

# 2010 Social Science Research Grant Program

## Assessment Process and Criteria

### ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The overall assessment process of proposals is comprised of the following steps:

#### **Step 1: Initial Screening**

All proposals will undergo a preliminary assessment to ensure that they are complete, that they conform to administrative requirements, that they respond to the terms and conditions of the call for proposals, and that they 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 be returned to the applicant without further action.

#### **Step 2: Independent Peer-Review Assessment**

Each proposal will be sent to a minimum of two (2) external peer-reviewers for comments and recommendations. The peer-reviewer pool will be composed of scholars and international experts actively engaged in the research fields relevant to each proposal. Due to the requirement of assessing the proposal in terms of the "Adequate capability of personnel / resources" criterion described below, the peer-reviewer will know the identity of the research team members. However, peer-reviewers will be required to report any potential conflict of interest and sign a declaration to that effect prior to commencing any review.

The peer-reviewers will submit to WADA a summary statement including scores and comments to sum up the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and, to the extent applicable, a recommendation for funding. Each applicant will receive, along with the official notification of the results of the selection process, a copy of the summary statements related to an applicant's proposal, from which copy all identification of the author(s) of such statements will have been removed.

#### **Step 3: Final Selection**

All proposals and peer-review reports will be submitted to the WADA Education Committee (the "Committee"). The Committee will then review proposals in terms of their relevance to WADA's programs and priorities, taking into account the scientific and technical merit assessments provided by the independent peer-reviewers. The Committee makes recommendations to WADA's Executive Committee regarding the selection of proposals to be granted funding. It is the Executive Committee that makes the final selection of those proposals that are to be granted funding.

To ensure an unbiased review process, and should a conflict of interest occur at any stage, the reviewer or Committee or Executive Committee member concerned will give full disclosure of the nature of his/her conflict of interest and will be removed from any assessment or selection process relating to that year's proposals.

An applicant may withdraw his/her application from consideration at any time during the review 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 in its possession, which relate to that application.

## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

The Social Science Research Grant Program was created in response to WADA's strategic objective to educate and inform signatories to the World Anti-Doping Code, governments, athletes, and athletes' support personnel about the dangers and consequences of doping. The aim of the Grant 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 research 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 this 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 in the field (10%): Does the proposed research address an important problem? Does it have the potential to contribute originally 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 it realistic to achieve the research project within the timelines specified? 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 community?

In addition to the above criteria, and in accordance with WADA's Research Ethics Policy, all applications will be reviewed in terms of the adequacy of the local ethics review process applicable to them and of their respect for the terms governing protection of human subjects.