



Sporting Director Programme

PRESENTED BY

UEFA





The ultimate upskilling
opportunity for
sporting directors

Foreword

In football today, the role of sporting director is crucial to the management and success of clubs.

Over the past decade, the position has evolved into a key strategic role and an increasingly specialised one. This new programme aims to ensure sporting directors can master the new skills and knowledge required to be successful.

As well as discussing the latest trends and challenges, you'll develop a valuable international network of peers with whom you can share insights and best practices not only during the programme but throughout your career.

Ultimately, the programme is designed to empower sporting directors to lead their clubs to new highs while ensuring sustainable development and responsible management within European football.

At UEFA, we believe that by elevating the skills of those managing the game, we can elevate the game itself. We look forward to seeing the impact you'll make.

A photograph of three individuals: Paul Mitchell, Bianca Rech, and Pablo Longoria. Paul Mitchell is on the left, a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark suit. Bianca Rech is in the center, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a grey blazer. Pablo Longoria is on the right, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a blue suit. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a light blue gradient.

Paul Mitchell,
Bianca Rech
and Pablo Longoria.

Programme overview

TYPE OF LEARNING

◀ E-learning

Face-to face ▶

ESTIMATED HOURS OF LEARNING

100–120

SKILLS TRAINED

◀ Soft skills

Hard skills ▶



WHO

Sporting directors, senior members of sports departments at clubs or national associations



STARTING IN

Every second year Second intake in March 2027



HOW LONG

Three months



WHERE

Seminars hosted at UEFA headquarter and European clubs
Two online masterclasses



PRICE

€7,900



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

30



ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION

Certificate of completion awarded by the UEFA Academy



LANGUAGE

English

Sporting Director Programme (SDP)

The SDP is the ultimate programme for any sporting director looking to enhance their skills to meet today's global football challenges.

The SDP is designed to equip sporting directors with the practical skills, strategic insights and leadership qualities necessary to excel in modern football management. Developed by UEFA and EFC, this programme is designed for those at the pinnacle of the game, embodying a commitment to excellence and the highest standards of professional development.

Combining three immersive face-to-face seminars at UEFA headquarters and top European football clubs and two online masterclasses, this programme covers every aspect of running a successful football operation, from squad planning to recruitment and high-stakes decision-making. The programme invites participants not only to learn about and discuss the latest trends, but also to anticipate future challenges.

Participants will engage in both group and individual assignments and receive tailored feedback to ensure growth and long-term development in their roles.

The structure and content of the programme will ensure that participants enhance their understanding of sporting strategy within the context of club management, have access to a range of different resources and become part of an expanding network of international graduates – all of which will contribute to their personal and professional development.

Programme outcomes

- Expertise to manage complex and technical subject areas and optimally perform role
- Cutting-edge knowledge in talent identification, recruitment processes and player development methodologies
- Skills to navigate the financial complexity of football, ensuring sustainable financial practices
- Effective communication and negotiation skills
- Empower with strong strategic and decision-making skills to influence and create impact
- Access to a unique network of sporting directors and best practices from across European football

“ Testimonials



Sporting directors are evolving in a fast-changing environment. Committing to lifelong learning and professional development helps you adapt to new challenges and innovations in the sport. This continuous growth not only benefits you personally but also enhances the overall success of your clubs.

Bianca Rech, director Women's Football, FC Bayern München.



In football management, the landscape is always shifting. Taking part in such education programme is key to navigating these changes successfully, ensuring we remain at the forefront of the industry and maintain our competitive edge. This dedication will drive us and our clubs towards long-term success.

Pablo Longoria, sporting director, Club Atlético River Plate.



In the fast-paced world of football, staying updated through continuous education is essential. This dedication to learning ensures we can lead our teams effectively and make informed decisions. By constantly expanding our knowledge, we can anticipate and respond to the evolving demands of the sport we love.

Paul Mitchell, sporting director.

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Programme overview

01 SEMINAR 1 FOOTBALL GOVERNANCE AND SPORTS STRATEGIES

22-24 March 2027, UK

To lead a football club effectively, sporting directors must master football governance and develop robust sporting strategies that ensure long-term success. Sporting directors are responsible for shaping their clubs' football philosophy, balancing short-term performance with long-term planning. This means aligning recruitment, player development and first-team goals with the broader vision of the club.

This first seminar will cover:

- Governance in modern football: understanding the regulations, financial models and ethical responsibilities that govern the modern game.
- Developing sporting strategies: building a cohesive football philosophy, balancing immediate success with sustainable growth through structured planning.

02 SEMINAR 2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND BUSINESS SKILLS

21-23 April 2027, France

For sporting directors, understanding the legal framework of football and possessing solid business skills are essential to managing the modern game effectively. The legal side of football involves navigating complex contracts, transfers and negotiations while ensuring compliance with national and international regulations.

On the business side, sporting directors must balance the financial health of their club with its sporting ambitions.

This second seminar will cover:

- Legal frameworks in football: navigating contracts, transfers and regulatory compliance to ensure legal soundness in all club operations.
- Business skills for sporting directors: developing financial strategies, managing budgets and making decisions that align sporting success with financial sustainability.

03 SEMINAR 3 EVOLUTION OF FOOTBALL AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

18-20 May 2027, Switzerland

The evolution of football has transformed the game at every level, from the style of play to the integration of new technologies. Sporting directors must stay ahead of these changes, understanding how football tactics and innovations impact their clubs.

By staying ahead of these trends, sporting directors can ensure their clubs remain competitive and relevant in an ever-changing football landscape.

This final session will cover:

- Football evolution and new technologies: how technological evolutions have reshaped football operations, from scouting to training, and how to use these tools to drive success.
- Strategic implementation of tools: applying new methods to improve club performance and future-proof the team's approach.

01 MASTERCLASS 1 (ONLINE)

7 April 2027 (14:00–18:00 CET)

Testimonials from leading sporting directors and football executives

Case studies

02 MASTERCLASS 2 (ONLINE)

5 May 2027 (14:00–18:00 CET)

Testimonials from leading sporting directors in other sports

Football management workshop

About the UEFA Academy

Building on the professional expertise that UEFA has established in the course of its history and the learning initiatives that it has created over the last decade, the UEFA Academy provides educational programmes for individuals and organisations alike with a view to constantly elevating the game of football. The UEFA Academy is LIFT certified, recognising the impact of its programmes on people, their organisations and society at large. For details of all our courses, visit [UEFAacademy.com](https://uefaacademy.com).

About EFC Campus

EFC Campus is the hub for European Club Association's education and knowledge-sharing initiatives, driving club excellence across Europe. Built on the pillars of Knowledge, Education, and Impact, it delivers practical, club focused learning initiatives tailored to members' needs. Combining cutting edge theory with actionable insights, EFC Campus equips professionals with tools to address challenges and achieve real-world results. It also fosters collaboration through unparalleled networking opportunities, enabling the exchange of strategies and best practices to drive success on and off the pitch.

Application process

Eligible candidates must apply at <https://uefaacademy.com/courses/sdp/> and complete the application form before 27 November 2026.

Full attendance is required to qualify for the certificate of completion. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact academy@uefa.ch.

We welcome participants from diverse backgrounds and cultures, recognising the unique value that diversity brings to our programmes. In line with this commitment, we especially encourage applications from women and individuals working in women's football. If you have any uncertainties about meeting specific programme criteria or if you believe the fees could be a barrier to your participation, please feel free to contact us.

LIFT certification

The UEFA Academy was awarded the LIFT (Learning Impact for Today and Tomorrow) by EFMD for the period 2024 to 2027. This certification recognises the impact of the UEFA Academy programmes on its participants, their organisations and society at large.



Be part of the UEFA Academy Alumni Association

After graduation, your journey continues. Join a global network of 5,000+ football professionals, take part in exclusive events, and stay connected through dedicated platforms and expert-led sessions.

A word from EFC



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In today's football landscape, the role of sporting directors is becoming more vital, encompassing a wide range of responsibilities requiring skills and expertise in areas such as sporting, scouting and recruitment, commercial, legal and regulatory, medical and technological competencies. At the core of EFC's mission is our commitment to advancing the excellence and professionalisation of member clubs through representation, knowledge sharing, and education. This Sporting Director Programme, delivered as part of the wide-ranging partnership between UEFA and EFC, equips sporting directors with essential skills, knowledge, and toolkits to tackle today's complex challenges with confidence, fostering excellence on and off the pitch. Our goal is clear: to empower sporting directors to lead effectively, face emerging industry challenges and drive the advancement of all clubs across Europe.

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Charlie Marshall, CEO, EFC



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