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**Exploring the Potential of Santarém's Sports City Project: Analyzing Successful Sports
City Models and Their Impact on the Sports Ecosystem**

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Abstract

In Portugal, the proliferation of Sports Cities and Academies is increasingly evident, with these initiatives playing a crucial role in nurturing young athletes and promoting physical activity within the sports ecosystem. However, challenges persist due to inadequate investment and a lack of specialization in key areas within the Portuguese football landscape.

This Work Project seeks to provide strategic recommendations for Santarém's Sports City, drawing insights from diverse case studies and best practices. The goal is to stimulate Sports tourism and enhance the local economy in the district of Santarém, contributing to the overall development of the region.

Keywords

Sports Management, Sports Cities, Strategy, Urban Development, Economic Impact

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1) Introduction

In the realm of developing sports infrastructure, the joint effort between the Santarém Football Association (SFA) and the Santarém City Council (SCC) to establish a Sports City in Santarém is a game-changing initiative. Starting with the construction of a Football Academy, this ambitious project underscores the vital role of sports in youth education, health, and well-being. Considering the context of Portuguese Football and the limited presence of such infrastructures in the Santarém district, there is a lack of projects and studies emphasizing the significance of initiatives from less developed Football Associations in the Portuguese landscape.

Therefore, this Work Project intends to explore the economic and social impacts in the Santarém district through a thorough analysis, focusing on key aspects: sports tourism, women's football, educational initiatives, and sports accessibility for all. These are recognized as pivotal drivers with substantial economic promise. The assessment centers on how the community and its surroundings in Santarém could benefit from the project. An in-depth analysis of the current situation, project characteristics, and the district's internal and external features was conducted. Lastly, success stories and best practices from similar-sized projects were analyzed to provide actionable recommendations for the Santarém Sports City's implementation over the next 10 to 12 years.

2) Context and Background

European and Portuguese Football Industry

For many years, football has been considered the most popular sport in most of the world, especially in Europe. In the 2021/2022 season, the European football sector was valued at roughly 29.5 billion euros (Appendix 1). This marked a rise from the season before and even surpassed its financial standing before the COVID-19 outbreak (Statista 2023).

Currently, football fosters significant financial inflow through avenues such as sponsorships, player transfers, product licensing, and diverse merchandising strategies. Also, the media not only amplifies the spectacle of the sport but also serves as a pivotal financier through mechanisms including sponsorships, broadcast rights, and advertising ventures. The media and television broadcasts also play an important role in boosting football (Neves 2013). This author describes these forms of diversification to argue that football is no longer just a recreational sport dominated and moved exclusively by passion. Instead, it has evolved into a dynamic industry that requires continuous innovation and growth in order to remain competitive.

In a detailed analysis of the national football landscape and according to Neves (2013) “there is currently no other sporting activity in Portuguese society that occupies such a central place in the media, in dominant tastes and the public’s attention as football.”, and the quality of Portuguese football has always been undeniable. Portugal is almost a country just of football and that can be seen in the number of federated football players in 2021 (126 006), which is around 26% of the total of federated athletes in all sports (483 829) (Pordata 2021) (see Appendix 2 and 3), and through the fact that football in Portugal has an impact of 1.67 million euros (Agência Lusa 2021).

However, as stated by Barros (2006), there exists a pronounced disparity among Europe's leading football leagues concerning aspects like the quality of spectacle, consumer satisfaction, attendance rates, and financial power. The author further underscores the relative

underdevelopment of Portuguese professional football in comparison to its European counterparts. The dominance of the three major clubs - Benfica, Sporting, and Porto - significantly overshadows other teams within the league in many different aspects. Moreover, outside of the cities represented by these leading clubs, the fan base is considerably limited. This, combined with financial and economic constraints, reduces the ability of Portuguese clubs to procure players of requisite caliber, thereby limiting the establishment of a consistently competitive championship.

This means that within the Portuguese context, football is of high quality and achieves good results, but when compared with external and more developed contexts, the perspective shifts. While other European leagues are creating strategies to leverage the best from international markets, Portugal seems to be delayed in comparison (Silva et al. 2021).

However, even in this atypical context, the Sports Anonymous Societies (SAS) contributed more than 617 million euros to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and even with some limitations, the football industry hasn't stopped growing in value and investing (Proença 2022). 3 595 jobs were created, and this number is increasing with the number of projects underway, which demonstrates the importance of football in the national economic fabric. The 6th edition of the Portuguese Professional Football Yearbook (2022), a collaborative study by EY and Liga Portugal, states that "professional football plays an important role not only economically, through the creation of wealth and employment, but also socially and culturally, through its ability to unite communities and inspire young people.". The social impact of football also has a crucial symbolic dimension since many Portuguese people seem to watch and feel football as an indicator of the nation's quality and the competence of its people (Coelho and Tiesler 2006).

Portuguese Football Association

The Portuguese Football Federation (PFF), originally established as the Portuguese Football Union on March 31, 1914, plays a pivotal role in coordinating, promoting, developing, and

organizing football in Portugal across all its facets and categories (Neves 2013). This establishment was a collective initiative by the Porto, Lisbon, and Portalegre Associations (Portugal Store 2022). In May 1926, its name transitioned to the Portuguese Football Federation (Serra 2015) and presently, it counts with 5 165 affiliated football clubs from all 22 football Associations within Portugal (Zerozero 2022).

According to its official website, PFF's vision is to be "the entity that energizes football as a sporting, economic, social, educational and leisure activity, taking into account its growing importance in the training of young people, in the economy and the country's international image". Structurally, the PFF operates through seven distinct social organs: the general assembly, board of directors, supervisory board, judicial board, disciplinary board, and arbitration board (PFF 2023).

A study conducted by UEFA Grow SROI, a "model that has been developed by leading academics across Europe to measure amateur football, country by country, and club by club" (UEFA 2020), positioned the PFF as the third highest-valued federation per member (7.4 thousand euros) among the 22 federations in the study. This ranking placed the PFF's economic impact at an impressive 944 205 million euros for the year 2021 (Agência Lusa 2021).

Santarém Football Association

District Football Associations hold significant influence over the lower and non-professional divisions. They address various matters at this tier, and when necessary, escalate concerns to the PFF (Neves 2013).

The SFA is the main hub coordinating football activities in Santarém. It has as one of its main objectives the technical framework, selection, and monitoring of athletes, as well as the organization, promotion, dissemination, and coordination of all activity in the area of its jurisdiction (Relatório Contas n.d). They're also in charge of scheduling matches for both the 1st District Division and the 2nd District Division. On top of that, they handle the ins and outs

of the Ribatejo Cup, which is similar to the Portuguese Cup, but just for teams from Santarém's 1st and 2nd District Divisions (Guerra 2022). Between the years 2020 and 2024, the organizational structure of the SFA comprises several key entities: the general assembly, the board of directors, the supervisory board, the justice board, the disciplinary board, and the arbitration board (SFA n.d.).

In the 2022/2023 season, there were 8 756 registered players with the SFA, as compared to 8 202 during the 2019/2020 season (Appendix 4). This statistic positions the SFA in 8th place among football Associations with the highest number of registered players in Portugal, as reported by Futebol Distrital em Debate in 2023 (see Appendix 5 for a full comparison between Portuguese districts). Predominantly, these players are affiliated with men's football; however, it is noteworthy that the number of players in women's football increased by 18,6% between the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 seasons.

While these figures may not immediately appear to be substantial, they shed light on the SFA's concerted efforts to reinvent itself and diligently promote the sports industry within the district. This effort has been particularly pronounced in the wake of the global pandemic in 2020, with the SFA placing significant emphasis on innovation and promoting women's football – a facet of the sport that has demonstrated noteworthy growth over recent years.

Furthermore, the SFA has underscored its commitment to education and training, notably through coaching and refereeing courses. Over the years, there has been a consistent increase in the number of candidates partaking in these courses, as documented in the materials furnished by the SFA.

Additionally, in terms of direct support to clubs, tangible measures of support amounting to 388 000 euros have been deployed over the past three sports seasons, further underlining the SFA's dedication to fortifying the local sporting landscape (Futebol Distrital em Debate 2023).

Santarém City Council

The SCC serves as the governing body for the city, shaping policies for social, cultural, and urban development. Its primary role is to meet the community's collective needs by providing essential services and managing the city's finances effectively. The SCC is organized into various departments, divisions, and offices, each focusing on different areas of municipal activity. Its four departments are categorized as follows: the Department of Administration and Finance, the Department of Territorial Management and Planning, the Department of Environment, Sustainability and Public Space, and the Department of Education, Culture and Social Development (SFA 2012).

Santarém Sports City Project

On February 10, 2023, an initiative by the SFA in collaboration with the SCC was presented to the PFF, to construct a Sports City in Santarém. This ambitious project initiates with the development of a football Academy, targeted for completion in July 2024. The project is rooted in the SFA and SCC's strategy to expand and enhance their sporting infrastructure. It acknowledges the critical role of sports in youth education and health, a subject that has gained considerable attention in the context of football, particularly following the pandemic of 2020. Looking into the future, this facility isn't just seen as a place for young athletes to get into sports and stay healthy. It's also expected to be a hotspot for finding new talent, giving the sports industry a boost, and raising SFA's profile (Rede Regional 2023).

The SFA president has emphasized the project's pivotal role in realizing the long-anticipated Sports City. According to Rede Regional (2023), the proposed football Academy will feature two football pitches with seating accommodations - one covered stand with 904 seats and an uncovered stand with 76 seats - alongside changing rooms, various support areas including a medical post and meeting rooms, and a parking space. An additional goal of the project is to

refurbish the existing pavilion and futsal sports complex (see Appendix 6 to 11 for the project's images).

Financially, the project represents a substantial investment from the three organizations, totaling 3 500 million euros. The responsibilities delineated for both the Santarém entities involved include SCC ensuring land ownership, financing, and procedural execution, with obligations to perform necessary upgrades and maintenance for the Academy's operational efficiency (O Mirante 2023). The SFA is tasked with the creation, submission, and progression of the implementation projects for the Academy.

The consolidation of sports facilities into a centralized location is argued to offer considerable management benefits by the chairman of Viver Santarém's Board of Directors. However, it is recognized that the full scope of the Sports City is a long-term vision, spanning a 10–12-year timeframe (Rede Regional 2023). The director of Viver Santarém acknowledges the gradual nature of implementing such a comprehensive range of projects but highlights the anticipated regional advantages (Correio do Ribatejo 2023). Santarém, with its strategic geographical position, has experienced significant growth in sports-related projects, positioning itself prominently in receiving national and international events as a promoter of physical activity and healthier living standards (Correio do Ribatejo 2022).

The Sports City project is more than a construction endeavor; it symbolizes a commitment to the future of Portuguese football. The PFF's support is more than just an endorsement – it's a testament to the shared vision of nurturing young talent that could one day shine on the national and perhaps international stage. It's this forward-looking approach that could make the Sports City a cornerstone of Portugal's football legacy (SFA 2023).

3) Literature Review

a. The Concept of a Sports City

In the realm of urban planning and development, a notable trend has emerged in recent years where several municipalities have focused on aggregating new sports facilities within targeted urban areas, effectively creating dedicated sports zones. This concept has been encapsulated under the designation of “sports cities”, a term that has gained prominence for its ability to provide both visibility and coherence to these areas (Smith 2010). Smith underscores the somewhat elusive nature of the “Sports City” concept, acknowledging it as abstract yet acknowledging its growing usage in contemporary urban discourse.

Despite being seen as an abstract concept, Sharma (2022) stated that a Sports City is “essentially a themed development that includes a regular succession of sports venues, sports academies and a platform for youth development, leisure sports facilities, residential and commercial buildings, and other connected amenities”. A Sports City should incorporate this holistic structure to fully contribute to the development of both the sport and the locality in which it resides.

But this concept of thematically designated urban zones is not new. Recently, there has been a heightened focus on utilizing these clusters of urban development by forming city quarters with distinct themes. Smith (2010) observes that these thematic areas often arise spontaneously as centers of activity. However, in some instances, as noted by the same author, they are deliberately designed as part of tourism enhancement strategies, aiming to lend both coherence and visibility to unconventional urban areas. The historical roots of sports-themed urban areas can be traced back to ancient Olympia in Greece, as supported by various scholarly sources. In modern times, cities in the Middle East are at the forefront of developing a new wave of sports cities, which aim to attract tourists and new residents.

A challenge identified in numerous cities is the disproportionate focus on elite sports. Smith (2010) states that this issue arises when cities construct high-specification sports facilities but subsequently face difficulties in attracting enough elite athletes to use them. Consequently, there is a growing shift among cities towards encouraging local participation from amateur residents and visitors, as opposed to exclusively concentrating on the development of elite sports venues.

Various external organizations, including the European Capital of Sport Association, Sport Business International, and Sportcal, have designated certain cities as sports cities, employing diverse criteria like events, public engagement, facilities, and infrastructure for their evaluations and rankings. Pye et al. (2015) highlight that these distinctions offer multiple advantages, including international recognition, legacy creation, media impact, Return on Investment (ROI), opportunities for active networking, enhancement of local sports policies, and the potential for cities to secure EU Grants.

Considering the various interpretations of a Sports City, a unifying element among them is not only their profound Association with sports but also the aspiration to utilize this link for economic, social, or reputational benefits. Therefore, a city's strategic plan for sports should meet the social, economic, and environmental needs of the community while taking advantage of the economic opportunities presented by the growing global sports industry (Pye et al. 2015). Alzate et al. (2021) developed a sustainable Sports City model, integrating insights from various organizations and practices of existing sports cities. This model is based on four critical pillars of planning and management. At the core of this model is the sports system, which comprises five key factors that are essential for the overall development of a Sports City. The outputs of this system aim to meet the needs of a diverse range of users (audience/fans, sponsors/investors, corporate customers), and its overall impact is measured by its contribution to the sustainable growth and well-being of the city's inhabitants (see Appendix 12 for the model overview).

The effective management of relationships among organizations engaged in sports, as well as in the development and upkeep of a Sports City, is becoming more crucial and intricate. Alzate et al. (2021) highlight that the complexity of sports events arises from the diversity of activities, objectives, and results involved. Meeting the needs of sports enthusiasts, businesses, investors, and visitors requires significant interaction between local government, the private sector, public institutions, and academia.

According to the same author, a Sports City should include these different essential components to succeed: promotion of and access to sports, recreation, and physical activity; sports infrastructure and equipment; human capital and knowledge management; sports and economic development; and finally, big sports events.

Promotion of and Access to Sports, Recreation, and Physical Activity

Promoting universal sports participation is vital in many countries, making it essential for Sports Cities to ensure accessible physical activity for all. Such cities should focus more on social rather than economic benefits, as studies show sports participation boosts social capital and well-being. This is especially true for youth, where sports positively affect health, academic performance, and peer behavior. Pye et al. (2015) emphasize that neglecting these social aspects can lead to reduced societal benefits and a disconnect between sports facilities and community needs.

Sports Infrastructure and Equipment

Long-term planning of sports infrastructure and equipment is crucial in the development of Sports Cities, serving as vital instruments for various sports activities. Such infrastructure significantly contributes to the essential elements of a livable city, including safety, vibrancy, sustainability, and health.

Smith (2010) contends that the development of Sports Cities requires careful planning and management to achieve lasting social impacts. This strategic approach encompasses effective urban planning, integrating social programs, and establishing productive partnerships.

Human Capital and Knowledge Management

In Sports Cities, the ever-changing information landscape creates a constantly evolving labor market, requiring new skills and competencies. This necessitates a more skilled workforce, calling for collaborations between academia and the sports industry, alongside the implementation of policies to enhance human capital in the sports sector.

Sports and Economic Development

The sports sector's economic impact on Sports Cities is acknowledged, but its contribution to GDP remains unclear in many countries due to the absence of a consistent economic framework and reliable data. This gap hinders understanding the sector's economic performance and the effects of economic policies. Strategies like cluster initiatives and policy designs for productivity and competitiveness are vital for revitalizing the sector. The pandemic required rethinking business models to embrace customer engagement, data analytics, digital capabilities, and next-generation technologies like IoT (Internet of Things), enhancing spectator experiences and invigorating the industry (The Business 2019).

Big Sports Events

As mentioned above, incorporating major events into the overarching development plans of a Sports City is essential. Their feasibility should be integrated into the planning stages, and evaluation must be a key component of post-event management. Additionally, these events require substantial engagement from all relevant social and economic stakeholders.

The authors that developed this model conclude by stating that sport is instrumental in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) outlined in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Post-2015, it has become crucial for the sports sector

stakeholders to develop and implement SDG-aligned indicators. These indicators should be woven into development strategies, public policies, and strategic action plans, necessitating a collaborative approach among various actors in the sports ecosystem, including civil society, the private sector, academic institutions, and government agencies (Alzate et al. 2021).

4) Methodology

a. SWOT Analysis

In this study, we adopted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis to gain a thorough understanding of the project in question. This approach is instrumental in dissecting both the internal dynamics and the external environment of a project. This is achieved by sidestepping any preconceived notions and concentrating on tangible, real-world scenarios that mirror SFA's actual operational context. The rationale behind employing this framework is to ensure that the analysis remains grounded in reality, free from subjective biases or ambiguous areas.

Strengths

Geographically, Santarém's Sports City will benefit from its strategic position. Less than an hour's drive from Lisbon Airport, Santarém offers convenient highway access for those coming from major cities like Lisbon, Porto, or Coimbra.

As mentioned earlier, the SFA will benefit from the project with the support of the PFF, offering two advantages. On one hand, the support from a renowned entity brings visibility to the project. On the other hand, there is the expertise factor, as the PFF has already developed its own Sports City, making it a valuable partner in suggesting best practices for the construction and

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development of the Sports City in Santarém. Another advantage is the substantial number of registered football players in the Association, 8 756, indicating the local community's strong interest in the sport. Furthermore, the Tejo Cup stands out as a strength; it's Santarém's most prominent football event, attracting key figures from Portuguese football annually, and with new facilities, it could draw even larger audiences.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of SFA, closely tied to Santarém's region, include a significant aging population, with 204 elderly per 100 young people, reducing the potential sporting event participation (Pordata 2023). Accommodation is also a limitation, as Santarém has only four hotels, suggesting a limited capacity to handle high tourist influxes, impacting the organization of large events (Pordata 2023). Moreover, the professionalization of local clubs is weak; currently, only Casa Pia AC, which isn't originally from Santarém, plays in the Portuguese 1st Division.

Finally, SFA's marketing efforts are virtually non-existent. Their absence on major digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, unlike other football Associations, results in missed opportunities for visibility and attracting younger audiences. The Sports City project itself has had minimal national exposure, with only a few local newspapers highlighting it.

Opportunities

In terms of opportunities, the foreseen Sports City in Santarém is primed to be a pivotal hub for the promotion of football, providing a significant boost to the industry within the district. Central to this endeavor is the SFA and PFF's shared commitment to the growth of women's football, aligning seamlessly with the project's strategic goals. This initiative promises to enhance the training facilities and competitive edge of local teams fostering superior athletic performance. Moreover, it presents an invaluable opportunity for nurturing young talent, offering a favorable environment for growth and development in sports.

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The strategic location of the Sports City that was mentioned above presents a unique opportunity to host national and international tournaments, catalyzing the district's economic structure through sports tourism. One of the main effects of this promotion includes the attraction of financial opportunities, such as sponsorships, which are instrumental in infrastructure development and operational financing, ensuring the project's sustainable evolution.

Economically, the centralization of sports activities is anticipated to revitalize the business landscape, stimulating the emergence of various complementary enterprises including hospitality, restaurants, and recreation. This commercial expansion is expected to drive job creation, yielding substantial economic and social benefits for the Santarém community. Educational initiatives, aligned with the project, aim to provide upskilling opportunities, further bolstering local employment prospects.

With the project's completion targeted around 2030, coinciding with the World Cup, Santarém Sports City stands on the threshold of significant growth. The World Cup presents a remarkable opportunity to showcase Santarém on a global stage, potentially positioning it as an optimal location for team accommodations due to its high-performance facilities and cost-effective offerings, complementing the limited supply that currently exists and which is proving to be a weakness, as mentioned above. The anticipated influx of tourism, coupled with the city's enhanced visibility, promises a profound economic impact, the magnitude of which could be transformative for Portugal.

Threats

In addressing potential threats, a nuanced strategy is essential, particularly given the Portuguese football industry's context, which, as noted in the literature review, is not as advanced as neighboring countries. Additionally, the project's initial phase is heavily contingent on the current economic climate in Portugal and globally, marked by significant uncertainty. It's a

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common misconception that large projects will automatically rejuvenate local economies and improve their settings. Therefore, it's vital to consider the broader context and how it aligns with the project itself.

Financially, large construction projects often face risks like cost overruns, necessitating meticulous financial planning and continuous monitoring. Furthermore, legal and environmental challenges are inherent in projects of this magnitude. Given the goal to attract a significant number of people to Santarém, even for short periods, it's crucial to proactively mitigate potential impacts like pollution and traffic congestion.

b. Defining a Research Question

In the literature review, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of topics crucial to enhancing the value of this Work Project. Following this, and after a thorough SWOT analysis, the logical progression is to narrow down the themes. This will provide clarity on how we can effectively contribute to the development of Santarém's Sports City.

To streamline the upcoming section, we have formulated a research question, aligning with the three aforementioned pillars: What strategic measures can be implemented in Santarém's Sports City to augment its social, sporting, and financial value?

5) Recommendations

Following consultations with the participating entities in the project, the subsequent section presents a series of recommendations carefully crafted to enhance the Santarém Sports City. These recommendations are meticulously aligned with the project's foundation pillars – social, sporting, and financial. While acknowledging the organization's explicit indication that this project is not oriented toward financial sustainability, we posit the significance of incorporating financial viability into all projects. Consequently, our recommendations are geared towards the attainment of this objective. Mindful of the financial constraints faced by organizations

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involved, emphasis has been placed on ensuring that the proposed initiatives yield tangible returns, be it in financial terms or for the broader sports ecosystem in the district of Santarém. Additionally, recommendations are strategically categorized into distinct core areas, each warranting a unique focus upon implementation.

The recommendations provided are rooted in the Sports Cities model outlined by Alzate et al. (2021) in the Literature Review above, which we perceive as a highly promising framework for a project of this nature. Beyond aligning with the three pillars mentioned earlier, our focus extends to crucial elements identified by the author as integral to the success of a Sports City: promotion of and access to sports, recreation, and physical activity; sports infrastructure and equipment; human capital and knowledge management; sports and economic development; and finally, big sports events.

a) Women's Football

Prioritizing Women's Football

Elevating women's football to a central position within Santarém's Sports City should be a paramount objective for the SFA. This strategic emphasis aligns with the burgeoning interest in women's football, presenting a unique opportunity for the Sports City project to dedicate a significant portion of its resources and focus to this dynamic area of the sport.

To position Santarém's Sports City as a reference in this topic, the SFA can implement a comprehensive set of initiatives. Firstly, publicizing the Sports City project should be accompanied by a distinct emphasis on women's football. This entails actively seeking opportunities to host various youth selections, including the A National Team, and organizing training camps, friendly matches, and official fixtures. An additional critical aspect is the creation of a tailored environment that aligns with the commitment to women's football. Specific facilities, such as dedicated changing rooms and physiotherapy zones, should be integrated into the Sports City's construction to cater to the unique needs of female athletes.

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Initiatives of this nature can potentially receive support through the application to the “Crescer 2024” fund, which is a fund established by the PFF for Associations and clubs. This fund is allocated to entities that achieve goals in five different aspects, one of which is the development of women’s football (Público 2023).

Furthermore, investing in the scouting of female talent becomes imperative. This can be realized through strategic partnerships with local schools, the organization of women's football tournaments, and the hosting of other events. Conducting talent recruitment training sessions and exploring innovative avenues for player development can also contribute to the growth of women’s football in Santarém. This recommendation is designed to augment the participation levels, aligning closely with the objectives outlined by the PFF. The PFF has set an ambitious target to achieve 75 000 federated athletes in football and Futsal by the year 2030 (PFF 2022). Active pursuit of collaboration with other organizations and clubs is essential for the SFA to foster synergies in the growth and development of women’s football. The presence of Atl. Ouriense, a prominent team in the Liga BPI, uniquely positions Santarém to establish itself as a dynamic hub in this matter. By strategically integrating Atl. Ouriense into the initiatives of the Santarém’s Sports City, this collaboration extends beyond the league matches. The Sports City can serve as a collaborative platform, where Atl. Ouriense players contribute to joint youth development programs, conduct specialized coaching clinics, and participate in community events. This synergy not only elevates the standard of women's football within Santarém but also establishes the Sports City as a unifying force that supports both the local clubs and the Liga BPI team. As Atl. Ouriense gains innovative resources and facilities, the broader community benefits from increased visibility, enhanced development pathways, and a shared passion for the growth of women's football in the region. This collaborative approach positions Santarém as a forward-thinking center for women's football, where the success of Atl. Ouriense

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and the overall development of the sport become intertwined, creating a mutually beneficial relationship within the innovative Sports City framework.

One of FIFA's key objectives in its 2022 strategic plan for women's football resonates with the presented recommendation. This goal, which aims to achieve 60 million players by 2026, is complemented by the specific objective "Build the Foundations." This particular focus centers on the establishment of a women's football ecosystem at the local level, emphasizing the transfer of expertise among various sports stakeholders within the discipline (FIFA 2022).

In addition to these initiatives, exploring the introduction of mentorship programs, women's football clinics, and awareness campaigns can further enhance the visibility and inclusivity of women's football in Santarém's Sports City. These multifaceted efforts not only align with the global momentum towards gender equality in sports but also position Santarém as a progressive and influential hub for women's football in Portugal.

b) Education and Innovation

Increased Investment in Educational Programs

A pivotal recommendation for the sustained progress of Santarém Sports City involves initiating and increasing investments in education, promoting continuous learning for all involved parties. It is crucial to emphasize that the sports industry goes beyond athletic performance and its outcomes. Proficiency in administration and management is essential for sports organizations and their stakeholders. Therefore, Santarém Sports City is encouraged to develop programs focused on vital areas such as Sports Management, Finance, Data Analytics, Marketing, Leadership, and Communication. Educated professionals within the sports domain contribute to enhancing the industry's reputation, attracting talent, investors, and sponsors who recognize the value of a knowledgeable and skilled workforce.

Concerning athletes, it's widely acknowledged that the conditions provided by clubs in districts like Santarém don't enable them to retire and sustain themselves solely through earnings from

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their sports careers. In light of this, one crucial educational initiative in the Santarém Sports City should be an Athlete Transition Program. This program aims to support athletes in transitioning more smoothly from professional sports to the job market. It could encompass career advice, educational opportunities, and mentoring. Given that athletes have devoted their time primarily to sports from a young age, it's essential to equip them with resources and tools for building a career both within the sports industry and in entirely different fields.

One idea would be to establish an educational partnership with Instituto Politécnico de Santarém, a well-regarded institution in the job market with diverse educational options in areas such as sports, management, and education. The envisioned partnership has a dual purpose. Firstly, existing Sports courses at the Instituto could integrate components developed at the Santarém Sports City complex, like practical classes or even end-of-course internships. Secondly, a collaborative program would be formulated between the two institutions to retrain district athletes. This effort aims to support athletes in gaining new skills, not just to boost their professional growth but also to help them navigate the emotional and mental challenges that often arise during this transitional period. As noted by Stambulova et al. (2009), the shift from a professional athlete career can be quite stressful and present unexpected challenges, both in terms of career and mental well-being.

This phase also represents a noteworthy shift in athlete's financial situations, underscoring the importance of these programs in extending education and support in the realm of financial literacy. As highlighted by Cude and Kabaci (2011), the absence of financial education for athletes requires attention and rectification. The primary objective of this recommendation is to assist athletes in formulating a comprehensive plan for long-term financial stability. We emphasize the importance of offering this support while athletes are still active in their careers to ensure they are well-prepared in advance. Regrettably, not all sports organizations can furnish

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these conditions, and therefore, we assert that this space will offer the necessary resources to facilitate this pivotal change.

Platts and Smith (2009) underscore the limited attention given to matters on the education and welfare provisions available to young players engaged in Academies and Centers of Excellence. The authors emphasize the significance of education, especially in light of the considerable number of players who do not progress to professional football levels or secure professional contracts. As illustrated by Platts and Smith (2009), “the Premier League and Football League state that between 60% and 65% of the 700 or so scholars taken on each year are rejected at 18. Even half of those who do win a full-time contract (at 18) will not be playing at a professional level by 21.”

Considering this information, our recommendation draws inspiration from the successful Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP) implemented by the Premier League. This long-term strategy, initiated in 2012, focuses on cultivating homegrown players, incorporating a robust educational component. According to a Premier League article, “the League has its own Education Department that delivers a program to support the technical, tactical, physical, mental, lifestyle, and welfare development of all Academy Players” (Premier League 2012). Building upon this proven concept, we propose the development of a similar program tailored to the scale of our project.

An area of paramount importance for this project’s focus is women’s football, given its remarkable growth and significance in the sports industry. The Sports City organization should act as a catalyst for change, exemplifying these ideals throughout its entire structure. Foremost among the priorities should be an investment in educational programs dedicated to this topic. This investment reflects sports organizations’ acknowledgment of the importance of female athletes, signaling a positive stance on the significance of women’s sports within the Santarém community. By providing such training opportunities, organizations contribute to the

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advancement of gender equality, fostering a more inclusive environment and culture. Additionally, this educational offering enables the cultivation of talent from grassroots levels to professional tiers, establishing a robust foundation for women's sports.

On a broader scale, educating individuals on this subject contributes to job creation in a future where market opportunities are expected to proliferate. The escalating interest and visibility of women's football have generated a heightened demand for trained and qualified professionals. A key objective of the PFF is to boost participation in women's football, and the SFA has consistently exceeded these targets annually, aligning with the PFF's goals. We believe that by adopting similar practices, this growth could be further amplified, positioning Santarém as a benchmark for other Associations and Clubs.

Our final recommendation concerning training aligns with a longstanding concern of the SFA – namely, the development of young talent. One of the principal aims of the Sports City's establishment is to prioritize the training, health, and well-being of young athletes. Therefore, we propose that the nurturing of emerging talent extend beyond the conventional academy and sporting performance aspects. We recommend establishing partnerships with schools in the district, where athletes can explore new sports and disciplines. Such programs can foster the development of leadership, communication, and teamwork skills – attributes crucial for both the professional and personal growth of the athlete. These activities could serve as extracurricular pursuits integrated into the athlete's school plan. Looking ahead, the Sports City might contemplate creating an ATL (Atividades de Tempos Livres) structure with study and development support.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Product Testers

As Bodemer (2023) mentions, “the integration of AI in sports training has emerged as a transformative approach to enhancing individual performance, optimizing training strategies, and providing personalized insights for athletes and coaches”.

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There has been a growing connection between AI and sports equipment, particularly in terms of wearable devices for athletes and sports apps used in training. These methods offer real-time monitoring of various parameters like heart rate, distance covered, and fatigue levels. This data not only helps optimize training but also plays a crucial role in preventing injuries and ensuring the overall well-being of players. Bodemer (2023) underscores that “by analyzing biomechanical data, training logs, and medical records, AI algorithms can identify injury risk factors and provide personalized recommendations to mitigate those risks”.

In the realm of performance improvement, AI algorithms analyze athlete’s training data, psychological measures, and performance metrics. By discerning patterns and correlations in the data, AI systems generate personalized training plans and optimized schedules (Bodemer 2023). This not only aids in decision-making but also provides coaches with valuable insights and recommendations.

This trend has encouraged numerous companies in the sports sector to integrate AI into their products, giving rise to new businesses. Raturi (2023) exemplifies this trend with companies like Playermaker, which employs sensors to monitor players’ performance during training and matches (see Appendix 22 for a product example). This technology enables the real-time tracking of data such as distance, speed, acceleration, and fatigue, offering immediate insights for optimal player usage.

In light of this growth, our recommendation is to encourage Santarém’s Sports City affiliated clubs to serve as test users for these AI-driven products. The Sports City can function as a pivotal testing ground, allowing athletes to utilize these products in authentic training scenarios. Such partnerships are instrumental in advancing the synergy between sports and technology, directly benefiting the development and well-being of football players. Companies can effectively test and refine their products, ensuring the highest quality, while simultaneously

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elevating the reputation of Santarém Sports City and the district within the sports ecosystem, potentially attracting partnerships with various sports brands.

Sustainability Initiatives

Incorporating sustainable practices into the construction of Santarém's Sports City is integral to fostering environmental responsibility and enhancing community well-being. This strategic emphasis on sustainability is designed to minimize Santarém's ecological footprint, optimize resource efficiency, and establish a sports facility that not only elevates the residents' quality of life but also contributes to the enduring health of the local environment. Such a commitment aligns seamlessly with global initiatives addressing climate change, positioning Santarém as a forward-thinking and environmentally conscious community.

FIFA has established a central message for organizations building new infrastructures: “Build the most efficient sustainable solution possible”. To align with this directive, FIFA outlines specific recommendations that sports organizations can adopt across five pivotal areas: carbon emissions, water, energy, waste, and ecology. Regarding carbon emissions, Santarém can enhance its sustainability efforts by considering the substitution of steel and concrete frames with timber alternatives, ensuring safety and compliance with fire safety standards in the design. Furthermore, a strategic choice in material suppliers is essential, favoring those utilizing renewable energy in their product development and/or located in proximity to the Sports City (FIFA 2022).

In the context of energy options, a practical step for designers to optimize energy efficiency involves consolidating all heated spaces. In the pursuit of sustainability, stadiums must rely on renewable energy sources rather than fossil fuels such as gas. Commonly employed renewable sources encompass photovoltaic (PV) panels, geothermal, wind power, hydrothermal, and solar thermal technologies (FIFA 2022).

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In the realm of water conservation, a fundamental objective is the prudent use of potable water. Designers tasked with stadium planning should conduct a thorough evaluation of the glass components integrated into the building's facade, aiming to minimize water consumption during cleaning processes. Furthermore, the implementation of facilities for rainwater harvesting presents an avenue for sustainable water management, where captured rainwater can subsequently be utilized for field irrigation (FIFA 2022).

In an ecological context, the construction of stadiums should avoid areas of high ecological value and the use of products leading to biodiversity loss should be strictly avoided, with particular attention given to wood products (FIFA 2022).

Finally, for waste management, the exploration of innovative design solutions becomes imperative to foster a circular economy paradigm. This entails a departure from the conventional practice of discarding products as waste at the end of their life cycle. Instead, the emphasis lies on retaining these products within the economic system for reuse (FIFA 2022).

In this segment, we aim to illustrate initiatives undertaken by other sports organizations that can be readily adaptable to Santarém's Sports City. For example, Real Betis has new seats at their stadium crafted from fishing nets reclaimed from Spanish seas and ports (Euronews 2023).

In Germany, a legislative initiative mandates all clubs in the top four divisions to serve beverages exclusively in reusable cups, effectively curbing excessive plastic usage (Euronews 2023). When Tottenham Hotspur plays away matches, the club has implemented proactive measures to facilitate transportation for its fans, thereby reducing reliance on private vehicles (Pusey 2022).

These sustainability recommendations bring valuable insights from two distinct perspectives. On one hand, project decision-makers can consider adopting many of the recommendations outlined by FIFA, advocating for the construction of more sustainable sports infrastructures. On the other hand, the examples provided by sports organizations are easily replicable.

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Furthermore, Santarém's Sports City should explore additional sustainability initiatives to distinguish itself in this sector.

Merchandising Initiatives for Santarém's Football Clubs

As Sports City is not affiliated with any specific club, it serves as the collective home for all clubs within the SFA. In light of this, the SFA aims to promote its member clubs. To that extent, we propose incorporating the sale of merchandise from various clubs in the Santarém region within the future SFA facilities. The significance of merchandising sales has shown a rising trend in Portugal, as demonstrated by the financial reports of SL Benfica, Sporting CP, and FC Porto (Cunha 2021). In 2020, encompassing merchandising sales, sponsorships, publicity, and royalties' revenues, the total operational turnover for these clubs ranged from 22% to 31%. This reflects an increase from 2010 when commercial income directly linked to brand value constituted 18% to 26% of total operational revenues (Cunha 2021).

Within the Santarém Sports City, merchandising sales serve dual purposes: revenue increase and promotion of clubs, fostering a community atmosphere. Berqvist and Falck (2010) have validated these objectives as primary drivers for merchandising sales in Nordic clubs. Interviews with four Head Sales Representatives from prestigious Nordic clubs, including Malmö FF, underscored the shared goal of generating additional revenue and cultivating a sense of community around the club.

Tackie's (2018) analysis, involving a sample of slightly over two hundred football enthusiasts, highlights that the main factors influencing their decision to purchase club merchandise are the inherent product quality and the current success of the team. These considerations carry more weight than factors such as team popularity, the fashionable appeal of the attire, or any potential impact on personal athletic performance.

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Santarém has the opportunity to leverage Tackie's (2018) findings effectively. The SFA, representing all teams in the district, ensures a constant base of satisfied fans, given the diversity of supported teams.

Local Business Partnerships

According to Yuen (2012), Sports Cities projects typically encompass a combination of leisure, retail, and entertainment complexes, alongside sports stadiums, aquariums, and cultural facilities within multi-use complexes. For instance, the initial phase of Santarém Sports City is set to be constructed adjacent to the Santarém Aquatic Complex, a pivotal infrastructure in the district. While not explicitly profit-driven, this proximity can be considered a strategic partnership, critical for the project's human resource needs and the efficient operation and maintenance of the Academy, leading to cost savings (information provided in a meeting with Carlos Coutinho, the administrator of Viver Santarém).

Furthermore, a key priority for Santarém Sports City should be the cultivation of impactful partnerships with local businesses. As highlighted by Panas (2021), "local businesses are a vital part of the overall football economy across the world.". The sports ecosystem has faced financial challenges, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. With the resurgence of stadiums and sports infrastructure attendances since the 2021/2022 season, clubs and academies now have an opportunity to rejuvenate their revenue streams and play a significant role in revitalizing local economies through strategic partnerships.

By fostering these collaborations, the Sports City can transcend its conventional role as a sporting venue and become a dynamic community hub. Extending the positive matchday atmosphere beyond the playing field, as suggested by Xero (n.d), can strengthen ties and cultivate stronger relationships within the local business community. Specific recommendations include collaborating with local restaurants to diversify culinary offerings during events, forming partnerships with nearby shops for exclusive merchandise, and launching joint

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promotional campaigns spanning various services. Implementation of loyalty programs to reward attendees with privileges at partnered establishments will encourage sustained engagement. Additionally, community events, such as charity drives and sponsorships for local teams, will further integrate the Sports City with the district's economic and social fabric. Through these collaborative initiatives, the Santarém Sports City project aspires not only to establish itself as a premier sports destination but also as a catalyst for the future economic and social prosperity of the district.

c. Diversification

Pitch Rentals

The subsequent recommendation offers an approach to maximize the utilization of the Sports City during periods when the infrastructure remains idle, presenting an opportunity for incremental revenue. The proposal involves providing pitch rentals for group games, individual training sessions with personal trainers, and utilizing the space as an extracurricular learning environment for students. The Sports City organization itself could introduce fitness programs, encompassing group classes, yoga sessions, functional training, and more, to attract a broader audience and promote physical activity within the Santarém district. Establishing partnerships with local companies is another venue, allowing the Sports City to be used for corporate events such as lectures, workshops, team-building activities, and employee wellness programs.

The potential applications are myriad, contingent on the adaptability of the Sports City's infrastructure to diverse needs.

Diversification of Tournaments

The significance of a tournament like the Tejo Cup for the district of Santarém is widely acknowledged. Beyond the annual representation by a Patron, typically a revered figure in Portuguese football, this event assumes the character of a district-wide celebration of the endeavors undertaken by sports agents. It transcends the realm of sports, fostering interaction

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and establishing formal and social connections among participants. The tournament represents a pivotal juncture in the sporting development of young players, promoting their value and growth as both athletes and individuals. For clubs, such events serve to spotlight and valorize the efforts invested in player development, offering a continual assessment ground for potential inclusion in district teams.

With the establishment and evolution of the Sports City, we see opportunities for diversification and the introduction of new tournaments throughout the season. Crafting a more compelling sports calendar not only benefits the athletes but also elevates the standing of the involved organizations. It serves as an additional platform to spot and nurture talent. We recommend the inception of tournaments across various levels, extending these opportunities to all age groups. These events also carry commercial advantages, providing an additional avenue to secure sponsorships and partnerships. Local companies and brands may find value in aligning themselves with distinctive tournaments, thereby contributing to increased revenue for the Sports City.

Utilization of Facilities for Non-Sporting Events

Another impactful recommendation involves leveraging the Sports City facilities for non-sporting events, such as concerts, fairs, festivals, and exhibitions. This initiative provides Santarém with an opportunity to stand out among other regions by actively supporting the local community, showcasing its artists, promoting fairs, brands, and products. It also sets a precedent for other Sports Cities to follow, contributing to a more vibrant representation of local culture. This recommendation underscores a prevalent concern linked to investments in sports facilities. It is common to encounter difficulties when substantial investments are made in infrastructures designed for large-scale events, leading to a limited utilization rate post-event (Alm 2012). An instance of this challenge unfolded in Portugal following Euro 2004, where multiple municipalities grappled with debt, and stadiums remained largely underutilized throughout the

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year, lacking a clear strategy for economic viability (Curado 2012). This issue is not exclusive to Portugal; after the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, where over 1 billion euros were invested in arguably unnecessary stadiums, many of these facilities transformed into "ghost stadiums" post the major event (Alm 2012).

While Santarém's Sports City may lack the scale of the mentioned stadiums, it remains imperative to optimize its facilities during periods of inactivity to mitigate potential challenges in unutilized spaces. Sports infrastructures possess the capability to host various social events, including weddings, meetings, trade shows, holiday parties, concerts, and other gatherings (Lee 2015). The author underscores the intrinsic suitability of these infrastructures for such events, citing their capacity to accommodate a sizable audience, expansive parking facilities, accessibility through public transportation, and the positive atmosphere that these venues generate (Lee 2015).

In Portugal, it has become a common practice for stadiums to serve as venues for non-sporting events, notably hosting concerts. A notable instance of this occurred in 2023 when the German band Rammstein held a performance at Estádio da Luz. SL Benfica, the club overseeing the stadium, affirmed its commitment to further explore this avenue to establish the stadium as a prominent entertainment venue in the country (Record 2023). A scenario more aligned with the potential trajectory of the Santarém Sports City was observed in the local festivities of Alcobaça. In 2021, nine performances were held at the Municipal Stadium of Alcobaça. The President of Alcobaça Municipality stressed the importance of utilizing these spaces for cultural events and articulated Alcobaça's objective to host an increasing number of non-sporting particularly during the summer months when there is a reduced frequency of games at the municipal stadium (Vieira 2021).

This strategic move aligns with two pivotal pillars of the project. From a financial perspective, the SFA has the potential to generate a significant revenue stream by renting out its space for

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these diverse events, effectively optimizing the facility during periods of inactivity. On a social level, introducing this measure holds the promise of making a substantial impact on the community.

Renting the Lecture Room for Other Business/Educational Events

The lecture room will be designated for essential processes and activities related to the operation of the SFA and the SCC. However, if its use is restricted solely to the obligations of these entities, its full potential may not be realized. The Sports City is an infrastructure with a social mission, aiming to bring together workers, youth, businesses, and athletes in a shared space dedicated to the practice and teaching of various sports. As indicated by Lee et al. (2015), there is potential to leverage sports facilities for various purposes, including social and educational events. In this context, given the room's capacity to accommodate a considerable number of people, sixty-eight to be precise, we believe it should be utilized for various types of events.

Kung and Taylor (2014) highlight the significance of sports organizations embracing athletes with reduced mobility to both enhance this specific segment and promote greater accessibility to sports. Integrating individuals with disabilities aligns with the social mission of the Santarém Sports City, aiming to make sports accessible to all. This approach would optimize the use of this infrastructure, turning it into a spatial resource for diverse activities that are of interest to the community.

In conclusion, this recommendation harmonizes well with the three defined pillars for the Sports City. Financially, it adds to the overall revenue, socially it serves as a valuable space for the community, and it contributes to the sports aspect if the intended use of the room aligns with sporting activities.

Introducing Padel in the Sports City

Despite the primary focus of the Sports City being football, other sports will also be present in the Sports City of Santarém. The pavilion planned for the second phase is intended to host

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sports such as futsal, volleyball, and basketball, among others. In the stadium, an athletics track is planned for construction. However, we believe that even more sports can be explored, to increase social impact, attract more visitors to the Sports City, and provide an additional source of revenue to contribute to the sustainability of the project.

One such sport that could be considered is padel. In 2021, a significant cohort of approximately 100 000 participants engaged in padel across Portugal, utilizing a network of over 550 courts (Ferreira 2023). Beyond the inherent allure of the sport, Kong (2023) posits that the attractiveness of padel is further heightened by factors such as the quality of infrastructure, the expertise of coaches, and the establishment of a wholesome, community-centric environment. Upon initiation into padel, individuals swiftly cultivate a “healthy habit”, evidenced by an impressive retention rate ranging between 80% and 90% (Moreira 2023).

In 2023, Ferreira evaluated the potential construction of a padel complex in the Palmela region of Portugal. The comprehensive cost analysis (consult Appendix 23) for constructing and fully implementing a padel court involved estimates from four distinct suppliers, ranging between 24 650 euros and 33 290 euros. Ferreira also details all additional investments and operating expenses required for the Palmela club to become operational and ready for athlete participation. The primary revenue streams for padel clubs include court rentals and lessons. Ferreira considered a competitive rental pricing strategy, varying between 16 and 21 euros, dependent on factors like the day and time. This pricing is not only competitive in Lisbon, where hourly rates tend to be higher, but also aligns with the 16 to 21 euros per hour range observed in the Santarém area, as indicated by Playtomic app data. In terms of lessons, the pricing structure ranges from 30 to 200 euros per month, depending on the number of lessons per week and the athlete's proficiency level.

Following an in-depth analysis of all potential revenues and expenses associated with the club, and a projection covering the initial five years of the project, Ferreira (2023) concluded that all

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scenarios - pessimistic, realistic, and optimistic - demonstrated financial viability for the successful execution of the project at hand. Given the distinct contexts of Palmela and Santarém, presenting the final results might not serve as an accurate indicator for stakeholders in Santarém contemplating an investment in the padel courts. What proves to be more visually insightful and practical is understanding the payback period of the investment. In the pessimistic scenario, the payback period was 4 years and 6 months, in the realistic scenario, it was 1 year and 8 months and in the optimistic scenario, it was 1 year and 2 months.

This example is valuable due to its currency and inclusion of crucial values such as the investment required for court construction and the hourly rate. As indicated by Ferreira's analysis, the swift recovery of the investment in Santarém is evident given sufficient demand. Before committing to this investment, the primary focus should be on assessing whether there is a shortage of infrastructure for this sport in Santarém and whether there is a corresponding demand for such facilities. If the analysis yields positive results, stakeholders at the Santarém Sports City might find this investment worthy of consideration.

d. Sports Tourism

Hosting Training Camps for External Teams

Within the envisioned plans for the Sports City, the incorporation of a Training Center opens up opportunities for accommodating teams beyond Santarém, including both national and international entities. While prioritizing local teams and sports agents remains paramount, exploring the facility's potential to host teams from across Portugal and abroad can yield multiple benefits. This recommendation is strategically divided into three distinctive offerings. Firstly, the Sports City of Santarém should aim to establish a partnership with the PFF, with a primary objective of hosting various levels of the Portuguese national football teams, both male and female. While accommodating the A-level men's team may pose challenges, hosting other

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national teams, including friendly or official matches on the envisioned 11-a-side field, makes the training center a logical choice for their pre-event preparations.

Secondly, Santarém's strategic location and convenient road access make it an attractive option for professional football clubs in the 1st and 2nd Portuguese league. For instance, GD Chaves traveling from the north to the south of the country could consider renting the Training Center for one or two days. This would allow the team to break their travel, conduct training sessions, and prepare for matches without the physical strain of extensive travel. Moreover, this option could present a more cost-effective alternative compared to traditional hotel arrangements.

The third scenario, potentially the most financially appealing, involves renting the training center to foreign teams, aligning with plans to enhance sports tourism. Teams from Nordic countries, which often seek training opportunities during the winter, could find Santarém an economically attractive option compared to more established locations like the Algarve. Critical determinants in this decision-making process include the quality of accommodations, dining facilities, well-equipped sports infrastructure, and the diverse origin of participating clubs. The region's climatic advantages further contribute to its appeal. These considerations draw parallels with the preferences of teams favoring the Algarve region (Soares 2023).

In the summer of 2023, several prominent football teams, including Al Nassr FC, AS Roma, Celtic FC, SL Benfica, and others, chose to conduct their pre-season training camps in the Algarve region, with many of these clubs being regular patrons of the locale (Bruxo 2023). Notably, training centers are intensifying their focus on enhancing field conditions, overall infrastructure, strategic planning for complementary activities, and elevating the quality of staff to effectively cater to the needs of professional football teams (Bruxo 2023). Examples of such establishments include Browns Sports Resort, Cascade Wellness Resort, and the Melgaço Training Center, with nightly rates typically ranging between 150 euros and 300 euros, based on available information. Santarém offers a compelling opportunity to establish itself as a more

cost-effective alternative to the Algarve, potentially attracting a multitude of football teams to the region. This advantageous positioning is further underscored by Santarém's proximity to Lisbon, ensuring convenient accessibility. It not only facilitates the seamless organization of tournaments and events but also opens avenues for exploring complementary activities within the Lisbon metropolitan area and other nearby attractions, such as Fátima.

e. Community Engagement

Open-Air Public Spaces

Constructing appealing open spaces emerges as a pivotal recommendation to enhance the aesthetics of Santarém's Sports City and promote community involvement and physical activity. According to recent data from the Eurobarometer survey conducted by the European Commission, Europeans engaging in exercise or physical activities predominantly favor informal settings, such as parks and outdoor public spaces (40%) (Borrego et al. 2018).

Considering this information, the integration of a central park within Santarém's Sports City is strongly advocated, designed to accommodate informal gatherings and non-sporting events. Incorporating walkways, biking trails, and outdoor gym equipment becomes imperative to encourage physical exercise. Borrego et al. (2018) highlight the motivational impact of providing suitable and conveniently located physical spaces on the cultivation and maintenance of active lifestyles. To further facilitate socializing during tournaments and pre-game settings, the establishment of a picnic area with accompanying facilities is recommended, aligning with prevalent Portuguese cultural tradition, and benefiting the Santarém community.

These open spaces must complement the primary purpose of the Sports City, namely football practice. Thus, a designated fan zone for watching important matches and major competitions, even if unrelated to Santarém, is proposed. Research by Hautbois et al. (2020) on fan zones during UEFA Euro 2016 indicates that such spaces offer cities opportunities for attractions, cultural events, and expanded visibility of games. The potential for developing marketing

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strategies and engaging with fans in terms of gastronomy, entertainment, and merchandising is also highlighted by Hagemann (2010). Partnerships with local businesses, as suggested in the Local Business Partnership recommendation above, could play a crucial role in enhancing these venues and increasing the visibility of local businesses.

Considering the lack of such offerings in the district of Santarém, as noted by the Administrator of Viver Santarém in a meeting with our group, the proposed fan zone aims to address this gap. It collectively contributes to fostering a healthier and more inviting environment, providing a space where community members can relax, socialize, and participate in various activities, thereby promoting overall community engagement.

Innovative Fan Engagement Strategies

Securing sustained fan engagement presents a contemporary challenge for clubs and sports organizations, transcending mere on-field excellence for stadium attendance. As outlined in the UEFA 2019-2024 plan “Together for the Future of Football”, which outlines a five-year path for the development of European football, a key objective involves clubs fostering continuous engagement with fans for the overall prosperity of football (UEFA n.d).

To strengthen the bond between fans and the Sports City, various innovative fan engagement strategies can be implemented with minimal investment. Firstly, endorsing existing fan initiatives for local teams is paramount. This may entail supporting organized fan groups that contribute to the development of these clubs, with potential backing from the Sports City. Drawing inspiration from the Liverpool FC Fan Engagement Plan (n.d), a framework (see Appendix 24) could be applied at the scale of Santarém’s clubs, offering advantages in terms of both fan engagement and club development. Similar to the English club’s approach, establishing a Supporters’ Council with representatives from all 1st League clubs in Santarém can facilitate discussions on various aspects related to football development in the district, aiming for continual improvement of the sporting ecosystem. To address additional topics

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requiring input from a broader fan base, forums could be created, segmented into key themes, and subsequently shared with the wider fan community via the digital application mentioned below.

Recognizing the increasing significance of the digital realm in sports engagement, we propose the development of a digital mobile application for this purpose. As highlighted in a Barça Innovation Hub (2022) article, football organizations must produce distinctive, quality content to stand out. Beyond disseminating news from forums, this application could provide information on local teams, players, schedules, and news, fostering virtual interaction among fans. This initiative, with relatively low costs, has the potential to significantly benefit the Santarém community, even extending its reach to football enthusiasts beyond this context.

In a broader context, the regular organization of fan engagement events underscores a commitment to the community, maintaining fans' connection to the sporting reality of the district.

6) Conclusion

Following a comprehensive analysis of diverse facets within this project, we have discerned significant potential within Santarém's Sports City to yield economic and social impact in the region. The formulated research question has been complemented with a suite of recommendations addressing the three fundamental pillars of this initiative. Structured recommendations have been presented for each dimension, drawing inspiration from successful applications in analogous sports projects and tailored for potential adaptation to the specific context of Santarém's Sports City.

The primary drivers of the project, prominently featured within each pillar, entail the strategic intensification of efforts in sports tourism, women's football, educational initiatives, and sports accessibility for all. This concerted approach is essential for the seamless interconnection of each pillar, thereby optimizing the potential inherent in Santarém Sports City. Anticipating a favorable response to the identified project drivers, the ensuing economic and social implications for the region stand to be profoundly positive. Prospective benefits encompass job creation, increased investment in sports and related industries, local business development, social inclusion, enhancement of health indicators, infrastructural development, heightened social appeal, community engagement, and educational advancement.

a) Limitations and areas for future research

This chapter outlines the limitations encountered during this research. The constraints primarily stemmed from challenges in data collection, directly impacting the analysis of the project's impact. A notable limitation was the absence of a specialized data processing department within the District Football Associations. This organizational gap significantly restricted access to pertinent data, which is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of such projects. Given that similar projects in Portugal are just getting started, the lack of established models for comparison made these challenges even more difficult.

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Moreover, the adherence to confidentiality concerning financial data and the economic impact of comparable projects on a national or European scale presented additional barriers. This confidentiality limited the scope of our benchmarking efforts, confining the analysis predominantly to non-financial aspects.

To navigate these challenges, the focus of the study was reoriented towards the social and sporting impact anticipated from the Santarém Sports City. This shift allowed for an examination grounded in the main trends within the sports sector and the regional context. The analysis thus concentrated on qualitative impacts rather than quantitative metrics.

These limitations underscore the need for future research in this area. Addressing these challenges would require a strategic shift towards the digitization and internationalization of sports organizations. Such a transition would facilitate more efficient data collection and availability, paving the way for more nuanced and comprehensive analyses in future studies.

The acknowledgment of these limitations is not to diminish the value of the present work but to provide a clear perspective on its scope and to guide future research in this evolving field.

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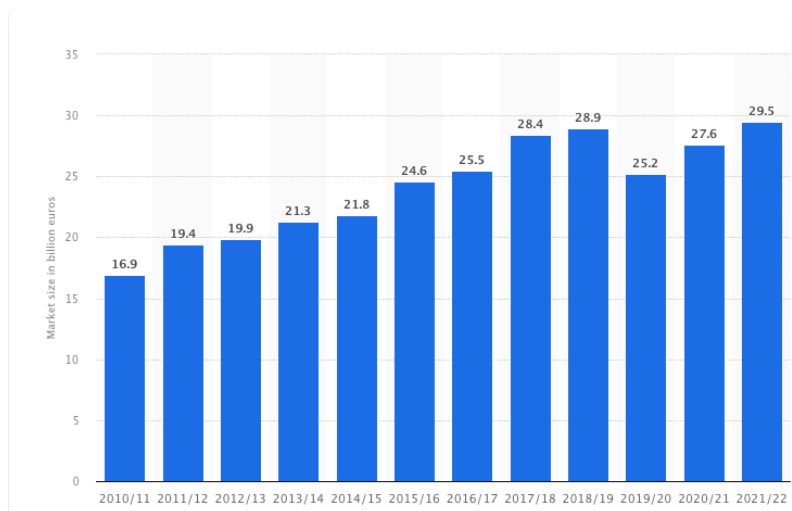
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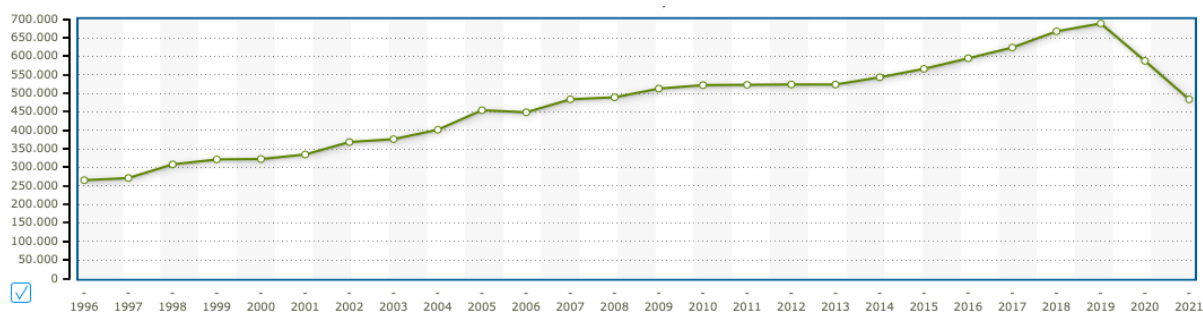
8) Appendix

Appendix 1 – Market size of the professional football market in Europe (in billion euros)



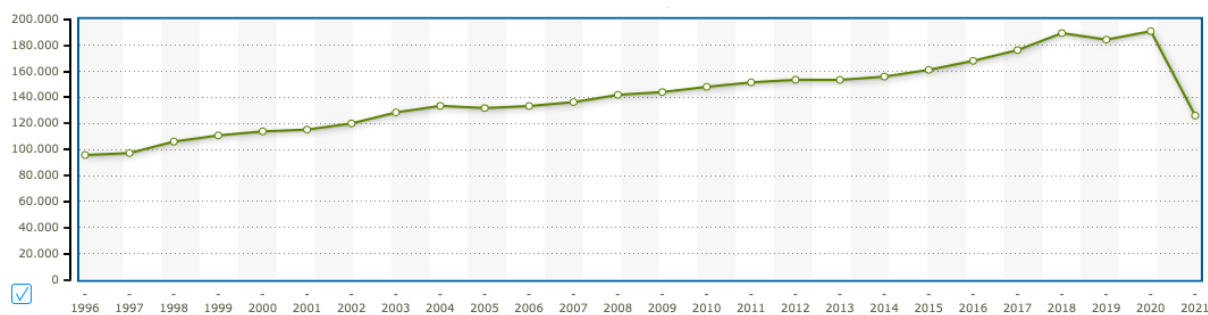
Source: Statista (2023)

Appendix 2 – Total federated sports athletes by all sports federations



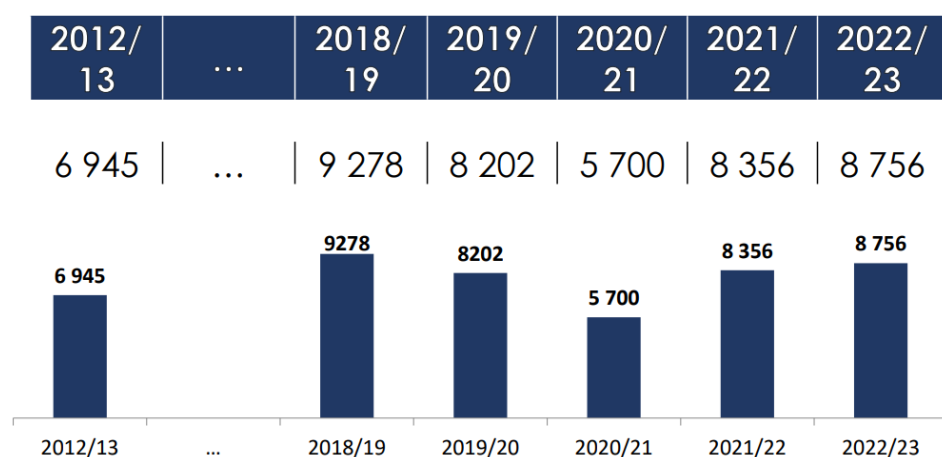
Source: Pordata (2021)

Appendix 3 – Total federated football athletes by all sports federations



Source: Pordata (2021)

Appendix 4 – Number of registered players in the SFA



Source: SFA (2023)

Appendix 5 – Number of registered players in the top 10 Portuguese Football Associations

		<u>17/18</u>	<u>18/19</u>	<u>19/20</u>	<u>20/21</u>	<u>21/22</u>	<u>22/23</u>
1º	Porto	33 887	40 056	35 318	25 420	35 954	40 321
2º	Lisboa	33 197	33 532	33 015	19 325	30 578	33 420
3º	Braga	23 467	24 516	20 764	9 725	20 389	22 525
4º	Aveiro	16 173	18 549	16 267	13 089	16 736	17 904
5º	Setúbal	11 680	12 738	12 851	7 033	12 663	14 019
6º	Leiria	11 017	11 308	10 823	6 847	11 042	11 721
7º	Algarve	7 333	7 950	8 095	4 701	8 052	8 947
8º	Santarém	8 038	9 278	8 235	5 700	8 356	8 756
9º	Coimbra	7 398	8 907	7 815	5 630	8 029	8 701
10º	Viseu	6 504	6 950	7 164	5 229	7 195	7 607
...							



Total FPF

212 981 214 118 200 535 128 819 199 622 217 384

Source: SFA (2023)

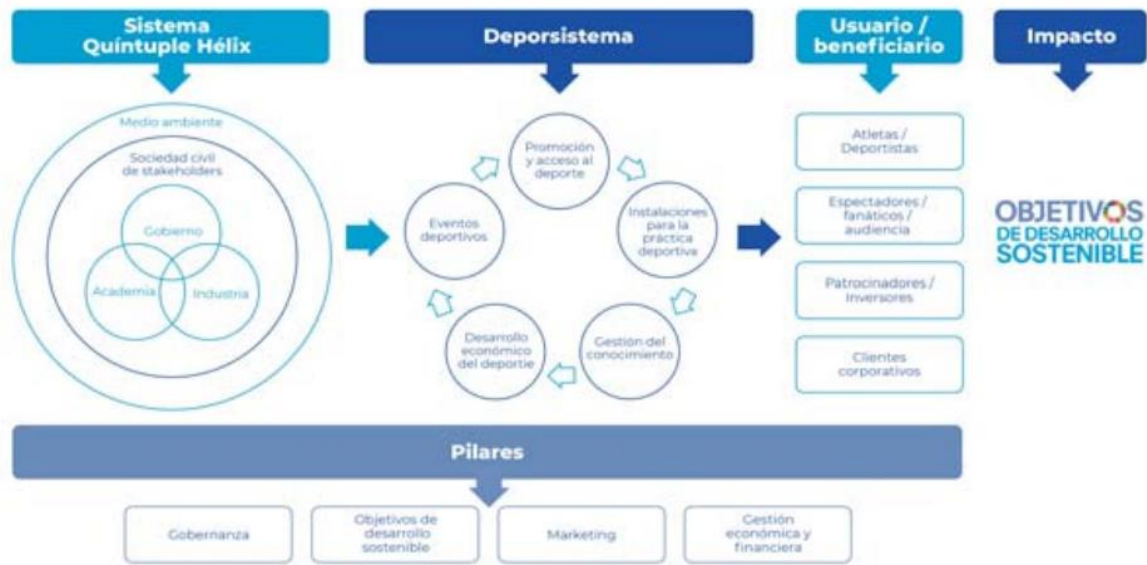
Appendix 6 to 11 – Images of Santarém’s Sports City Project





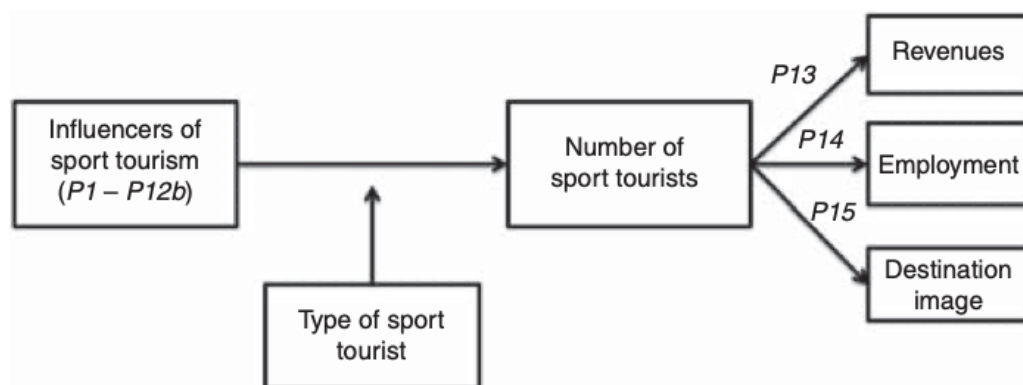
Source: SCC (2023)

Appendix 12 – Quintuple Helix Model



Source: Alzate et al. (2021)

Appendix 13 - Model of Sports Tourism as a Factor of Economic Development



Source: Roche et al. (2013)

Appendix 14 - Number of Foreign Tourists Visits in the 2012 European Football Championship in Poland

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of tourists	13.5	14.84	15.65	16.0	16.7
Increase year on year	-	1.49	0.81	0.35	0.70
Increase in %	-	11.1	5.5	2.2	4.4

Source: Bergier et al. (2018)

Appendix 15 - Tourist expenditure per person and per day in the 2012 European Football Championship in Poland

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average per person	398	426	384	337	332
Increase in USD	-	+28	-42	-47	-5
Increase in %	-	+6,6	-9,9	-12,2	1,5
Average for 1 day	79	85	101	95	No data
Increase in USD	-	+6	+16	-6	available
Increase in %	-	+7,1	+15,8	-6,3	

Source: Bergier et al. (2018)

Appendix 16 – Estimates of attendance for matches in Cordoba CF Stadium

		2013–2014	2014–2015			2013–2014	2014–2015
Per match	Full site capacity	20,945	21,614	Journalists		6	18
	Average attendance	9910	20,000	Referee team		4	4
	Attendees			Rival team			
	Season ticket holders	8427	16,150	Player team		19	19
	Local supporters	1383	850	Coach team		3	6
	Rival supporters	100	3000	Managers		2	5
Season	Total attendance	242,610 ^a	380,000	Total attendance		782 ^b	988

Source: Amador et al. (2016)

Appendix 17 – Estimates of the total shock of demand on Cordoba's economy in the 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 seasons (euros)

Expenditures	Conservative		Progressive	
	2013–2014 ^a	2014–2015	2013–2014 ^a	2014–2015
Commercial services	135,488	290,150	153,803	402,650
Coffee shops	1,008,128	1,641,200	1,031,660	1,796,000
Public transports	28,092	116,370	33,975	155,070
Merchandising and other expenditures	758,470	1,260,000	784,380	1,389,000
Accommodation	280,130	1,274,770	325,190	2,324,770
Restaurants	92,120	1,570,080	131,540	2,365,080
Tickets	932,694	1,908,500	1,020,840	2,722,500
Effect of player wages	2,506,624	12,407,018	2,506,624	12,407,018
Budget effect	0	9,730,630	0	9,730,630
Image effect	0	5,500,000	0	5,500,000
Total	5,954,246	37,498,719	6,350,512	41,672,719

Source: Amador et al. (2016)

Appendix 18 – Impact on Cordoba's economy in the 2013/2014 season (euros)

	Conservative scenario		Progressive scenario	
	Impact	Percentage	Impact	Percentage
Total Production	16,785,043	0.05	17,847,798	0.06
GDP	6,211,084	0.06	6,609,837	0.06
Change in Labour after shock	33		35	

Source: Amador et al. (2016)

Appendix 19 – Impact on Cordoba's economy in the 2014/2015 season (euros)

	Conservative scenario		Progressive scenario	
	Impact	Percentage	Impact	Percentage
Total Production	93,732,391	0.30	104,851,421	0.34
GDP	34,042,649	0.31	38,241,339	0.35
Change in Labour after shock	179		201	

Source: Amador et al. (2016)

Appendix 20 – Economic impact on Cordoba's economy over the net effect (euros)

	Conservative scenario		Progressive scenario	
	Impact	Percentage	Impact	Percentage
Total Production	76,947,348	0.25	87,003,623	0.28
GDP	27,831,565	0.26	31,631,502	0.29
Change in Labour after shock	146		166	

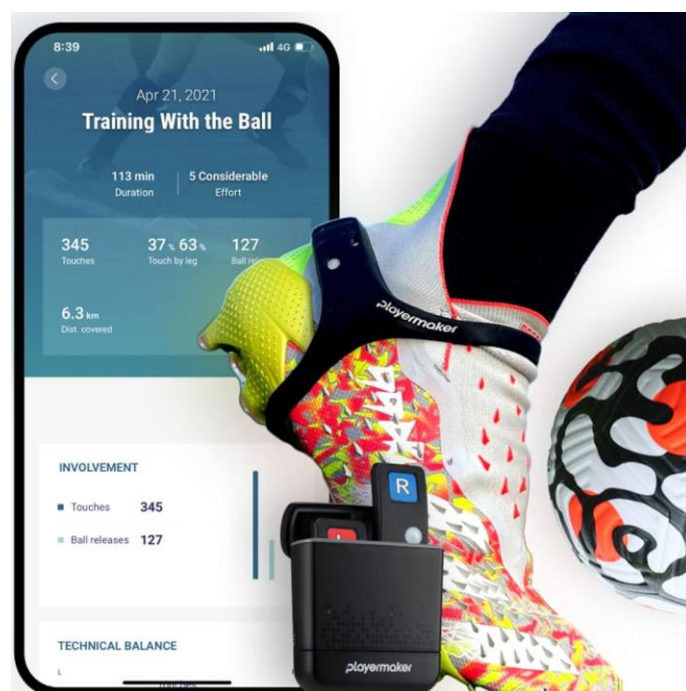
Source: Amador et al. (2016)

Appendix 21 – SWOT Analysis

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	• Strategic location with convenient accesses • Portuguese Football Federation support • Number of registered football players in Santarém • Tejo Cup host	• Elder population • Limited hospitality offers in the district • Weak professionalization of local clubs • Marketing strategy
	Opportunities	Threats
External	• Promotion of football industry within the district • Growth of Women's Football • Nurturing young talent • National and international tournaments host • Financial opportunities (sponsors) • Complementary businesses • Job creation • Educational initiatives • World Cup 2030	• Portuguese Football context • Global economic uncertainty • Over relying on the project to rejuvenate local economy • Financial costs overruns • Over dependence on other institutions • Environmental challenges

Source: Own Elaboration

Appendix 22 – Playermaker products



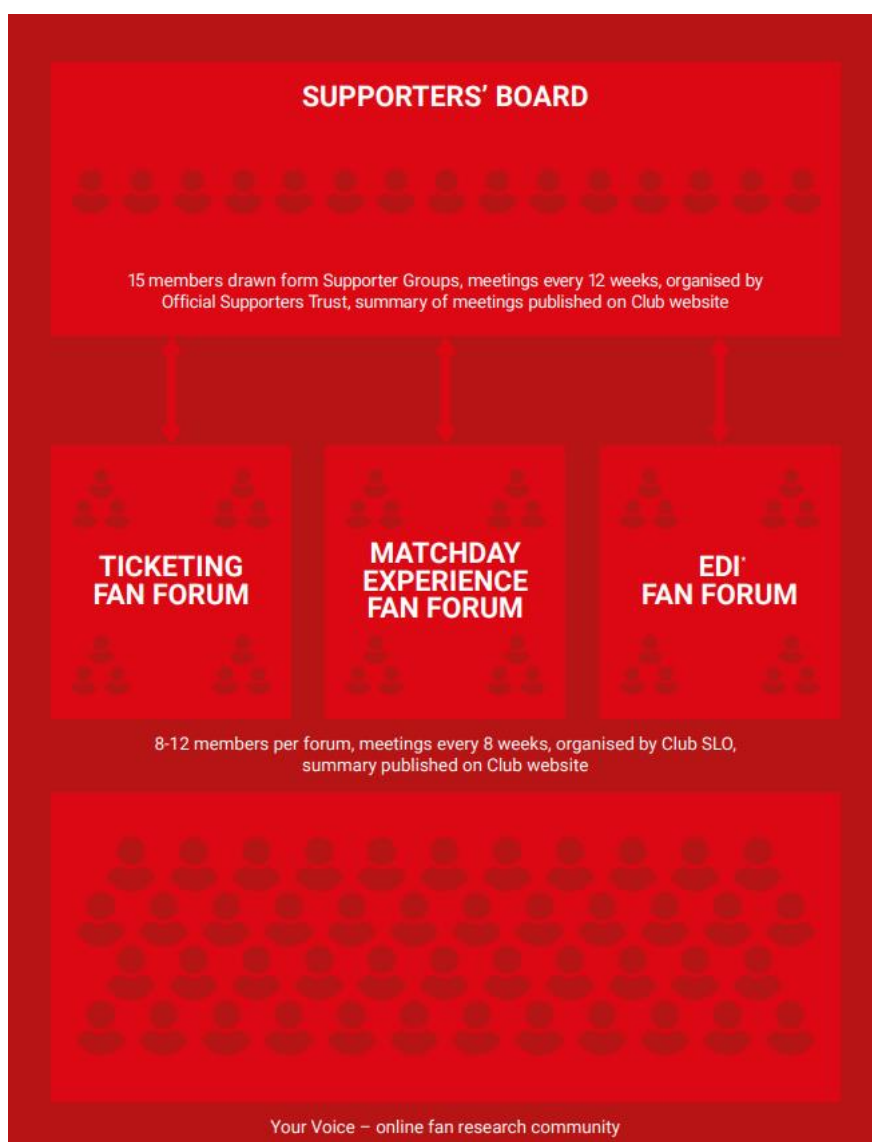
Source: Playermaker.com

Appendix 23 – Total Cost Analysis of a Padel Court in Palmela

Total price for 1 standard court				
Entry/Suppliers	InCourts	GreenPark	Mediterra	Qifan Fitness
Price per unit standard court	15.700 €	22.240 €	13.500 €	12.200 €
Installation	3.000 €	-	1.500 €	1.500 €
Construction Work	10.450 €	10.450 €	10.450 €	10.450 €
Transportation	1.700 €	600 €	1.065 €	500 €
Total	30.850 €	33.290 €	26.515 €	24.650 €

Source: Ferreira (2023)

Appendix 23 – Liverpool FC Fan Engagement Plan Framework



Source: Liverpool FC (n.d)