



MEDICAL

UEFA MEDICAL RESEARCH GRANT
PROGRAMME

Regulations 2024/25

WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

1. Eligibility

Applicants must either:

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

All applicants must have an excellent command of English language.

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

- No more than three applicants may be involved.
- The applicants may not be employed by the same university or institution, and preferably present an international collaboration.

One of the applicants 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 topics may be submitted for consideration by the UEFA Medical Research Grant Jury (further referred in this document as to "jury"):

1. **Football Medicine**, with the aim of positively impacting the health of players, referees, or coaches (e. g. injury prevention, infectious disease management, etc.)
2. **Football Performance**, with the aim of improving players' optimal performance (e.g., psychological factors that affect performance, optimal raining methods, nutritional / dietary recommendations, etc.)
3. **Impact in Football**, with the aim to implement health or performance-based evidence in football (e.g., implementing effective prevention exercises, harnessing a safe sports culture, etc.)

In principle the jury will decide case by case on the amount to grant **up to €30,000 for general research** in the beforementioned topics and **up to €30,000 for female football research** in the beforementioned topics.

2. Application requirements and procedure

2.1 Application dossier

Applications to the UEFA Research Grant Programme must be submitted online at <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/mrgp/> along with the following:

- The declaration to UEFA, which is available at <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/mrgp/>, duly completed and signed. For joint applications involving more than one applicant, each applicant 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).
- A CV of the applicant of no more than one page. For joint applications involving more than one applicant, each applicant must provide their CV.
- A letter that provides evidence of support for the project from the Head of the Universities Department or equivalent position at the respective institution of the applicant. For joint applications involving more than one applicant, a letter of confirmation from the lead applicant's institution is sufficient.

Incomplete applications will not be considered by the jury.

The entire application dossier must be written in English.

It is imperative that all applicants read these UEFA Medical Research Grant Programme Regulations and the Declaration to UEFA before completing the application form.

2.2 Application structure

Applications must use the provided UEFA template and be no more than ten pages long. This template contains the following sections:

- Introduction
- Question(s) and hypothesis(-es) to be researched
- Justification for the research (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 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 applicants' 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
 - The timeline should start at the earliest on 1 June 2024 and end, in principle, at the end of season 2024/25 (if not agreed differently and accepted by the jury, **before the start of the grant**). The

timeline must include the production of an interim report, to be submitted by 15 January 2025, and a final report, to be submitted no later than 30 June 2025.

- 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.
 - The budget can cover:
 - the purchase of specific material necessary for the research (this area does not include the purchase of a computer);
 - the cost of additional manpower (e.g. for data collection);
 - the cost of travel and accommodation linked directly to the research.
 - The budget cannot cover:
 - costs related to participation in academic conferences and/or meetings;
 - university overheads should, in principle, not be covered from UEFA grant;
 - costs related to publication of the results in peer-reviewed scientific journals/publications.

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 applicant, or the team of applicants in the case of joint research projects, the UEFA Medical representative and three members of the jury to discuss the planned research. The goals of the kick-off meeting are to provide the applicant or research team with the jury's feedback and recommendations, and to identify the areas in which the jury and/or UEFA can help facilitate the research and maximise the quality of its results. Following this meeting, the applicant, or lead applicant 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. At this instance, **an ethical approval letter** if the research involves human subjects, regardless of whether they are involved in interviews, focus groups or clinical research, **must be presented to UEFA**. The **award of the grant and payment of the first instalment** are **conditional** on the submission of this amended proposal and the ethical approval. Once agreed by the jury and UEFA the applicant, or the team of applicants in the case of joint research projects, will receive an official confirmation letter.

UEFA will set a time and date for the applicant, or the team in the case of joint research, to present the results once the project is completed. The presentation will be by conference call to the jury and representatives of the UEFA Medical Unit and/or UEFA Medical Committee.

Application documents must be typed in size 12 font (1.5 line spacing) on numbered A4 pages with margins not smaller than 2 cm on each side. **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 <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/mrgp/> by **15 March 2024** (24:00 CET) in order to be considered for the 2024/25 UEFA Medical 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. Please follow the examples below for fictional applicant Albert Einstein:

2020_EinsteinAlbert_Application dossier_10 pages
2020_EinsteinAlbert_Application dossier_summary
2020_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page
2020_EinsteinAlbert_Letter of confirmation of support Institution
2020_EinsteinAlbert_Ethical clearance letter
2020_EinsteinAlbert_Declaration to UEFA

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

2020_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_EinsteinAlbert
2020_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_NewtonIsaac
2020_EinsteinAlbert_CV_1 page_HawkingStephen

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

3. Jury

The jury consists of five members. One of the jury members is appointed as chair. For each completed application, three jury members will be requested to review the application. It remains with UEFA to appoint, together with the chair of the jury, the jury members to the applications depending on their individual expertise and potential conflict of interest (COI). In the case of a COI, the respective jury member concerned will be removed from voting, and any documents linked to this application will not be available to them.

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

English proficiency will be checked before the grant will be awarded. When considering an application, the jury will base its decision on the criteria as outlined in the MRGP evaluation forms.

However, subject to the quality of the project proposals received, the jury may also award a smaller number of grants. The level of funding awarded in each case may be higher or lower than requested by the applicant(s). Exceptionally, the jury may decide that no proposal meets the required standards and decide

not to award the grant. In such case, allocated amount will be transferred and added to the grant budget for the following season.

4. Selection procedure

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

1. All applications are reviewed on their eligibility by the UEFA administration and all applications that do not meet the required standard or the criteria of the UEFA Medical Research Grant Programme Regulations are eliminated.
2. The jury then reviews the applications in **two stages of voting**:
 - 2.1 Three appointed jury members will firstly review and grade on the eligible applications using the official UEFA MRGP evaluation form for the first stage of voting. Upon request of the jury, each application might also be sent to a specialist in the field that the research proposal relates to, appointed by UEFA. The highest rated applications enter the second stage of voting. The number of applications taken into the second stage can differ depending on the number of applications.
 - 2.2 The final applications are each reviewed in detail (see evaluation form second stage) by three members of the jury. The applications are then discussed at a jury meeting and a decision is taken on which applications will be awarded UEFA Medical Research Grants.

Applicants will be informed of the **jury's decision** by **no later than 30 April 2024**. Decisions by the jury are final and no appeals will be considered. The jury may decide to select several applications as potential substitutes in case a grant is withdrawn in the early stages of the research. Should there be applications 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 2024.

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 Medical Research Grant Programme cycle. Finally, an applicant who has received a UEFA medical research grant may not submit a new application or be part of a research team applying in either of the next two editions of the programme. Rejected applicants from the **first round of voting** will receive their evaluation form together with an anonymous comparison of overall scores of all applicants. This will enable them to understand the weaknesses and strengths of their application. No individual comments will be provided in the first round. Rejected applicants from the **second round of voting** will receive their evaluation form together with an anonymous comparison of overall scores of all applicants. This will enable them to understand the level and weaknesses / strengths of their application. Additionally, they will also receive a personal evaluation from the jury providing them with further feedback on their application.

5. 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 <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/mrgrp/>. 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 applicant 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 <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/mrgrp/>.

Grants are paid in three instalments. The applicant (or the lead applicant in the case of joint research projects involving more than one applicant) will receive one-third of the grant at the start of the project, after submission of the amended proposal and ethical approval letter following the kick-off meeting (in May 2024). A second payment will be made in January 2025, once an interim report has been submitted and approved by UEFA. **The deadline for interim reports is 15 January 2025.** 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 has been submitted and approved by UEFA. **The deadline for the final report is 30 June 2025.** As for the reports, the jury and UEFA reserve the right to review, comment, and reject them which can have an impact on the instalments until a revised version of the report has been submitted taking account of these amendments and has been accepted.

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
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:
 - a. Justification of the design (longitudinal, cross-sectional, experimental etc.)
 - b. Justification of the measurement approach and assumptions about the research topic
 - c. An outline of the key variables for quantitative work, and/or the concepts and dimensions examined by qualitative research
 - d. The sample frame and size, and the interviewee selection process
 - e. An outline of the hypothesis(-es) addressed, the analysis strategy and techniques used, and the strength and significance of the results
 - f. The validity and reliability of the instruments and variables applied, or the qualitative equivalent (e.g. authenticity)
 - g. 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 submitted no later than 15 January 2025. It must be accompanied by an official letter from the applicant or lead applicant in the case of joint research projects, stating that the research has made sufficient progress and that the deadline for the final report (no later than 30 June 2025) 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 applicant'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 an applicant or applicants 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 no later than 30 June 2025. It cannot be a journal article or part of a thesis, for example. One electronic and five hard copies of the final report must be submitted to UEFA. For the interim report, only one electronic copy is required. 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 no later than 30 June 2025.

The applicant, or the team in the case of joint research, will be invited to present their key outcomes and recommendations to UEFA in a conference call to the jury and experts from the UEFA Medical Unit. In some cases, UEFA may extend an invitation to one of their organised conferences for a face-to-face presentation. UEFA will provide the (lead) applicant with detailed guidelines prior to the presentation; however, it should be noted that the presentation should focus on the results and practical outcomes of the research. All fees related to this invitation will be covered by UEFA.

UEFA may ask applicants 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 applicants submit a list of their expenditure in connection with their UEFA-supported research project.

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

UEFA's role as sponsor and supporter of the project must be clearly mentioned and outlined within any scientific publication/presentation arising from the project.

6. Contact details

UEFA Medical Research Grant Programme UEFA
Medical Unit

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