

# **Universal Design in Sport: A Catalyst for Social Inclusion?**

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Doctor of Philosophy

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## **Certificate of original authorship**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor it has been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources used are indicated in the thesis.

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To my grandmas, Caterina and Giovanna

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## **Preamble**

This thesis invites the passionate of life in any field to pursue their dreams, as society needs dreamers and visionaries who with their intuitions drive progress because 'People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do' (Steve Jobs)

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**ANT** – Actor-Network Theory

**BRT** – Bus Rapid Transit

**EVS** – Event Services

**FAQ** – Frequently Asked Questions

**FTC** – Forte de Copacabana

**Games** – Olympic and Paralympic Games

**IOC** – International Olympic Committee

**IPC** – International Paralympic Committee

**OCOG** – Organising Committee of the Olympic Games

**LOCOG** – London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

**MSE** – Mega Sport Event

**PSA** – Pedestrian Screening Access

**Rio2016** – Rio Organising committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

**RC** – Riocentro

**UAC** – Uniform and accreditation centre

**UD** – Universal Design

**VANOC** – Vancouver Organising Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

**VCC** – Venue Communication Centre

**VMC**- Venue Media Centre

## **Key terms**

**Carioca:** Brazilian from Rio de Janeiro

**Journal:** Researcher's Journal entry

**Matter of concern:** needs and exigencies of agents which become evident

**Ontological dualism or dichotomy:** between environment and humans is solved, because objects do not exist by themselves

**Symmetry:** the equal analysis of the context

**Universal Design:** emergent design of the interactions between actors in the practices.

**Voices:** interviews

'We are so many things that who we are does not suffice to say  
that we know what social is...' (VLP, 2018)

# Abstract

This study investigates social inclusion and universal design in the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic volunteer programs through the lens of actor-network theory (ANT). An ‘ethnography of performances’ of volunteers’ journeys tracks the development and changing nature of interactions in the relationships between actors. Document analysis, media analysis, participant observation and semi-structured interviews with key volunteer program informants were used to document the voices and actions of Rio2016 managers, team leaders and volunteers. A thematic analysis and process coding of the actions undertaken by the volunteers, team leaders and managers during the Games was conducted. The analysis provided evidence of how the social unfolds through the practices that volunteers carried out interacting with non-humans. The study revealed the numerous ways in which non-humans acted to facilitate or/and inhibit social inclusion in the volunteer program. The social emerges from the practices enacted in the volunteers’ program by humans and non-humans. Some practices resulted in inclusivity, while others did not have this effect. A novel conceptualisation of social inclusion that is related to practices and of UD as emergent design of the interactions between actors in practices is presented. UD emerges also as method to investigate the social in practices in a sociomaterialistic perspective by studying the interactions, the components that participate in the interactions, and the way these interact to underlie practices. The findings of this research could inform practitioners, future organising committees for the planning and operationalising of inclusive practices, and researchers for future study.