ACADEMY

UEFA Research Grant Programme



Regulations

2027/28

1. Eligibility

Applicants must either:

- have obtained a doctorate and currently hold a research position at a university or equivalent institution; or
- be enrolled as a doctoral student at a university or equivalent institution and currently be preparing a doctoral thesis.

All applicants must have an excellent command of at least one official UEFA language (English, French or German).

Joint applications may be considered if they meet the following conditions:

- No more than three researchers may be involved.
- The researchers must hold research positions or be enrolled as doctoral students at different universities or equivalent institutions located in the territories of different national associations (i.e. one researcher per university/institution and per member association).
- One of the researchers must be appointed as the lead researcher, to act as UEFA's sole point of contact and to present the final report if the application is accepted and a research grant awarded.

Research proposals in the following fields may be submitted for consideration by the UEFA Research Grant Jury:

- Economics
- History
- Law
- Management
- Political science
- Psychology
- Sociology



Please note that as of 2023, research projects on medical topics are no longer accepted for the UEFA Research Grant Programme. Academics working on medical and health-related research can apply to the UEFA Medical Research Grant Programme (UEFA MRGP), a specific set of schemes, tailor-made to medical topics and under the management of UEFA's medical unit.

UEFA's objective is to support research projects that are of high relevance and interest to its 55 member associations. The closer the cooperation between academia and the associations, the greater and more lasting the benefits for European football. For this reason, all research projects must be supported by a national association by means of a letter of recommendation signed by the president or general secretary/CEO. The letter must include the details of a contact person within the national association.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to discuss their projects with representatives of the national associations in order to understand their expectations and requirements, and to decide together on the most appropriate research methodology to ensure the chosen research progresses well over the nine months available.

2. Application requirements and procedure

2.1 Application dossier

Applications to the UEFA Research Grant Programme must be submitted online at UEFAacademy.com/courses/rgp, along with the following:

- The declaration to UEFA, which is available at UEFAacademy.com/courses/rgp, duly completed and signed. For joint applications involving more than one researcher, each researcher must sign the declaration.
- An application document of no more than ten pages, describing the proposed research (see section 2.2).
- A one-page summary of the application document (see section 2.2).
- An ethical clearance letter if the research involves human subjects, regardless of whether they are involved in interviews, focus groups or clinical research.
- A CV of no more than one page. For joint applications involving more than one researcher, each researcher must include a CV.
- Copies of two academic articles published by the applicant in peer-reviewed journals or presented at an academic conference. For joint applications involving more than one researcher, only the lead researcher must include copies of academic articles.
- One letter of recommendation signed by the president or general secretary/CEO of a UEFA member association. If several national associations support the same research project, only one letter is required and it must be signed by the 'lead' national association. The letter must include the details of a contact person within the national association.
- A second letter of recommendation signed by a professor at a university or equivalent institution other than that of the applicant(s). For joint applications involving more than one researcher, each researcher must provide a letter of recommendation signed by a professor at a university or equivalent institution not involved in the proposed project. Each researcher's letter of recommendation must be signed by a different person.

The letters of recommendation must attest to the importance of the proposed research (in academic terms, for the national association(s) concerned and for European football in general) and the quality of the applicant(s). They must be written on official headed paper and scanned. In the case of a previous applicant submitting a new application on a similar topic to the first, the same letters of recommendation may be used as in the original application as long as they are no more than two years old (in other words, letters of recommendation are valid for two years).

Incomplete applications will not be considered by the jury.

The entire application dossier must be written in one of the three official UEFA languages (English, French or German). However, the one-page summary must be written in English, irrespective of the language used for the other documents. It is imperative that all applicants read these UEFA Research Grant Programme Regulations and the declaration to UEFA before completing the application form. Please note that in case of any differences between the English, French and German versions of these reference documents, the English version takes precedence.

2.2 Application structure

Applications must be no more than ten pages long and contain at least the following sections:

- Introduction
- Question(s) and hypothesis(-es) to be researched
- Justification for the research (contribution to the national association(s) concerned and European football in general):
    - This section should be at least one page long and should convince the jury of the importance of the research for the national association(s) concerned and for European football in general
- Summary of the state of knowledge and a literature review on the research topic
- Description of research undertaken to date by the applicant(s) on the topic or in related fields
- Planned methodology
    - This section should be at least one page long and should explain in detail the methodology which will be used during the research, showing that it is the most appropriate for the purpose, timeframe and budget of the research, demonstrating that it will be correctly applied and illustrating the researcher or researchers' awareness of the latest methodological developments in the field. Moreover, it should clearly show how the methodology is realistic and fits into a realistic timeline (see below).
- Main results expected
- Detailed timeline, ideally clearly presented in the form of a graphic chart
    - Given that the research should be feasible in a period of nine months, the timeline should start at the earliest on 1 July 2027 and end at the latest on 31 March 2028. The timeline must include the production of an interim report, to be submitted by 30 November 2027, and a final report, to be submitted by 31 March 2028.
- Risk assessment describing the potential threats to the feasibility of the project
- Select bibliography (max. one page)
- List of the applicant's or applicants' main academic publications (max. one page)
- List of bursaries previously awarded to the applicant(s)
- Detailed budget in euros, ideally clearly presented in the form of a table, justifying the amount requested (max. €15,000 for individual applications and €20,000 for joint applications)
    - The budget can cover:
        - the purchase of specific material necessary for the research (this area does not include the purchase of a computer);
        - the living costs of the researcher(s), and any assisting researchers;
        - the cost of additional human resources (e.g. for data collection);
        - the cost of travel and accommodation linked directly to the research.

- The budget cannot cover:
  - costs related to publication of the results (e.g. participation in academic conferences);
  - university overheads.

At the beginning of the research, once a grant has been awarded to a research project, a mandatory 'kick-off' meeting will be organised via conference call with the researcher, or the team of researchers in the case of joint research projects, specialists working in the research area, a representative of the supporting national association(s) and two members of the jury to discuss the planned research (supervision group). The goals of the kick-off meeting are to provide the researcher or research team with the jury's feedback and recommendations, and to identify the areas in which the jury, the national association(s) and/or UEFA can help facilitate the research and maximise the quality of its results. Following this meeting, the researcher, or lead researcher in the case of joint research projects, might be asked to provide UEFA with an amended proposal that takes into account the meeting discussions and decisions. The award of the grant and payment of the first instalment are conditional on the submission of this amended proposal.

In addition to the kick-off meeting, the researcher, or the team of researchers in the case of joint research projects, will update the supervision group on the progress of the research during an interim meeting. The date of the interim meeting must be set during the kick-off meeting.

UEFA will set a time and date for the researcher, or the team in the case of joint research projects, to present the final results once the project is completed. The presentation will be by conference call to the UEFA Research Grant Jury and representatives of the UEFA Academy. Representatives of the supporting UEFA member association(s) will also attend the presentation.

After the final presentation, the researcher, or the team in the case of joint research projects, needs to produce a 60 to 90-second video summarising their results and recommendations for a general audience. These videos can then be used by UEFA to promote the programme and disseminate the results through its different communication channels.

Application documents must be typed in size 12 font (1.5 line spacing) on numbered A4 pages. **No application documents of over ten pages or in a different format will be considered.**

Applicants must also provide a one-page executive summary of their application document as a separate file. The summary must be typed in size 12 font (single line spacing) and be written in English. It must mention:

- the justification for the research (contribution to national associations and European football in general, specifying how they will particularly benefit from the research and why);
- the research question(s) and hypothesis(-es);
- the planned methodology; and
- the total financial contribution requested.

2.3 Submissions

Applications must be submitted online at UEFAacademy.com/courses/rgp by 15 March 2027 (17:00 CET) in order to be considered for the 2027/28 UEFA Research Grant Programme. The UEFA administration will acknowledge receipt of all applications by email.

To make it easier for UEFA to process the applications, each applicant must name the files that make up their application as follows: Year_SurnameFirstname_Document name

Please follow the examples below for fictional applicant Albert Einstein:

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Application dossier_10 pages

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Application dossier_summary

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Ethical clearance letter

2027_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Scientific article 1

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Scientific article 2

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of recommendation_University

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of recommendation_National association

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Declaration to UEFA

For joint applications involving more than one researcher, the surname and first name in all file names should be those of the lead researcher. This applies equally to files that must be submitted for every researcher, whose own names should be added to the end of the file names. For example:

2027_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_EinsteinAlbert
2027_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_NewtonIsaac
2027_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_HawkingStephen

2027_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of recommendation_University_EinsteinAlbert
2027_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of recommendation_University_NewtonIsaac
2027_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of recommendation_University_HawkingStephen

Applications that do not conform to these naming conventions will not be considered.

3. Selection procedure

Applications that meet all the requirements set out in this document will be examined by the UEFA Research Grant Jury. The jury comprises representatives of the European football community and academics known internationally for their work linked to football or other sports in Europe. One of the jury members is appointed as chair. The UEFA administration will be involved in the shortlisting of dossiers and in an advisory capacity in subsequent stages of the process.

When considering an application, the jury will base its decision only on objective criteria, primarily those listed below:

- **Importance of the research for UEFA and its member associations**
- The **European dimension** (Is the project of limited geographic interest or is it on a European scale?) and the **replicability of the results** (Will the research lead to the identification of best practices that may be useful for other national associations wishing to support a similar project in the future?). As a general principle, research focusing on a single country should be avoided unless there is a compelling justification; where such an approach is adopted, the rationale must be clearly articulated and substantiated.
- The **feasibility of the project** (Can the project be realistically carried out according to the proposed timeline?) The potential impact of the research findings on decision-making (Could the research findings be used to improve current processes, structures or regulations?)
- The innovative nature of the research (Would the proposed research advance the current state of knowledge, or does it at least offer an innovative interpretation of existing research in the same field?)
- Academic rigour (Is the theoretical basis sound? Has the current state of knowledge been considered? Are the proposed methods best suited to address the questions posed?)
- The clarity of the proposal (Is the proposal well-structured and well-presented?)
- The quality of the documents attached (What is the quality of the applicant's or applicants' prior research? Are the letters of recommendation convincing?)

In principle, the jury will award a total of four or five grants, supported by different national associations, and will decide the level of funding to allocate case by case (maximum of €15,000 for individual applications and €20,000 in the case of joint applications involving more than one researcher). However, subject to the quality of the project proposals received, the jury may also award a larger/smaller number of grants and/or award grants to two or more projects supported by the same national association. The level of funding awarded in each case may be higher or lower than requested by the applicant(s).

The UEFA Research Grant Programme selection process is divided into three stages.

1. All applications are reviewed by the UEFA administration and all proposals that do not meet the required standard or the criteria of the UEFA Research Grant Programme Regulations are eliminated. If the number of applications is high, those proposals which are perceived as having the least potential impact on European football will also be eliminated at this shortlisting stage.

2. At least two members of the UEFA Research Grant Jury review, grade and comment on the shortlisted proposals. Each application is also sent to a specialist who works for UEFA in the field that the research proposal relates to. The proposals that receive the highest grades enter the third and final stage.
3. Proposals that make it through the first two stages are reviewed by the members of the UEFA Research Grant Jury. The applications are then discussed at the annual meeting of the jury and a decision is taken on which proposals will be awarded UEFA research grants.

Applicants will be informed of the jury's decision by no later than 30 June 2027. Each applicant may ask to see the reviewers' main remarks on their application. Decisions by the jury are final and no appeals will be considered. The jury may decide to select a number of applications as potential substitutes in case a grant is withdrawn in the early stages of the research. Should their applications be placed on this substitution list, applicants will be informed at the same time as the jury's decision, i.e. no later than 30 June 2027.

Applicants may not submit the same project proposal twice without having made significant changes. In addition, applicants may not submit a research proposal on the same subject more than twice in a row. Nor may applicants submit more than one project during the same UEFA Research Grant Programme cycle. Finally, a researcher who has received a UEFA research grant may not submit a new application or be part of a research team submitting an application in either of the next two editions of the programme.

4. Payment procedure and beneficiaries' obligations

When submitting their application dossier, each applicant must sign the declaration to UEFA regarding confidentiality, data protection, intellectual property, publication and public presentation restrictions and the conditions of payment and possible repayment of the grant if any of the clauses outlined in the declaration are breached. For this reason, applicants must read, fully understand and sign the declaration before submitting their research proposal. The declaration is available at UEFAacademy.com/courses/rgp. If an application dossier does not contain a signed declaration to UEFA when it is submitted, it will be considered invalid and will not be eligible for a grant. If any researcher other than the beneficiary(-ies) of the grant is directly involved in the research, a declaration signed by them must also be included in the application dossier.

When submitting their application dossier, each applicant agrees to take note of the UEFA rules regarding access to UEFA's archives and to follow the necessary steps with the relevant UEFA services if the nature of their research project means that they require access to UEFA's archives. These rules are available at UEFAacademy.com/courses/rgp.

Grants are paid in three instalments. The researcher (or the lead researcher in the case of joint research projects involving more than one researcher) will receive one third of the grant at the start of the project, after submission of the amended proposal following the kick-off meeting (in July or August

2027, depending on when the meeting takes place). A second payment will be made in January 2028, once an interim report of approximately 15 pages has been submitted and approved by UEFA (the deadline for interim reports is 30 November 2027). The jury and UEFA reserve the right to ask for the interim report to be completed or amended and may suspend the instalment until the requested amendments have been made. The remaining instalment will be paid after the final report (approximately 40 pages, excluding appendices) has been submitted and approved by UEFA. As for the interim report, the jury and UEFA reserve the right to ask for the final report to be completed or amended and may suspend the instalment until a revised version of the report has been submitted taking account of these amendments.

Interim and final reports must be structured as follows and contain all of the following sections:

1. An executive summary fully detailing the importance and interest of the research for football and UEFA. The executive summary should contain two distinct sections:
   - 1.1. A concise presentation of the academic contribution of the research
   - 1.2. A clear presentation of the practical impacts of the research for European football
2. An introduction that indicates the context of the research and its relevance for UEFA
3. A clear statement of the research question(s), and the aims and objectives of the research
4. A literature review identifying the current state of knowledge, methodology and insights on the research topic and justifying the theory, design and method of the current study
5. A review of the proposed research design and strategy. This should include the following:
   - 5.1. Justification of the design (longitudinal, cross-sectional, experimental etc.)
   - 5.2. Justification of the measurement approach and assumptions about the research topic
   - 5.3. An outline of the key variables for quantitative work, and/or the concepts and dimensions examined by qualitative research
   - 5.4. The sample frame and size, and the interviewee selection process
   - 5.5. An outline of the hypothesis(-es) addressed, the analysis strategy and techniques used, and the strength and significance of the results
   - 5.6. The validity and reliability of the instruments and variables applied, or the qualitative equivalent (e.g. authenticity)
   - 5.7. An overview of any ethical issues and how they are addressed
6. An overview of the main research findings, with a clear focus on the research question(s)
7. The limitations of the current study, including any issues of inherent partiality and any operational issues, such as data access
8. The impact of the research in terms of current theory, state of knowledge and/or practices, and the consequences/recommendations for UEFA and football

The interim report must be accompanied by an official letter from the researcher, or lead researcher in the case of joint research projects, stating that the research has made sufficient progress and that the

deadline for the final report (31 March 2028) will be met. The jury and UEFA will assess the progress of the research based on the interim report and may ask for amendments or additional information. In exceptional cases, UEFA may withdraw the grant if it deems the researcher's progress to be unsatisfactory.

Although it is not possible to present full results and conclusions at the time of submitting the interim report, an analytical summary and a broad outline of the results obtained so far are required at this stage. It is also necessary to indicate in the interim report any data that has yet to be collected. On this basis, the interim report should provide UEFA with an indication of the potential results of the research and therefore the contribution it is likely to make to European football and its relevance to UEFA.

If a researcher or researchers are for any reason unable to follow the above reporting structure, any deviations from the standard structure must be clearly justified. The methodology, reasons and logic behind such deviations must be explicitly explained in the introduction to the report.

The final report must be submitted by 31 March 2028 at the latest. The final report must be produced specifically for the national association(s) supporting the research project. It cannot be a journal article or part of a thesis, for example. An electronic version of the interim and final reports must be submitted to UEFA. The jury and UEFA will assess the quality of the research based on the final report and may ask for amendments or additional information, particularly if the initial objectives of the research have not been met. In exceptional cases, UEFA may withdraw the grant if it deems the quality of the project to be unsatisfactory or to have deviated from the planned deliverables.

In addition to the final report, a one-page document summarising the key practical outcomes of the research for European football (UEFA and its stakeholders) must be sent to UEFA by 30 April 2028. The document must focus on concrete measures and recommendations and must include a list of clear outcomes for practitioners. As much as possible, researchers are encouraged to present their findings and insights graphically (e.g. through infographics), and recommendations should be grouped and prioritised according to the stakeholders impacted.

The researcher, or the team in the case of joint research, will be invited to present their key outcomes and recommendations to UEFA in May or June 2028. This 15 to 20-minute presentation will be by conference call to the UEFA Research Grant Jury, representatives of the supporting national association(s) and experts from the UEFA administration. The presentation will be followed by approximately 25 minutes of questions and answers. UEFA will provide the (lead) researcher with detailed guidelines prior to the presentation; however, it should be noted that the basis of the presentation should be the one-page document summarising the key practical outcomes of the research for European football (see above).

Researchers are also strongly encouraged to give an additional presentation at the headquarters of the national association(s) concerned.

UEFA may ask researchers to send updates on their research and any results collected at any time during the research process. Likewise, UEFA may at any time request that researchers submit a list of their expenditure in connection with their UEFA-supported research project.

The researcher will conduct the research either alone or together with one or two other researchers in the case of a joint research project. The researcher's obligations are set out in the declaration to UEFA document.

5. Contact details

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