

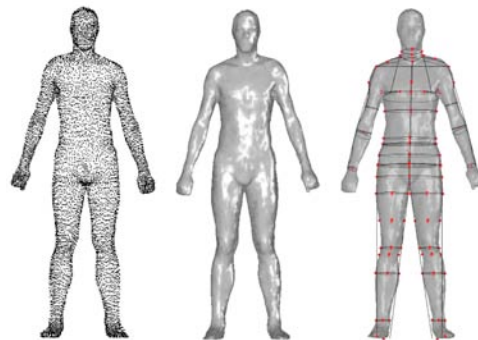
Fitness meets fitness

Testing for a link between looks and performance in humans

Evolutionary biologists are usually the first to emphasize that evolutionary fitness has little in common with the meaning that is commonly attached to fitness by the general public, that is physical fitness. However, recent work has suggested that there might be an important role for physical fitness in shaping variation in evolutionary fitness via natural and sexual selection in various animal species, including humans.

In this project you will use concepts and methods from evolutionary biology, sport physiology and psychology to study individual variation in strength and endurance, as well as in attractiveness, which is one aspect of evolutionary fitness, and how the two are related. This multidisciplinary project will thereby provide a unique insight into human attractiveness and the nature of physical performance.

You will recruit participants who will perform one or more standardised and well-established performance tests. Combined with photographs and/or 3D full body scans and a number of sophisticated software packages to process these data, you will be able to obtain a uniquely detailed insight into the link between looks and performance. Depending on your interests, you can choose to focus on strength or endurance, men or women, facial characteristics or body shape, or some combination thereof.



This project would be ideal as a Masters project or research practical for someone who has an interest in both evolutionary biology and sports, is open-minded and likes working with people. It will provide you with valuable experience in experimental design and data analysis, including 2D and 3D morphometrics, as well as a thorough introduction into both sexual selection theory, evolutionary psychology and sports science.

More information? Contact Erik Postma

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