



**ACADEMIC
CONSORTIUM**

AMERICAN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

The American Athletic Conference Academic Consortium: Invitation to Apply for 2025-26 Research Grants

The American Athletic Conference (The American) Academic Consortium is pleased to announce the 2025-26 American Athletic Conference Research Grant Program. The program's goals are: (1) to stimulate research on college athletics designed to promote student-athlete welfare; and (2) to assist The American's member institutions and intercollegiate athletics programs in evidence-based practice for student-athletes.

The American's Academic Consortium invites research proposals within the general area of student-athlete well-being. Research topics include, *but are not limited to*:

- * The impact of participation in intercollegiate athletics on the academic or social experiences of student-athletes;
- * Best practices in the areas of student-athlete physical and mental health;
- * Career and professional development strategies;
- * Student-athlete integration into the campus community;
- * Diversity and inclusion issues in intercollegiate athletics; and
- * Novel and timely issues effecting student-athletes.

Award Details

The research grant is a 6-18 month award set at a maximum total of \$15,000. Upon approval of your proposal, funding is sent to your institution's Office of Sponsored Programs (or equivalent). **NOTE: Institutions may not charge indirect costs.** Grant recipients must budget a trip to the annual American Academic Symposium (in the Spring typically in late March or April) to present their findings one year following the awarding of their grant. Where a grant has more than one researcher, at least two researchers are expected to present the findings, including, when applicable, a researcher from an institution which is not the host institution for the Academic Symposium. Upon completion, it is anticipated that the research will be submitted for publication to a scholarly journal, and/or presented as a report, which shall include best practices, that can be posted on The American's website. The purpose of this report is to assist member institutions with the development of enhanced programming and education related to student-athlete well-being.

Eligibility

In order to be considered, the principal investigator (PI) of the research proposal must be a faculty, student or staff member at an American Athletic Conference institution throughout the duration of the grant. The American's Research Grant Program is intended to support our member institutions in conducting innovative research designed to enhance student-athlete well-being. **Further, preference will be given to research grant proposals that include investigators from at least two American Athletic Conference member institutions.** If the PI ceases to be a faculty, student, or staff member at an American Athletic Conference institution prior to completion of the grant requirements, a new PI must be named who is a faculty, student, or staff member at member institution. In all instances, the grant funds awarded will remain with an American Athletic Conference institution.

Human Subjects Approval. If the research involves the use of human participants, the proposed study must receive approval from the appropriate Institutional Review Board(s) prior to any data collection.

The American Athletic Conference Academic Consortium Request for Proposals 2025-26

Submission Rules & Deadline

Applications **must** be sent to academicconsortium@theamerican.org prior to the posted deadline. Applicants will receive an email confirmation that their proposal was received. Completed grant applications must be submitted via the email address listed above by **11:59pm (EDT) on Sunday, January 19, 2025.**

If you have questions about grant eligibility or the submission requirements, please contact Ralph Shick, Assistant Commissioner (Compliance & Academics) at rshick@theamerican.org.

Application Requirements

Proposal. Proposals not conforming to the required format will not be reviewed. All sections of the proposal are limited to 8.5"x11" pages with one-inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, in Times New Roman (or similar) 12-point font. Applicants are encouraged to use headers for each section below. The following sections are required and should be merged into a singular PDF document:

1. **Title Page.**
 - a. Include the research study title, name and institution of principal investigator(s).
2. **Abstract.** (100 word maximum).
 - a. The abstract should be a brief summary of the proposal's key points.
3. **Proposal narrative.** (Limited to 10 double-spaced pages).
 - a. The proposal narrative should be detailed but concise and should include references where appropriate. The narrative should be structured as follows:
 - b. **Problem statement.**
 - Introduce the issue(s)/theories/program(s) to be addressed by your research.
 - Be sure to include the rationale for the study - Why is this important?
 - c. **Methodology.**
 - Describe the research methodologies.
 - Be sure to address the research questions and include information about the research design, data collection, sample/subject selection, instruments, and protocols.
 - Link your research question(s) with your proposed data analysis technique(s).
 - d. **Significance/Potential Implications.**
 - Discuss the significance of the research and the practical application to the field of intercollegiate athletics and student-athlete welfare.
4. **Timeline.** (Not to exceed 1 page).
 - a. List the beginning and termination dates for the proposed research.
 - b. A list of the projected dates of completion of major milestones in the progress of the proposed research should be included.
 - c. Not counted as part of the 10-page limit; single-spaced text permitted.
5. **Budget and Budget Justification.** (Not to exceed 2 pages - Not counted as part of the page limit).
 - a. Prospective grant recipients must provide justification for how funds will be used in the research project.
 - b. The line-item budget should not total more than the total maximum award amount of \$15,000.
 - c. The budget must include travel to The American's Academic Symposium in Spring 2026 (March/April) for the PI or a delegate. The location of the Spring 2026 Symposium is at Wichita State University in Wichita, KS. NOTE: If the research team can use a different fund source for the travel to the symposium, it would need to be described as "in-kind" contributions.
6. **Bibliography/References.** (Not counted as part of the page limit).
 - a. APA, MLA, or the citation style of your discipline.

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7. **Resume/Curriculum Vitae of Principal Investigator(s) and co-PI.** (Not to exceed 2 pages for the PI and each co-PI; Not counted as part of the 10-page limit; single-spaced text permitted).
8. **Additional Materials.** May be included in an appendix and are not part of the 10-page limit.
 - a. A letter of support and endorsement of the proposed project by a senior member of the Principal Investigator's Athletics Department.
 - b. Copies of instruments, protocols, etc.
 - c. If a student is serving as the principal investigator, two reference letters of support by faculty members must be included in an appendix.
 - The reference letters should attest to support for the student and this application.
 - References should be from faculty advisors, professors and/or others who can affirm that the applicant and proposed study meet the funding parameters, speak to the specifics of the research proposal, and affirm the researcher's ability to successfully answer the research questions posed using the methods selected and sample identified (e.g., by noting relevant coursework or previous research employing the described methods, and/or demonstrating confidence that the applicant can access the sample population).

Research Proposal Review Criteria

Each proposal is evaluated using the following criteria and point system:

1. The importance of the topic to the student-athlete welfare (*30 points*);
2. The strength of the methodological approach (*25 points*);
3. The appropriateness of proposed analyses (*20 points*);
4. The contribution to literature or ability to produce new knowledge (*15 points*);
5. The acceptability of the proposed budget (*10 points*).

When reviewing the proposals, the review panel considers the following questions:

- ★ Is the research question clearly stated?
- ★ Is there a high likelihood that the study can be carried out as designed?
- ★ Will this study contribute to student-athlete well-being?
- ★ Is the study likely to contribute to issues within the American Athletic Conference?
- ★ How does the proposed methodology relate to the research question(s)?
- ★ Does the analytic plan fit the question and the proposed data?
- ★ Is the applicant qualified to successfully carry out the proposed study?

American Athletic Conference Grant Decisions

The American's Faculty Athletic Representatives (FARs) will conduct an initial review of all completed proposals to ensure they meet the submission requirements. Proposals that meet the requirements are then reviewed by the FAR Research Committee, and the Committee may seek the opinion of subject matter experts, if necessary.

The FAR Research Committee will make final funding decisions and notify applicants of the status of their submission by **Friday, March 14, 2025**.