

1. General Rules

UniCredit Foundation announces the **competition for one grant** supporting **multidisciplinary education research programs on education**. Through this contest, the Foundation aims to bolster education research projects contributing to the **enhancement of educational attainment across any country within the UniCredit Group perimeter**¹. This includes human capital formation, socialization of individuals, personality building, competence assessment, competence formation, evaluation of educational process, institutional design, school management, university autonomy.

This program operates on an "open-ended" basis; proposals are not tied to specific research topics, disciplines, designs, or methods. The primary objective is to support rigorous, intellectually ambitious, and technically sound research addressing pressing questions and compelling opportunities in education.

The competition welcomes **professional and researchers of any nationality** from universities, institutions, or organizations **worldwide**.

2. Details of the grant

The total allocation for this initiative is €250,000. One grant will be awarded for a duration spanning two to three years. Applicants are encouraged to seek funding amounts aligned with their project needs rather than applying for the maximum available. In the case of valuable projects with lower budget needs than the amount allocated for one grant, the evaluation committee may decide either to award two grants totaling up to €250,000 or to lower the amount awarded for the winning project.

We seek to support **research** that develops new foundational knowledge with likely lasting impact on educational themes.

We welcome: multidisciplinary research with projects referring to any discipline or field; **methodological diversity** in answering key questions; projects that utilize a wide array of research methods including, among others, quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, design-based research; projects that might incorporate data from multiple and varied sources, span a sufficient length of time and/or are based on **work performed closely with professional** or community members over the duration of the project; proposals submitted by **multidisciplinary and diverse teams** (e.g. by age and gender); collaboration and integration across different disciplines or fields.

Finally, we encourage teams to consider and describe plans regarding the trajectories of their project's findings, implications, and potential effects, especially how the knowledge may be shared and utilized by professional, policy makers, or the broader publics.

3. Eligibility requirements

Proposals to this Research Grant on Education program must be for **research projects that aim at the improvement of education in any country of the UniCredit Group perimeter**. Preference will be given to research targeted to young people in the 11-19 age group (lower and upper secondary school) and focused on: tackling school dropouts; assessing the effects of early tracking; defining the scope for remedial education and evaluating tutoring programs for disadvantaged children; identifying appropriate orientation programs for the school careers and the job market.

Proposals for activities other than research are not eligible (e.g., professional development, curriculum development, scholarships, capital projects). Proposals for research focused on areas other than education are not eligible. Proposals that focus on countries outside the UniCredit perimeter are not eligible.

Principal Investigators (PIs) and Co-PIs applying for this grant must have a **Ph.D. in their field of competency**.

Nationality of the applicants does not constitute an eligibility requirement. Proposals must be submitted in English.

If projects have already received **funds from other sources**, this must be declared in the application.

Projects proposed may **not span over 3 years in duration** and may **initiate from October 2025**.

4. How to apply

Applications must be submitted by the Principal Investigator only via the online platform available on the Foundation's website at

<https://www.unicreditgroup.eu/en/unicreditfoundation.html>

Applications must enclose the following documents (in **one single PDF or ZIP** file), whose absence would result in exclusion from the competition:

1. PI and Co-PI(s) first name, surname, nationality, date, place of birth, university/organization.
2. PI and Co-PI(s) updated CVs.
3. University department/Organization description.
4. Project team description² identifying the roles, responsibility, and knowledge base of the PI, Co-PI(s) and any supporting researcher(s), how the team will work together to complete the research project, what each team member will contribute to the project.
5. Information about the project, including project title, estimated duration, estimated budget, the central research question(s), and a project summary - max 3 pages.
6. A full research proposal including contribution, state of the art, methodology and expected output (including outcomes of interest) - max 7 pages.
7. A declaration of consent to handling the candidate's data pursuant to regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016.

5. Application deadline

Candidates' applications, complete with the accompanying documentation, must be submitted **online** no later than **March 31, 2025**, following the procedure indicated above. After this deadline, the online application procedure will be disabled.

6. Selection process

The selection process will be conducted by an ad-hoc Commission composed of experts of education themes, coordinated by the UniCredit Foundation's Scientific Committee. In assessing candidates, the Commission will evaluate: the team's academic curricula; the research strength, potential and impact; the centrality of education in the research proposal; the importance of the topic to its field and the quality of the research question(s) and/or direction of inquiry; academic and research track record; the adequacy of the budget, timeline, and strength of the proposal.

The decision of the Commission shall be final and not be subject to appeal.

7. Awarding date

The grants will be **awarded by July 15, 2025**, by the Chairman of the Foundation based on the final decision expressed by the Commission as provided for under Art. 6.

8. Requirements for receipt of the grant

The grants shall be awarded for a maximum duration of **three years**. The grant holder commits to:

- 1) report to the Foundation on the research progress by the end of each year;
- 2) share main findings of the research with the Foundation throughout the research period;
- 3) submit a final report to the Foundation and present the results to the Foundation's Scientific Committee and Board of Directors.

9. Method of payment

The grant is **disbursed in advance**, either in multiple instalments or according to the project's duration. The payment details, including the number of instalments and the recipient, will be mutually agreed with the PI to align with the project's requirements and the regulations of the university or organization. The Foundation reserves the right to withhold further installments if the research project is interrupted. The second and subsequent installments will be paid only upon approval by the evaluation committee, based on the report submitted regarding project development.

10. Acceptance of all the conditions of the regulations

Participation to the competition implies unconditional acceptance of the entire contents of the above rule.

Milan, 10 December 2024