

Interview with ICSSPE's Executive Board Member – Prof. Dr. Ruth Crabtree

- 1. Having served on ICSSPE's Development Committee before being elected to the Executive Board, how do you see this new role expanding your ability to influence ICSSPE's global mission? What priorities or perspectives are you most eager to bring from your previous committee experience into the Board's strategic agenda?**

I am delighted to be serving ICSSPE in an Executive role and having served on the development committee, I think it is very important that both the EB and DC work together to achieve the strategic priorities of ICSSPE. Working in a voluntary capacity, it is really important to me to still be very accountable for representing a global organisation. I have always tried to approach such work with commitment and enthusiasm and volunteered to lead projects and initiatives. Whilst serving with the DC, we initiated Global Teaching Excellence in collaboration with the World Association for Sport Management (WASM) and I see working with partners as crucial to developing any global aims for ICSSPE.

- 2. You have been a strong advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout your career. In your view, how can ICSSPE and higher education institutions work together to make inclusion not just a policy goal but a lived experience within sport and physical activity education worldwide?**

Yes, I think EDI is extremely important in any organisation, but especially a global organisation that works with many partners and members from countries across the world. To me, being aware of inter-cultural differences and listening to views that may be different from your own is vital for reflective practice and ultimately success. I have worked with many people over the years who think that seniority, title, or length of service entitles you to only that way of working. The best organisations are the ones that are open to challenge, listen to all views, are willing to see and do things differently and creatively, and most important embrace EDI in practice. I have learned so much from my students over 30 years of teaching, students from different countries who have taught me so much I didn't know, and I always get excited when a new cohort enters the University. New keen and eager students with new ideas from different parts of the world I have never visited who can teach me about their cultures and ways of working. That brings to me a classroom to life and helps embrace EDI and teach us all about the world and how we work together for the best in society.

- 3. Drawing on your experience as Head of the School of Sport and Physical Activity at Sheffield Hallam University and as President of the World Association for Sport**

Management, how do you balance global leadership in sport policy and education with the practical realities of local institutions and communities?

I think it all goes hand in hand, if you take the best of practice from global leadership, sport policy, education and local communities then it is a win-win situation. It can help open networks for your students and colleagues, and you can also learn best practice from leading academics and practitioners from across the globe that can help you with your own leadership and management competences, which ultimately helps you achieve goals on the global stage with ICSSPE and WASM and also bring that knowledge and lived experience alive in the classroom and within your 'day job' too. In all the external voluntary work I have undertaken over three decades, I have always used that work to help my students and colleagues. For example, initiating applied learning opportunities, undertaking consultancy work with students, volunteering placements, student seminars, research workshops etc. I have been privileged to work with some amazing people who have helped me throughout my career, and I have hopefully helped others too with all the work I undertake.

4. As the sport sector evolves with new technologies, sustainability imperatives, and shifting professional pathways, what do you see as the key competencies that future sport leaders must develop — and how might ICSSPE help equip them for this changing landscape?

Yes, the sport landscape is in constant change and anyone wishing to work in this industry must be open to change and managing change. Key skills I think that will be important now and certainly in the future are inter-cultural awareness, technological advancements such as AI, communication skills and associated technologies too, such as social media use, and as you state sustainability and carbon-neutral initiatives. These are all important things going forward and organisations such as ICSSPE can use their network and platform to better inform its members and partners about such issues. We have touched on some of the above issues in recent GTE webinars and plan to discuss them in future events too, so keep an eye on the website for further details.