**Developing a Marketing Strategy for Bridge**

Bridging Insights is a collaborative project between Bridge to Bridge (B2B), Bridge: A Mindsport for All (BAMSA), and SHM Productions (SHM). Bridging Insights aims to inform the development of a marketing strategy to promote and increase the global reach of the card game bridge to the next generation of players.

Members of the marketing and research team developed a behaviour change framework around four ideal types of bridge players: self-improver, competitor, socialiser, and mind-gamer. The self-improver type plays bridge for the challenge of the mind game which is both serious and internally driven. The competitor type is driven by the art of the game which is a serious yet extrinsic endeavour. The socialiser type participates for the fun of the game that is extrinsically social between other people. The mind-gamer type is for the insights of others for their own internal gain.

**Methods**: This study has a two-part emergent research design. Part 1 focuses on developing a marketing strategy of 'ideal type' bridge players. The marketing strategy was then tested with non-bridge players in part 2. For part 1, all registered attendees were recruited at the [*Bridging Academia, Policy, and Practice Conference*](https://bridgemindsport.org/bridging-academia-policy-practice-conference/). The sample of participants included a diverse range of people from an international context, including academics, amateur and professional bridge players as well as policy makers involved in the bridge community. Members of the research and marketing team conducted the workshops online.

For inclusion in part 2, we invited non-bridge players aged between 18-35 years old who had no experience in playing bridge or had not engaged with the game for at least ten years. The three focus groups in part 2 were facilitated by the marketing team and observed by members of the research team. A structured question guide, which was informed by a behavioural change framework, was used for both parts 1 and 2.

**Findings:** Members of the research team developed poetic representations in the form of short stories based on the workshop discussions of ideal types of bridge players. The non-bridge players’ sporting experiences were then iteratively compared to the poetic representations. There are three key findings from workshops and focus groups with the bridge and non-bridge community: 1. There was a consensus in recognising and identifying with the socialiser, self-improver, and competitor ideal types, but not the mind-gamer type; 2. Although the ideal types were evident in non-bridge players’ experiences of sport, they might not be enough in themselves to persuade them to play bridge; and 3. Bridge was perceived as a form of leisure which might undermine its credibility as a mindsport.

**Recommendations:** We set out six recommendations to inform an effective marketing campaign that will seek to promote non-players to take up bridge. A first recommendation is for clubs to be warmly welcoming to new players. A second recommendation is for clubs to strike a balance between the socialiser and competitor types. A third recommendation is to experiment with new competition formats. A fourth recommendation is to reinvent the image of bridge to make it more appealing to younger and middle-aged people. A fifth recommendation is to promote a deeper knowledge of bridge which can lead to new styles and strategies of play. A sixth recommendation is to use existing research findings to develop resources which could be used show a different side to bridge.

We now encourage others to market the ideal types based on the recommendations of this study.