



Call No. 2 of the research funds for the German Sport University Cologne

Call for proposals for project funding of DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Aim of the grant

Call No. 2 is part of the research funding schemes of the German Sport University Cologne (GSU) and aims at supporting **young scientists** and preparing them for a scientific career. Therefore, the German Sport University Cologne promotes innovative sport scientific research ideas of doctoral students. Unique modules of a bottom-up research project or projects as part of the doctorate are possible. The funding specifically aims at strengthening the competencies to carry out a scientific project, resulting in a quality-assured publication (see required output). For the project professional supervision by an academic employee of the GSU must be ensured, the applicant is responsible for the project.

Financial modalities

Proposals with a **funding up to 6.000 € for a doctoral student** will be accepted. Doctoral students, **not** employed at the GSU, can apply for funding for their own position (WHB). The grant can be spent on financing of personnel costs, equipment and travel¹ expenses. In addition, funding can be applied for within the framework of the Open Access Module (2,000 euros) and the Internationalisation Module (3,000 euros). Internal interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers from other GSU institutes (not departments) is possible as part of a joint grant application (increase in amount of funding by 500 euros).

If the project requires equipment or instruments that are already available at the GSU in other institutes, a compensation payment may be made if these are made available for the HIFF project to offset any additional costs and resource commitments resulting from wear and tear, training in their use, repair costs, etc. The compensatory payment, up to a maximum of 2,000 euros, is paid to the lending institute or department in accordance with the [established regulations](#).

Projects or the funds requested for this purpose will be approved for a **period of twelve months** (at most until the end of the doctorate). An approval will be made if the university budget allows its implementation and if the university has enough resources in the year of approval.

Application process

Doctoral students of the German Sport University Cologne are eligible to apply. A joint application with other students is possible. Each person can only hand in one proposal. Persons who, at the time of grant acceptance, are managing another HIFF project that has not yet been completed, are not eligible to apply. **The application form must be used to submit the proposal.**

Proposals can be written in German or English.

¹ Please note that call no. 2 is project funding and not a travel grant. Therefore, applications that only provide for the financing of conference costs and the associated travel expenses cannot be accepted. Up to €1,500 can be applied for to cover conference costs (including the associated travel expenses).

Information on the use of artificial intelligence in the form of generative models for text and image creation in the application:

The use of generative models is permitted, but must be disclosed and cited in a scientifically appropriate manner. The use must be in line with good scientific practice and applicants should disclose whether and to what extent they have used generative models for their research and in the context of the application. The responsibility for maintaining scientific integrity remains with the researchers themselves. In addition, legal aspects, such as copyright, must be taken into account when using generative AI in the context of an application. Generative AI should be seen as an aid and not as a substitute for the researcher's own scientific expertise. The final responsibility for the content and quality of the application lies with the applicant.

Please note: If the formal requirements of the application form (page numbers, missing signatures, missing documents, budget overruns etc.) are not met, the application will not be accepted.

Complete application documents should be handed in electronically (via e-mail, max. 8 MB) as one pdf document to the Department of Research and Scientific Qualification (forschung-dshs@dshs-koeln.de). Please state in the email subject line the call number (Call 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) for which you apply (e.g. Call 1 for this funding line).

For questions please contact Dr. Alexandra Pizzera (a.pizzera@dshs-koeln.de, Tel.: -7580).

Review process and approval

Scientific reviewers are involved in the review process. Core reviewing criteria are:

- Quality and feasibility of the work programme
- Relevance of the topic
- Appropriateness of methods and models
- Consideration of gender and diversity dimensions in the application
- Individual-related aspects (e.g. previous research achievements)

Approvals are estimated to be given by December 2026.

Required output

The results of the project must be published as manuscripts in one of the following categories:

- Original articles in an internationally accepted journal, i.e. the journal is part of the SCImago journal rank (SJR) list or
- Original articles in an edited book (no book of abstracts of a congress) or
- Original article in a theory-based textbook with applied focus



At the end of the funding period, at least a draft of an article must be submitted with information on the current status or planning of the submission.

- In the course of the proof of submission, you will receive a link to a questionnaire on the framework conditions of the funding and the implementation of the project. Participation in this survey (approx. 10 minutes) is obligatory.
- The project must be maintained and published in FIS.

Deadline is October 4th 2026.