

Call for Proposals: NCAA Innovations in Research and Practice Grant Program

September 15, 2015

The NCAA is committed to making policy decisions based on quality research data about the experiences of student-athletes, member colleges and universities, and others involved in college athletics. While the NCAA research staff conducts national research for its members on a wide variety of topics including academic performance, student-athlete well-being, finances of intercollegiate athletics programs, gender-equity and diversity issues, it also recognizes and supports external research initiatives addressing these and other topics. Ongoing efforts in the cultivation of external scholarship on intercollegiate athletics include the NCAA data-sharing initiative and the NCAA Graduate Student Research Grant Program.

In 2014, the NCAA began a new initiative, the NCAA Innovations in Research and Practice Grant Program. While other NCAA-affiliated research efforts address student-athlete health and safety, this grant program supports research and data-driven pilot programs designed to enhance student-athlete psychosocial well-being and mental health. Potential topics include, but are not limited to, managing transitions (e.g., from recruit to first-year student; transferring between universities; adapting from youth sports to college sports environment; developing independence from parents), identity development, stress management, substance use, bystander intervention, cultivating healthy relationships, career exploration and sport exit strategies. The NCAA will award \$100,000 in grants for the 2016 calendar year to scholars or practitioners conducting studies or piloting on-campus programs that benefit student-athletes and NCAA member institutions. Based on requests from the National Student-Athlete Advisory Committees from all three NCAA divisions, special consideration will be given to fund at least one proposal focused on career development in 2016. Grant recipients will be invited to present their work to hundreds of key stakeholders in intercollegiate athletics in January 2017 at the NCAA Convention in Nashville, TN.

Proposals will be judged on their originality, feasibility, clarity and, most significantly, the potential to result in campus-level programming that can positively impact student-athlete psychosocial well-being and mental health at a range of member institutions (e.g., across divisions, geographic regions and resource availability levels). The final work will belong to the researchers/practitioners to publish in appropriate venues with acknowledgement of the NCAA as a funding source.

Reports to the NCAA membership should be prepared for a broad audience of administrators in intercollegiate athletics and educators working with student-athletes. They should also directly address steps to practically implement findings in a campus-based setting.

Proposals may be original scholarship that furthers knowledge of an aspect of student-athlete well-being or data-driven pilot programs designed to impact student-athlete well-being at the campus level. Both of these formats will be assessed on an equivalent basis for quality, innovation and applicability to NCAA member institutions.

Levels of grants

Two tiers of grants will be considered. One tier will be considered for funding up to \$50,000, based on the quality of the proposal and the justifications in the proposed budgets. The second tier will receive awards up to \$10,000 based on the same criteria.

Eligibility and restrictions

Principal investigators (PIs) must be affiliated with NCAA member institutions. Interdisciplinary proposals bringing together athletics department administrators, student affairs practitioners and scholars are strongly encouraged. The PI(s) and project team members will be responsible for coordinating reviews of their work with Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) on their own campuses, as applicable.

Proposal format

Please merge the eight proposal components outlined below into one PDF document to upload with your application. Any supplemental materials must also be included in the singular PDF and can only be submitted for review via Program Hub, not via email.

1. **Cover page** indicating the title of the proposal, member institution(s) with which the PI(s) is/are affiliated, contact information for each PI (name, title, address, email, phone number), and contact information for the PI's grants/sponsored projects office.

2. **Proposal narrative**

The proposal narrative should be detailed but concise (2,000 words or less is encouraged for this section), should include peer-reviewed sources where appropriate, and must include the following elements:

- a. **Problem statement** identifying the research question(s) or the conditions that the pilot program is designed to address. This section should provide the context for the problem/issue in light of the current landscape of intercollegiate athletics.
- b. **Conceptual framework** that briefly discusses and perhaps visually depicts the theory underlying the project.
- c. **Data and methodology** section.
 - Research studies can be qualitative or quantitative in nature, and should be designed for publication in peer-review academic journals or policy venues. For such projects, this section should include an explicit description of sampling, dataset (and the criteria for selecting data/participants), research instrument or design, and data analysis.
 - Pilot programs should discuss the relevant data/research guiding the proposed program, discuss how key findings will be applied in a practical environment or educational setting, and clearly describe how the program will be evaluated.

- d. **Campus-level programming implications** section. The proposal should clearly identify, create and/or support specific programs at the institutional level designed to improve student-athlete well-being that have the potential to be adopted or adapted at a range of member institutions.
3. **References.** Appropriately reference (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.) the works cited throughout the proposal narrative.
4. **Timeline** for the various aspects of the proposed research/pilot program, with an end date by January 9, 2017, not to exceed two pages.
5. **Proposed budget.** Grants may be used for salary support, research travel, data collection, research assistant support, equipment and miscellaneous expenses such as software and books. Indirect costs, living expenses, conference registration fees and conference travel will not be supported. Separate funding will be provided for the lead PI to attend the 2017 NCAA Convention. Funded projects will be required to submit records of expenses to the NCAA as part of the interim and final grant reports.
6. **Budget narrative.** The budget should include a narrative not to exceed one page.
7. **Biosketch or resume** of the principal investigator(s), limited to two pages per person.
8. **Letter of Support.** Please include one letter of support for your proposed project/pilot program. This letter should, at a minimum, attest to the feasibility of your proposed research or pilot program and the ability of the PI/team to accomplish the proposed research or programming.

Submission instructions

NCAA grants and scholarships are operated from the NCAA Program Hub. Innovations Grant applications **must** be uploaded to this website directly (<http://www.ncaa.org/programhub>), and applicants should expect the process (including Program Hub registration) to take 15-20 minutes. Those submitting grants who have not accessed the Program Hub previously need to create a New Profile. Detailed instructions can be found [here](#). A confirmation page will be displayed after the proposal is submitted.

Funding disbursement

Funding will be linked to the grant schedule. More specifically, two-thirds of the total award will be disbursed at the beginning of the grant period (after the funding contract with the NCAA has been signed and IRB approval has been granted, if applicable), one-sixth upon the acceptance of the interim report, and one-sixth upon the acceptance of the final report.

Deadlines

September 15, 2015	Announcement of grant program
December 1, 2015	Deadline for proposals, <u>4 p.m., Eastern Time</u>
February 15, 2016	Announcement of winners
July 22, 2016	Interim report due
January 9, 2017	Final report due

Review process

A committee of NCAA research staff, NCAA Research Committee members and independent reviewers will evaluate proposals once they have been vetted for completion. Successful and unsuccessful PIs will be notified when the External Review Panel has made its decision.

Restrictions, acknowledgment of support and disclaimer

Grant recipients may not disseminate or publish findings from grant research prior to the NCAA Convention in January 2017, but subsequent publications and presentations are encouraged. Such work should include the following acknowledgment and support:

“Research for this project was conducted with the support of the NCAA. Any opinions, findings and conclusions are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.”

In exchange for the final payment, grant recipients give right to the NCAA to post each principal investigator’s final report on its website. Grant recipients retain legal rights to intellectual property developed during grant funding. The development and dissemination of future deliverables beyond the 2017 NCAA Convention are strongly encouraged, and grant recipients are expected to make results available to the policy and research community concerned with American intercollegiate athletics and student affairs research.

Questions

Please visit the Frequently Asked Questions page on the Innovations Grant [website](#). If your question is not answered there, please contact Dr. Lydia Bell, Associate Director of Research, at lbell@ncaa.org.