



THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS HEALTH STUDY

AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Pilot Funding Opportunity

Improving the Health and Safety of Football Players

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. If I do not have a Harvard University PIN or a Harvard Medical School eCommons ID, how can I obtain one?

A: Please contact Liz Carew at pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu for a temporary login.

Q. What are the Pilot Studies and how do they relate to the Football Players Health Study?

A: The Football Players Health Study is an overarching study that is comprised of three components: Pilot Studies, Law and Ethics, and Player Studies (a large cohort study of former NFL athletes). The Pilot Studies team works to identify new and innovative studies that may result in an impact on the health of football players. This could be anything from basic and translational research to clinical studies, as long as the results have the potential to impact the health and safety, or wellbeing of football players.

Q. Are successful applicants and pilot studies investigators able to access the Players Studies cohort and/or the data collected from this population?

A: Not yet. The large cohort of former players as part of our Player Studies is still being built at this time. At some point in the future we plan on making available additional funding opportunities that will support our investigations of the former player population and potentially utilize data from our cohort. However, the current funding opportunity is seeking applications that are not tied to this cohort.

Q: What should the pre-proposal include?

A: Pre-proposals must include the following:

1. Title of project
2. PI's name and institution
3. Scientific rationale and significance:
 - a. The background and significance of the proposed research
 - b. How the results of the proposed research will impact the health and wellbeing of football players
 - c. How the proposed research is important to the goals of the Football Players Health Study
4. References

Q: What is the expected length of the pre-proposal?

A: The pre-proposal (including the title, PI's name and institution, and the scientific rationale and significance) should be 1 page only. It should be single-spaced, using Arial font, 11-point size only with 0.5-inch margins. Pre-proposal text beyond one page will not be read by reviewers. References should be cited on a separate page, and kept to one page only.

Q: I am submitting an application on behalf of the principal investigator; will he/she be notified?

A: All email notifications will be sent to the person submitting the notification. All access to the application in Apply Hub is limited to the submitter. The submitter will need to work with the applicant to keep him/her apprised of the status.

Q: Are investigators who do not have a Harvard University appointment, or are based at institutions not affiliated with Harvard, eligible to submit a pre-proposal?

A: Not as principal investigator. The principal investigator must hold a Harvard University appointment (see next FAQ for details). However, co-investigators can be from any institution. If you are a Harvard principal investigator working with a co-investigator from an outside institution, please justify how the external expertise adds value to the project.

Q: Who is eligible to be a principal investigator?

A: Investigators with a Harvard University appointment are eligible to be a principal investigator if they meet the following criteria:

- They must hold an appointment as lecturer, instructor, research scientist/associate, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor.
- If selected to submit a full proposal, all PIs must provide a letter of support from their department chair.

Trainees (e.g. students, clinical trainees, post-doctoral fellows, clinical fellows) cannot serve as the principal investigator of an application, but may serve as co-investigators, provided they make a substantial contribution to the project. A substantial contributor is one who helped conceive of the experimental idea, contributed to the intellectual development of the project; and/or designed the study or part thereof (scientific or technical details), and will be involved with the study throughout the funding year. Co-I's can be from any institution. However, if a co-I is from a non-Harvard affiliated institution, the PI must justify how their external expertise adds value to the project.

If you have questions about whether you are eligible to apply, please contact us via email at pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu or at 617-432-3106.

Q: Is there an optimal number of co-investigators that should be involved with a project?

A: A co-investigator is not required nor is there a limit to the number of co-investigators that may be listed. If your project involves co-investigators, please be sure to include them in the data form when submitting your online application.

Q: Will my proposal be reviewed more favorably if it addresses one of the four categories specified in Section III of the RFA?

A: Applications in any of these areas are encouraged, but applications outside these areas will also be considered, and there is no guarantee that funding will be awarded in each category. Addressing one of the four categories is not as important as writing a proposal that excels in meeting other criteria, e.g. innovation, feasibility, impact.

Q: Can this project build on work that I'm already doing?

A: Yes, we welcome proposals from investigators who have ongoing research projects and want to build on existing work using this funding opportunity. In addition, proposals investigating novel approaches and ideas are encouraged.

Q: Can researchers apply for more than one Football Players Health Study Pilot Grant?

A: For the pre-proposal round, researchers may submit more than one application as PI, and may be listed as a Co-I on multiple applications. However for the full application round, researchers may submit only one application as PI.

Q: Who are the reviewers and what purpose do they serve?

A: Reviewers are Harvard faculty specializing in a range of health specialties. Completed pre-proposals will be reviewed for scientific merit, feasibility, and relevance to the health and wellbeing of football players. Reviewers will evaluate the proposals on the following considerations:

- Is the project feasible and achievable in the funding period?
- Do the investigators have the requisite skills and experience to execute the project within the funding period?
- Is the proposed research innovative?
- Does the project have a high potential to lead to future funding?
- Does the proposal have the potential to affect the health of athletes in general or NFL players specifically, including future, current, or former players?

Q: Is a budget required to be submitted with the pre-proposal?

A: No, budgets need only be submitted with full proposals.

Contact Information

All inquiries related to the application process, eligibility, and/or scientific research areas should be directed to Liz Carew, Pilot Studies Project Manager, Football Players Health Study at Harvard University (617-432-3106); pilotstudies@footballplayershealth.harvard.edu.

Inquiries relating to financial or grants management areas should be directed to Lucy Kolessin, Director of Finance and Research Administration, Football Players Health Study at Harvard University (617-432-7804); lucy_kolessin@hms.harvard.edu.