

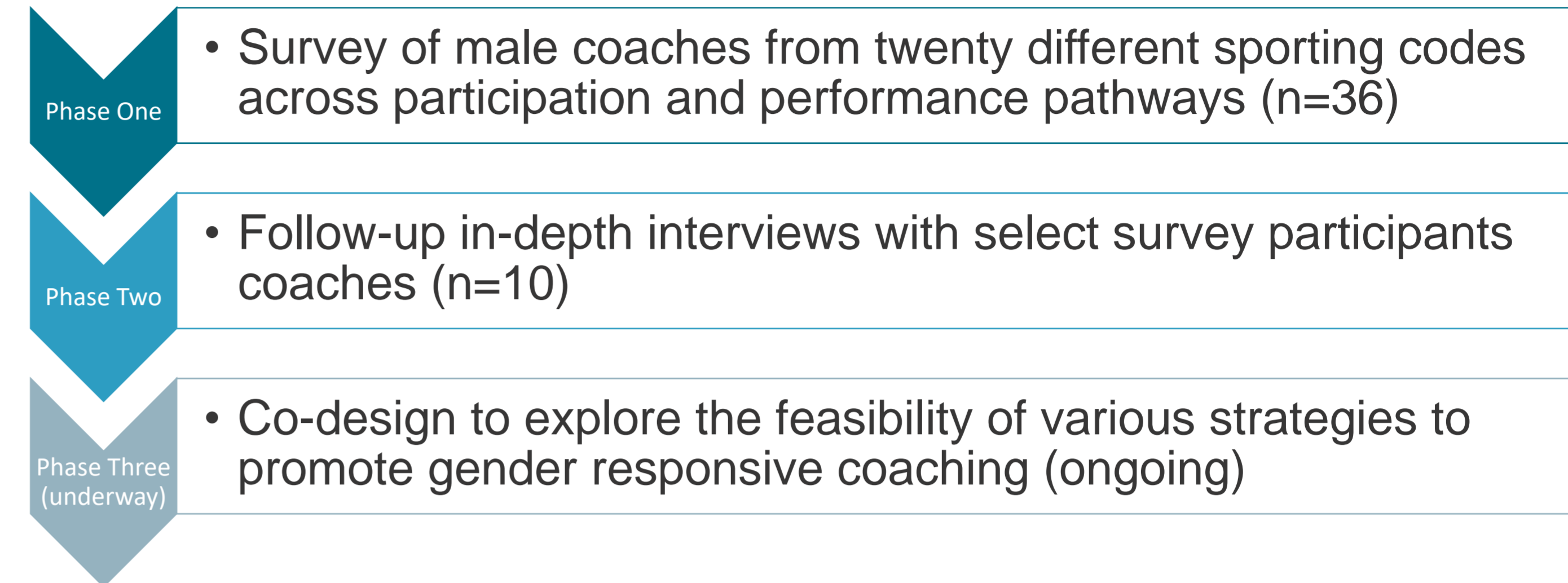
# Building Bridges across the Gender Divide: Mobilising male allyship in sport coaching

## Research Background

1. Need for contemporary coaches to become more aware of the impact of gendered assumptions and stereotypes (Gosai et al., 2021).
2. However, **little is currently known** about the development of gender responsive coaching practices (Goorevich & Lavoie, 2024).

**AIM:** To engage men as allies within sport coaching through exploring their knowledge and understanding of gender responsive coaching (i.e., their understanding of how to best support the wellbeing needs and skill development and performance goals of their female and gender diverse athletes)

## Methodology



## Results

1. Recognition of importance of being gender responsive.
2. However, there was a **lack of conceptual clarity** around what being gender responsive means and a **lack of consensus and consistency** around what this entails in practice.
3. Coaches current gender responsive coaching practices were informed by their understanding of gendered differences as either tied to **inherent biological or psychological differences** or as **socially constructed** through inequitable societal norms, cultures and practices
4. Despite coaches' best intentions, our analysis highlighted **the continued presence of stereotyping**, both positive and negative, which can be limiting for athletes regardless of their gender.

"Girls have more anxiety and are more nervous performing a new skill that is challenging...they are also more prone to bring stuff to training and get stuck in emotional ruts"

'Well, it must be tough to coach them [women]'. And then you say, tough how? It's a sort of pause and, 'yeah not sure' or 'we just assumed that it must be tough' (interviewed coach discussing previous interactions with other coaches within his network).

## Implications

1. Need to promote more **diverse ways of knowing about and practising gender responsive coaching** which recognise gender as a social construct but do not ignore the material and physical needs of female and gender diverse athletes.
2. Equally important to keep in mind that **'proactive' gender responsive coaching practices "even underpinned with the best intentions are never neutral"** (Schofield et al., 2022, p. 326) and often have a host of unintended consequences especially within the highly gendered landscape of sport.
3. Therefore, there is a need for **more critical and reflexive coach development frameworks** to support the development of gender responsive coaching that also draw attention to the **unintended consequences** of current gender responsive understandings and practices.