the Lyon 1 campuses, where numerous exhibitions and activities open to the general public are organised throughout the year. The fellow may play his/her favourite sport in the largest University Sports Association in France, where over 30 activities are on offer year-round through the Sports & Physical Activity University Department. The fellow may also join one of the 70 student associations that unite the University.