



1U4U INNOVATION FUNDING 2020 Projects

AN INVESTIGATION OF PATHOGENS ON ROCK CLIMBING MAT MATERIALS

The International Federation of Sport Climbing reports that 44.5 million individuals rock climb regularly and that this community is growing as a result of rock climbing's debut in the upcoming 2020 Olympics.

Increasing anecdotal evidence demonstrates that small cuts and abrasions may become infected upon exposure to different materials commonly found in rock climbing gyms, such as climbing holds, mats, and padding. We will perform pathogen testing at the Student Life Center’s Summit Climbing Gym and local industry gyms (Momentum and The Front).

A variety of gym mat and padding materials will be swabbed and subjected to microbial sequencing, aiding in the discovery of which materials may be pathogen-resistant and remediation methods to mitigate infections from these surfaces, as well as the design of new pathogen-resistant materials.

Ultimately, this project will develop and transfer new knowledge about pathogens and rock climbing surfaces, improving the health of climbers and other athletes at the UofU and beyond.

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\$15K