

Social Science Research Grant Program

Assessment Process and Criteria

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Step 1: Initial Screening

All submissions will undergo a preliminary assessment to ensure that they are complete, conform to administrative requirements, respond to the terms and conditions of the *Call for Proposals*, and have been submitted according to the *Application Guidelines*. All incomplete proposals and those not responding to the terms and conditions of the *Call for Proposals* will not be considered for funding.

Step 2: Independent Peer-Review

All eligible submissions will be sent to a minimum of two external peer-reviewers. Reviewers will be selected from a pool of international scholars and experts based on the relevance of their work to the proposal. Given that peer-reviewers are asked to assess the “capability of personnel/resources” (as described below), reviewers will know the identity of the research team members. Reviewers will be required to report any potential conflicts of interest and sign a declaration to that effect prior to commencing any review.

Peer-reviewers will provide WADA with a report on the strengths and weaknesses of the submission and, to the extent possible, a recommendation for funding. Each applicant will receive, along with the official notification of the whether the project was accepted for funding, a copy of the anonymous peer-review reports related to the submission.

Step 3: Review by Expert Group

All submissions and peer-review reports will be submitted to an expert group, composed of two senior researchers and two members of WADA’s Education Committee (Committee). The expert group will review the proposals in order to identify the projects that will best contribute to anti-doping programs and priorities.

Step 4: Review by Education Committee

The expert group will provide WADA’s Education Committee with the conclusions of their review. Taking these reviews into consideration, WADA’s Education Committee will make recommendations to WADA’s Executive Committee regarding the selection of proposals to be granted funding. The Executive Committee will make the final selection of those proposals that will be funded, along with the conditions of the funding, if applicable.

To ensure an unbiased review process, and should a conflict of interest occur at any stage, the peer-reviewer, expert, Committee Member or Executive Committee Member concerned will give full disclosure of the nature of his/her conflict of interest and will be removed from being part of the selection process related to that year’s proposals.

An applicant may withdraw his/her application at any time during the assessment process. A request to withdraw an application must be signed by the principal investigator and an authorized person from his/her institution of affiliation. If an

application is withdrawn, WADA will destroy all documents related to that application in its possession.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The aim of the Program is to support research in the social sciences, which will yield information that will benefit doping prevention efforts, intervention models and other programs to meet this strategic objective.

Reviewers will assess the proposed research in accordance with the degree to which it will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of these objectives by addressing, in their written comments about the proposal, the following weighted criteria:

Significance for doping prevention (25%): Are the objectives of the proposed project relevant to WADA's objectives and priorities? Does the project have direct relevance to doping prevention? Does the project have the potential to contribute to knowledge or best practice strategies in doping prevention?

Scientific merit in the project field (20%): Is the conceptual framework appropriate? Are the rationale and methodology (research design, sample collection, methods of analysis) sound and coherent with the aims of the project? Does the project challenge existing models or develop new methodologies?

Adequate capability of personnel/resources (20%): Is the principal investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out the work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the other researchers (if any)? Is there evidence of organizational support? Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?

Contribution to knowledge (10%): Does the proposed project address an important problem? Does it have the potential to contribute, in an original way, to the advancement of knowledge in the field?

Probability of achievement of objectives (10%): Considering all elements of the proposal, is there a reasonable probability that the objectives stated in the application will be achieved?

Justifiable and reasonable calendar and budget (10%): Is the timeframe specified realistic to achieving the research goals? Is the planned budget reasonable for the proposed research? Is the return on investment justified against the contribution of the research to doping prevention knowledge?

Plan for dissemination of results (5%): Will results be published in academic and mainstream literature? Does the plan to communicate research results appear suitable and effective in reaching both the academic community and the sports and anti-doping communities?

In addition to the above criteria, and in accordance with WADA's Research Ethics Policy, all applications will be submitted to an ethical review, to both the local internal review board and international ethical standards.