

AIU-MAiSI PARTNERSHIP REAPING MUTUAL REWARDS

28 OCTOBER 2022, MONACO: Apart from spearheading the progression of intelligence, innovation and technology in sport integrity, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) has been contributing significantly to the development of the next generation of specialists in this niche profession.

Since 2019, the Monaco-based organisation has fostered a partnership with the world-leading Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters in Sport Ethics and Integrity (MAiSI) programme that has proven mutually beneficial for all concerned parties: the MAiSI, its students and the AIU. This collaboration has seen nine interns from the full-time, two-year course get an opportunity to be exposed to and involved in the AIU's work and strategies. Clearly, the early signs were promising as two students from the inaugural 2019 MAiSI cohort impressed enough to be offered full-time employment and a consultancy respectively after graduation.

There have been three interns in each of the three following years (2020-2022) and this year's group, like their predecessors, have been quite productive. Recently, Sanchita Aidasani, Robbe Van Emelen and Bryony Robins were invited to the AIU office to present the outcomes of their research projects; undertaken while on internship with the AIU's Investigations and Intelligence unit. Aidasani and Van Emelen assisted in researching potential integrity threats in emerging areas in athletics, collating considerable data and analysis that will help guide the AIU's investigative strategies in the future.



AIU INTERNS FROM THE MAiSI PROGRAMME (FROM LEFT) SANCHITA AIDASANI, ROBBE VAN EMELEN AND BRYONY ROBINS

Meanwhile, Robins worked on statistical analysis into competition manipulation. Among the aims were to identify outliers that could be linked to the use of performance-enhancing drugs or indicators of manipulated competitions as well as to identify software to help with real-time monitoring of Member Federations on the competition-manipulation watchlist, as well as providing an easier way of identifying other Member Federations that should also be considered for inclusion.

“This group was exceptional as all have been. Each set of interns has contributed something different and valuable that we may not have had resources to cover otherwise. The work they have produced has been very helpful,” noted AIU Head Brett Clothier.

“It’s a mutually beneficial partnership for all parties. The programme seems pleased with our engagement with their students and the opportunities that AIU gives them. We are very impressed with the students’ performance, and how enthusiastically they were about this specialised work. They benefited both professionally and academically and it helped to build their confidence in this integrity space.”

MAiSI Programme Director, Professor Mike McNamee, noted the partnership “is immensely valuable to our consortium and our students”.

“Not only have our students gained crucial professional experience, but AIU staff have also contributed over the years, sharing their expertise, experience, and critical industry insights to inform our students about what it is like to operationalise the key integrity ideas and theories that they have learnt during MAiSI,” he said.

The interns spoke equally positively about the experience which has heightened their interest in the sports-integrity world.



Sanchita Aidasani: “My three-month internship was extremely meaningful. I worked alongside some of the best minds in the industry and I was able to sharpen my skills. My project required me to work on multiple integrity matters in athletics. This exposed me to novel issues that are now being witnessed in sport.”



Robbe Van Emelen: “This six-week internship with the Investigations and Intelligence department was my first professional step working in the sports-integrity field. It helped me gain confidence in taking responsibility and it very much made me realise how much I enjoy doing investigative research and analysis. Visiting the AIU headquarters at the end of my internship felt like the icing on the cake of a great learning experience.”



Bryony Robins: “Interning at the AIU was an invaluable opportunity to gain experience in a world-leading sports integrity unit. I was well supported and encouraged by my supervisors and learnt a lot from their expertise. The internship allowed to me apply what I have learnt throughout my MA in Sports Ethics and Integrity into practice while developing my skill set and broadening my knowledge.”

Currently, two of the nine interns are working as consultants with the AIU and prospects look good for another batch of MAiSI students to gain similar experience next year. The MAiSI is an innovative and multidisciplinary programme that addresses an area of study which has been lacking within sports administration. It concentrates on the development of ethical sports cultures and structures, and the development of tools for sports-integrity education and compliance.

The MAISI is delivered by six prestigious universities in Europe and the UK and each year the course attracts up to 25 high-quality students from across the globe to form a truly multinational and multicultural cohort with a wide array of experience and skills, from both within and outside of the sports industry.

About the Athletics Integrity Unit

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues – both doping and non-doping – for the sport of athletics. The remit of the AIU includes anti-doping, the pursuit of individuals engaged in age or competition results manipulation, investigating fraudulent behaviour with regards to transfers of allegiance, and detecting other misconduct including bribery and breaches of betting rules. It is the AIU's role to drive cheats out of our sport, and to do everything within its power to support honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through dedication and hard work.

Athletics Integrity Unit

media@athleticsintegrity.org

www.athleticsintegrity.org

- @aiu_athletics
- @aiu.athletics
- @aiu_athletics