



# Alternative Funding for Leisure Research:

Crowdfunding in the Global Community

Prof Samantha Punch, *Bridge: A MindSport for All* (BAMSA) Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stirling

BE THE DIFFERENCE

# What is Crowdfunding?



- raising small amounts from a large number of individuals
- leveraging the wide reach of social media (Medeiros et al. 2017)
- to finance a new business venture or cultural event (Rykkja et al. 2020)
- learning experiences in academia (Horta et al. 2022)

Changing landscape of academia: funding and competition

### When to Crowdfund in Academia?

- Moving to a new topic area no track record
- Community with a research need to mobilise a Campaign
- Potential for research impact: shared goals
- Potential to develop a research-practitioner network
- Support from the University (not FEC funding nor overheads)

















### Keep Bridge Alive

The Sociology of Bridge is a research project and an emerging academic field exploring interactions within the mind sport, well-being, healthy ageing and social connection as experienced in the bridge world.



Professor Samantha Punch, UK Bridge Player

#### How you can help

We need players, bridge clubs and organisations and other supporters to join us in the Keep Bridge Alive campaign so we can publicise and promote bridge more widely. We would also be delighted to hear from you if you have research ideas, expertise or even time to support the campaign.

Please contact us at alumni@stir.ac.uk

66 I totally support the Keep Bridge Alive Campaign which hopefully will become a global campaign by generating momentum to get people together to tackle the sustainability issues that the game faces. >>>

Zia Mahmood, International Bridge Player initiative to reach out to young people - indeed everybody - informing them of all the reasons why they have to play bridge. Any research to confirm to all my students what they feel already - that bridge is a life-enhancing activity for so many reasons - is very welcome.

Andrew Robson,

For more information, search: 'Keep Bridge Alive Crowdfund'

@soc of bridge

#### BE THE DIFFERENCE

### **Crowdfund Campaign Materials**

Poster

Leaflet

Social media content

- Instagram frame photos
- Famous player profiles
- Video clips

Letter to bridge organisations



• Launch of KBA Campaign: 5 Feb (to 31 March 2019)

• Open Lecture on 5 Feb: encourage share posts/retweet

Keep Bridge Alive

Sociology of Bridge Now

• Uni Bridge club exhibition match: open to public

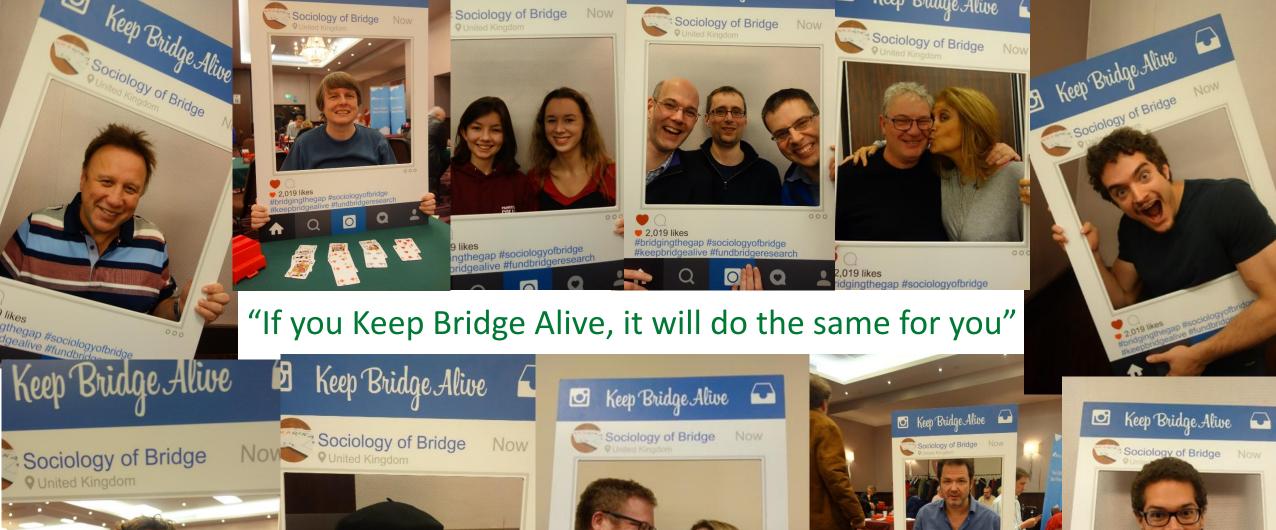
keep Bridge Alive

Sociology of Bridge









#bridgingthegap #sociologyofbridge







### SABINE AUKEN

German Player and Multiple World Champion

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I just love it. It's just so much fun. It has so many different facets and it's not just one way of thinking, it's putting things together. To me it's a little bit like detective work. There are some clues out there, you don't know what they are and where they are, so you have to go and find them, put them together and then draw the right conclusions. So to me that's fascinating

What is the key attraction of bridge for you?

Well it's the social part. Bridge has taken me around the world and still takes me around the world. Itopens doors for me that I otherwise would never have gone through and I'm meeting people that lotherwise would never have met which I think is exciting. In Denmark, sometimes, I play bridge withthe husband of the queen and that's somebody you wouldn't usually meet. In China I've played withsome of the top politicians and things like that, I think that's exciting. You feel like you have friendsall over the world and wherever you go you know somebody.







## **BRIDGE ENCOUNTERS**

# Adam Grossack, US Bridge Player WHY DO YOU PLAY BRIDGE?



To win. I mean, I think there are a lot of reasons-I very enjoy the intellectual element, it's very stimulating, but I really also enjoy the camaraderie that comes along with it during it, after it and post-mortems and just the thrill of winning.

# Keep Bridge Alive CrowdFunder

### **Various donation routes:**

Online with credit card: (search 'Keep Bridge Alive Crowdfunder')

https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/u5c0e5e7810869

Donation **form** to University of Stirling – cheque or bank transfer (then to BAMSA)

Tax-efficient for US donors: via British Schools and Universities Foundation (BSUF)









### Keep Bridge Alive to BAMSA

### Aims:

- Shift image of bridge
- Increase participation
  - Ensure future sustainability













































# **Fundraising Phases**

• Initial 2 month campaign 2019:

26K with 283 individual supporters

• Extended campaign (bridge clubs and organisations): 14K



10-day trip to USA national tournament: 60K (included match-funding)



## **Fundraising Event**

Pro-am bridge in London 2020:

- online auction of players, raffle to win a pro
- on the night: auction for gifted items & pros



# Larger targeted sponsors



Trust-fund donation (for school project)

- Phase 2 (2022-2023) US bridge sponsor:
  - 100K US\$ match-funding (other sponsors/orgs)

#### **Bridge, Youth and Schools**



Who am I? My name is Samantha Punch, Professor of Sociology at the University of Stirling, UK. I lead the international work of BAMSA.

What is BAMSA? *Bridge: A MindSport for All* (BAMSA) is a research project working collaboratively with bridge organisations to increase the number of players and transform the image of the mindsport.

BAMSA believes that bridge can be promoted as a potential solution to tackle big societal issues of social isolation, loneliness, mental health problems, inclusivity and healthy ageing.

#### BAMSA's new study

The new project aims to develop academic evidence that demonstrates the skills and wideranging benefits that bridge, as a mindsport, can offer young people. The study will investigate the benefits and challenges of teaching bridge in schools. The goal is to encourage schools to take bridge as seriously as chess, and mindsport education as seriously as physical education.

#### How can donating help?

By donating, you enable BAMSA to conduct this work in the USA as well as Europe. The funding pays for the researchers to interview school teachers, bridge teachers, pupils and parents to explore what helps and hinders learning bridge. The funds are used to develop practical resources from the findings to enable growth of youth bridge communities in USA and Europe.

#### How can I donate? \*All donations will be doubled\* (matched by Levine Foundation)

**Online** via the University website: www.stir.ac.uk/carddonate Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose single gift, this will direct you to our donation form where you can select "Bridge Research Project" as your designated cause.

Tax efficient giving for US donors: The University of Stirling is an approved institution with British Schools & Universities Foundation. You donate through their website stating that you wish the donation to go to the University of Stirling: www.bsuf.org/donate

Via the Keep Bridge Alive Crowdfunder: https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/u5c0e5e7810869

#### Thank You! Need more information?

Contact Sam with any queries – s.v.punch@stir.ac.uk

Follow BAMSA @bridgemindsport www.bridgemindsport.org















### Challenges



- Persuading potential donors to support a leisure research project
  - wellbeing, mental health, social connection, community-building, transferable skills
- Perception & recognition: poverty versus card game
- Building a stakeholder network is that research?
- Time-consuming with failed donor requests
  - lengthy negotiations for small donations
- Scepticism over motivations & negative reactions
- Affected my bridge game! (Russell et al. 2022)



# **Building Resilience**

- Becoming an academic fundraiser (cf. grant writer)
  - Take the emotion out of it and create a pitch
  - 'Sell' the project benefits see from donors' point of view
- Dealing with setbacks and rejections
  - Becoming more time efficient & focusing on the larger donors
- Potential conflicts of interest:
  - the community being researched is also funding the research
  - combined insider/outsider research team (Snellgrove and Punch 2022)
- Accusations of bias (Punch and Rogers 2022)





# Giving back to the leisure community

- Regular communication and sharing outputs:
  - news items on BAMSA website, quarterly BAMSA Bulletin with updates, regular posting on bridge blogsites, social media engagement
  - podcasts and interviews
- Practitioner conferences, eg online 2021 (500 participants from 62 countries)
- Responding to requests for evidence on benefits of bridge
  - e.g. to lobby governments for sport recognition











# Research Impact & Collaboration

- Enhanced stakeholder network
  - Advisory groups, community researchers
     and BAMSA volunteers



- Co-producing research with bridge partners & meeting their research needs
  - e.g. securing an ESRC-funded Collaborative PhD Studentship
- New avenues for developing Mindsport Studies
  - e.g. working with chess and IMSA International Mind Sport Association







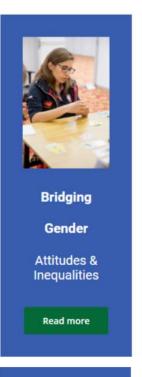


### **Lessons Learnt**

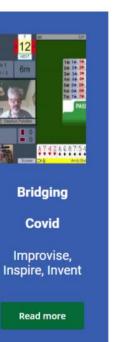
- Clarity of goals & belief in project worth
- Concise communications & practice the pitch
- Leaflet for donors. Match-funding helps.
- Focus on larger donors & create opportunity to talk with them
- Trusted introduction helps trust (cf. cold call)
- Endorsements from key orgs/individuals
- Don't take rejections personally

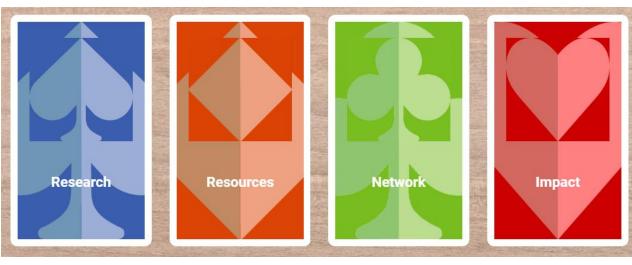












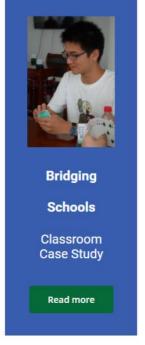
### www.bridgemindsport.org





Read more







- Journal articles and two books
- Accessible summaries and reports
- Videos
- Blogs and news items
- Conferences and seminars for practitioners and academics

# Bridge, Youth & Mindsport Education



### Learning & Teaching hub

- A centralised resource for volunteers & teachers
- Aim: Support for all aspects of teaching children and youth
- Promotional materials

### Lesson 1

**Tricks** 

Learning basic concepts



https://bridgemindsport.org/school-and-youth-bridge/

### References



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#BAMSA #BridgingMinds #MindSports #bridgingresearch #bridging #sociologyofbridge #playbridge @soc\_of\_bridge





Bridge: A MindSport For All Connects People, Challenges Minds

### Thank You!





https://bridgemindsport.org/story-of-a-project/