



Monash University Evaluation Comments from Dr Ruth Jeanes



I am an Associate Professor and Director of Initial Teacher Education in the Faculty of Education at Monash University.

My research focuses on the use of sport and physical activity as a community development resource, particularly as a tool to address social exclusion amongst marginalized communities.

I, with my colleague Dr Lisahunter are responsible for the evaluation of the Women's Spirit Project. Within this, we will be examining the outcomes and impacts of the project for participants, mentors and organisers and also evaluating the ways in which the project has been managed and delivered.

It is anticipated that the evaluation will provide valuable information on how the program can be developed and enhanced in the future and as well as evidencing its impact on the women involved.

I wanted to become involved with the evaluation for a number of reasons. I have been shocked by the high levels of gender-based violence within my local community of Frankston and felt that this project is both timely and highly necessary.

Having participated in physical activity all my life, and researched the area for almost two decades I was also drawn to the use of physical activity within the project to promote mental and physical wellbeing and felt the evaluation offered an excellent opportunity to better understand how physical activity may contribute in community development projects.

Finally, I was particularly inspired to become involved because of the grassroots, community-driven nature of the program. As a volunteer-led initiative, it represents the type of asset-based community development program that I advocate is necessary when seeking to create social change. I'm looking forward to seeing how the program develops and better understanding the experiences of the women involved in the program through our evaluation.