



UEFA Grow Awards 2021 Application guidelines

Introduction

"These awards are a kind of 'Oscars' for the strategic development of football in Europe. The great projects presented as part of the UEFA Grow Awards show how far we have come with the development of football and we congratulate everyone for sharing their projects so openly with the football community."

Zoran Laković, UEFA National Associations Director, at the UEFA Grow Awards ceremony in 2018

Background and objectives

The aim of the UEFA Grow Awards is to reward and endorse the initiatives and successes of UEFA's member associations, while also sharing best practices from all over Europe. Thus, the awards are about more than just winning; they are also about learning from each other and sharing knowledge, as well as purpose-driven networking.

Launched in 2011 as the UEFA KISS Marketing Awards, this initiative has proved to be highly successful, attracting very considerable interest from the national associations. In 2018, for example, a record 106 applications were submitted by 44 national associations. Media interest has also proved to be significant, with award-winning projects being covered by national and international media outlets alike, highlighting their success stories.

Award categories

Football – and the world in general – has changed considerably since the last edition of the UEFA Grow Awards back in 2018. In light of those external developments, as well as feedback from national associations, we have decided to adapt our award categories in order to better reflect the current strategic development landscape. This year's award categories, therefore, are as follows:

- 1) COVID-19 community initiative**
- 2) Commercial partnership**
- 3) Communications campaign**
- 4) Data and insights project**
- 5) Brand development**
- 6) Fan engagement project**
- 7) Organisational development project**
- 8) Stakeholder support initiative**

A detailed explanation of these categories is available on pages 6–13 of this document.

The jury

An independent judging panel will be selected and overseen by UEFA. The jury will comprise sports industry experts, who will review all entries and determine the winning projects in each category.

Awards

The jury will select the best project in each category (based on three nominees), as well as the most creative and innovative project (direct appointment). Thus, each category will feature two awards – one for the best project and one for the most creative and innovative initiative. In total, therefore, 16 awards are up for grabs.

Selection process

Once the application deadline has passed and all applications have been processed by the UEFA administration, the jury will get access to all applications and have sufficient time for a proper review of all materials. At a jury meeting in September 2021, the jury will select the winner of the creativity and innovation award in each category, as well as the three nominees who will compete for the best project award in each category.

The shortlisted nominees will be announced in a circular letter at the end of September or early October 2021. The relevant national associations (i.e. the key contact persons for the projects in question) will then be contacted and asked to prepare ten-minute presentations on their shortlisted projects. All nominees will present their projects to the 55 member associations at virtual UEFA Grow Awards events between Monday 29th November and Thursday 2nd December. A detailed event schedule and further details will be communicated in due course. The jury will then select the winner of the best project award in each category on the basis of the original applications and the presentations given at the virtual events.

The jury reserves the right to select more than three nominees in a particular category, depending on the quantity and quality of applications. In addition, the jury may also decide to award special mentions.

Selection criteria

The jury will consider several different criteria in determining the winning projects, including the following:

- Does the project feature clearly defined **SMART objectives** and key performance indicators (KPIs)?
- Does it demonstrate clear and **tangible results** (referring to research and data)?
- Do the project materials show how the national association will build on the project in the **future** and how it is linked to the organisation's overall **strategy**?
- Do they contain details of the internal and external **resources** used, as well as the project's **budget**?
- Do they explain how the project gained the support of the **board/senior management**?
- Is the **application** itself well presented and structured?
- Is the strategy/project/campaign **creative** and **innovative**?
- Is the project **transferable** to other national associations? Can other national associations apply the idea and implement something similar in their market?

Awards ceremony

The 16 award winners will be announced at the UEFA Grow Awards ceremony. This will be a live virtual event on Friday 3rd December 2021. Further details of the event will be communicated in due course.

General application guidelines

We strongly encourage all member associations to participate and submit applications. Please bear in mind the following guidelines when putting together your applications:

- National associations may submit multiple applications. It is also possible to submit more than one application in a particular category.
- Each application should consist of a **completed application form** and a **summary PowerPoint presentation**. The application form should provide an overview of all key information, whereas the PowerPoint presentation should provide more detailed information regarding the project (as well as the key information referred to in the application form). In addition, please submit at least **three high-quality images** that capture the essence of your project. These photos may be used for external communication purposes (see page 14 for further details). Where possible, these photos should focus on the output of the project – i.e. if it was a commercial partnership aimed at driving participation in football, the photos should show people enjoying playing football, rather than the press conference where the sponsorship deal was unveiled.
- The application form and the PowerPoint presentation are equally important and must be submitted in **English**.
- While providing video files is not mandatory, we recommend that you submit one video documenting the project. If possible, this video should have English subtitles if it features another language.
- Please do not provide links to photos/videos that are available online (e.g. YouTube videos); instead, please include the corresponding video or image files in your application materials.
- Please apply the following naming conventions to all of your documents:
 - *NAname_AwardCategory_Application form*
 - *NAname_AwardCategory_Presentation*
 - *NAname_AwardCategory_Image_1, _2, etc.*
 - *NAname_AwardCategory_Video_1, _2, etc.*
 - *NAname_AwardCategory_Supporting document_1, _2, etc.*

Detailed descriptions of each award category can be found on the following pages. As a rule, applications should relate to projects, campaigns or other initiatives that were launched, planned and/or implemented in the last three years (i.e. after the 2018 FIFA World Cup).

How to apply

- Email the completed application form, the presentation, at least three high-quality images and all relevant supporting materials to UEFAGrowAwards@uefa.ch **by 18.00 CET on Friday 27 August 2021**.
- If the total size of all materials exceeds 10MB, please use a file transfer service of your choice (e.g. www.wetransfer.com) to submit the files.
- Printed materials, USB sticks and other items can be sent by post to the following address: UEFA, FAO Zoélya Gagnebin, National Associations Division, Route de Genève 46, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland. (Please note that items sent by post also need to reach us by 18.00 CET on Friday 27 August 2021, so you should factor in the delivery time.)

If you have any questions, please send an email to UEFAGrowAwards@uefa.ch or contact Zoélya Gagnebin, UEFA national associations strategic development assistant (zoelya.gagnebin@uefa.ch) or Manuel Ruess, UEFA national associations strategic development coordinator (manuel.ruess@uefa.ch), directly.

Award categories

1. COVID-19 community initiative

The coronavirus pandemic has changed the world we live in. In 2020, national associations launched countless initiatives supporting local communities when the need for social distancing meant that people had to stay at home. Football made a difference across Europe, whether by raising funds to purchase medical equipment, producing videos about staying fit at home, delivering food to the elderly and vulnerable, or using the sport's enormous reach to deliver vital health messages. This award recognises the outstanding work done by national associations in support of local communities during the pandemic.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- be for a community initiative run by your national association;
- not relate to initiatives with no national association involvement;
- clearly define objectives and KPIs;
- show how the initiative gained the support of senior management prior to its launch;
- show whether/how this initiative was linked to your organisational strategy or a relevant sub-strategy.

Results

Entries should:

- show how this initiative has helped local communities;
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results;
- explain how you will build on this initiative in the future;
- clearly show whether objectives have been met or not.

Resources

Entries should:

- show the exact role of the national association in terms of involvement, support and resources;
- indicate the commercial/non-commercial partners (if any) that were involved in the initiative;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

European football competitions may have been put on hold in 2020, but the world's most popular sport continued to play a frontline role in society's response to COVID-19. This category covers all activities that helped to put a smile back on the faces of football fans, helped people to keep fit during the pandemic without breaking any rules and helped those in need. This goes beyond donations and financial assistance and is about demonstrating solidarity and support for all members of society during these unprecedented times. Thus, this category covers activities such as funding medical equipment for hospitals, allowing the national association's facilities to be used for medical purposes, providing funds for grassroots clubs, running health and well-being initiatives, and organising other initiatives in support of local communities during the pandemic. It also includes all initiatives aimed at ensuring that people comply with government regulations on social distancing and staying at home, thus making a valuable contribution to combating COVID-19. If the submission relates to a government-led initiative, please be sure to outline the national association's role in this and show how the project was linked to your own COVID-19 community initiatives.

2. Commercial partnership

This award is for the best commercial partnership or partnership activation. Entries should focus on the national association, the men's/women's national team, national youth teams, domestic league/cup competitions or grassroots football. The aim is to reward national associations for demonstrating commercial excellence by creating new commercial opportunities, driving partner activation or delivering commercial rights to a world-class standard in a way that supports the organisation's overall strategic objectives. National associations have had to adapt their partnerships owing to the impact of COVID-19 and be creative and innovative in order to keep their partners happy. Show us the new rights that you have created for your partners (e.g. digital rights packages for them to activate) or the new partnerships that you have established for the benefit of football in your country.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a commercial partnership, a partnership activation or an initiative aimed at all commercial partners (e.g. in addressing the impact of COVID-19);
- clearly define and detail the objectives, strategy, tactics and results of the partnership (for both the national association and the partner);
- not relate to sponsorship activation with no national association involvement;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- indicate the project's return on investment from a quantitative and/or qualitative point of view, from the perspective of both the national association and the commercial partner;
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results;
- show why the partnership or activation is innovative and engaging for fans and delivers a good return on investment in terms of marketing.

Resources

Entries should:

- show the exact role of the national association in terms of involvement, support and resources;
- detail the full range of resources employed in the activation of the programme (commercial partners, agencies, etc.) and indicate the project's budget;
- provide details of any pre- or post-project research;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for a commercial partnership or partnership activation that is innovative and fresh in terms of its approach, promoting a particular brand or football as a whole through an excellent activation campaign. Please note that this category is not limited to sponsorship. Indeed, it also includes other areas of the commercial revenue wheel – e.g. broadcasting, streaming, merchandising and licensing, ticketing and hospitality, digital and data, stadium events and government funding. The key here is to show how you have worked with your partners to deliver on the objectives of all parties.

3. Communications campaign

This award is for the best communications campaign aimed at raising awareness of the national association's activities and improving the image of football among key stakeholders and across society as a whole. This could be a strategic communications plan aimed at raising awareness of organisational activity beyond the men's national team, or it could be a communications campaign that focuses on the men's/women's national team, national youth teams, domestic league/cup competitions, grassroots football or other elements of the national association's role in football and society.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a communications strategy or campaign run by your national association (either alone or in partnership with an external agency);
- highlight the challenges that the campaign aimed to address;
- show the use of strong creative and original ideas;
- clearly define the relevant objectives, KPIs and strategies;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- clearly show how this campaign fits into your organisational and/or communications strategy;
- demonstrate clear and tangible results (measured against KPIs) or a step change in perception among stakeholders;
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results;
- show a clear progression from awareness to behavioural change.

Resources

Entries should:

- indicate the exact role of the national association;
- detail the full range of external resources employed in the activation of this project (e.g. agencies);
- indicate the overall budget and the human resources allocated to the campaign;
- provide details of any pre- or post-project research;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for a communications campaign or strategy relating to the national association, your men's or women's national team, domestic competitions, grassroots programmes or other elements of the national association's role that improves the perception of an aspect of football in your country. This could, for example, be a communications campaign timed to coincide with the launch of a new kit which aims to strengthen the public's bond or identification with the team, or it could involve the use of a crisis communications plan to deal with a particular scenario, or the use of effective and agile communications to keep the football community up to date with the latest developments during the pandemic. This category also covers communications activities aimed at raising awareness of the national association's activities and its role in leading, developing and promoting football in your country, as well as projects highlighting football's role in society (e.g. social responsibility projects).

4. Data and insights project

Insights are a hot topic, as organisations strive to make better-informed evidence-based decisions every day in order to deliver greater impact. Insights help us to understand the past, react in the present and anticipate future needs. Increasingly, corporate strategies are explicitly talking about information as a critical asset and analytics as an essential competency. Leading organisations in every industry are focusing on becoming more insight-driven, and football is no exception. The aim of this category is to reward national associations for excellence in the area of insights, research and data. It is about how data is used to inform national associations' decision-making and how insights are used to take action.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a data, insights or research project run by your national association;
- clearly define and detail the objectives, strategies, tactics and results of the project;
- explain whether/how the project is linked to the association's overall strategy;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- show which insights were generated and how these helped your national association;
- explain how you have taken concrete action on the basis of data and insights;
- clearly show how those insights have helped to support the growth of football;
- demonstrate clear and tangible results (measured against KPIs);
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results.

Resources

Entries should:

- detail the full range of resources employed in the project (external agencies, national association staff, etc.) and indicate the project's budget;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management;
- outline the tools that were used to analyse, visualise and communicate results;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for data, insights and research initiatives that have a real impact. This could be a specific project aimed at answering a specific question, a multi-disciplinary collaborative research project or overarching activities aimed at expanding/enhancing the use of insights across the organisation (and/or external stakeholders). Quantitative/qualitative research projects, analysis of databases (participation, customer relationship management, ticketing, etc.), the creation of predictive models, and other business analytics and intelligence initiatives all fall within this category, as do projects involving the use of insights in strategic planning processes and/or decision-making, data structuring/quality initiatives, data collection and sharing projects, and data architecture solutions. Entries must show how the initiative has helped the organisation to become more insight-driven and/or how it has supported commercial or non-commercial partnerships and the growth of football.

5. Brand development

This award is for the best brand strategy, action and/or implementation programme. The brand activation and/or strategy should focus on the national association, the men's/women's national team, national youth teams, domestic league/cup competitions or other brand properties of the national association (e.g. grassroots football programmes). Remember that a brand is much more than just a logo, so this category will still be relevant even if you have not recently changed your logo or visual identity. This category covers all elements and components of brand management and development.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a brand activation, strategy and/or implementation project run by your national association;
- clearly define the project's objectives, KPIs and strategy;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- clearly explain how this brand strategy and implementation fits into your brand portfolio and overall strategy;
- demonstrate clear and tangible results (measured against KPIs) or a step change in perception among stakeholders;
- indicate the return on investment in quantitative and/or qualitative terms (as regards brand awareness, changes in perception, media feedback, PR, etc.).

Resources

Entries should:

- detail the exact role of the national association in terms of involvement, support and resources;
- show the full range of external resources employed in the activation of this programme (e.g. agencies);
- indicate the overall budget for the brand project;
- describe any pre- or post-project research that was carried out;
- explain how the project gained the support of senior management;
- show how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for a brand activation or strategy for the national association, your men's or women's national team, domestic competitions or a grassroots programme that improves perceptions of an aspect of football in your country. Activities that fit the bill include the use of a visual property, brand architecture solutions, brand experience activities, brand development projects (e.g. to reflect changes to the association's mission/values/positioning), creative strategies, brand marketing campaigns, visual identity projects, brand evolution or brand performance measurement, or the development of tools enabling more efficient use of branding across internal and external stakeholders (e.g. a brand portal). Another type of project that would qualify as an entry in this category would be the implementation and rollout of a rebrand, including the planning and delivery of brand launch events and related communications activities.

6. Fan engagement project

The aim of this category is to reward national associations for excellence in digital marketing and the use of data, customer relationship management (CRM) and/or onsite experiences. This award is for the best fan engagement campaign run by a national association for the benefit of the association itself, the men's/women's national team, national youth teams or domestic league/cup competitions.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a fan engagement project run by your national association;
- clearly define and detail the objectives, strategies, tactics and results of the project;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- show why the project is innovative and engaging for fans and delivers a good return on investment;
- demonstrate clear and tangible results (measured against KPIs);
- not only demonstrate engagement levels on social media channels, but also show how the national association's own database has benefited from the project;
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results.

Resources

Entries should:

- detail the full range of resources employed in the implementation of the project (external agencies, national association staff, etc.) and indicate the project's budget;
- provide details of any pre- or post-project research;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for a fan engagement project that really connects with people in the country concerned. This category covers both digital and experiential campaigns (and combinations of the two). Thus, the project could be a digital marketing or CRM campaign aimed at increasing membership of your fan club or database, a dynamic social media campaign, a viral video attracting large numbers of hits on YouTube, or a digital campaign using virtual reality or augmented reality features. Alternatively, it could be an experiential promotion that was carried out before the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, such as an event designed to offer fans an opportunity to enjoy themselves and feel closer to football in your country (e.g. an efootball event or tournament), a fan zone established as part of a match/tournament, or an event enabling fans to meet players. It could also be a project aimed at improving matchday attendances and/or the matchday experience. Or, of course, it could be a project combining both digital and experiential elements or an innovative fan engagement project that was delivered virtually on account of the pandemic. Finally, this category also includes purely internal projects aimed at improving the segmentation of databases and the understanding of audiences, etc.

7. Organisational development project

This award is for the best organisational development project aimed at improving the national association's performance off the pitch. Organisational development covers a wide range of areas, including strategic planning, governance, IT, education, human resource management, financial management, innovation, digitisation and sustainability. Entries should focus on the national association in question, showing how the project has helped to improve its operations and performance.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to an organisational development project run by your national association;
- clearly define the project's priorities, objectives and KPIs;
- show how internal and external stakeholders were involved in the development and/or implementation process;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch;
- describe the tools used to develop and implement the project on a day-to-day basis.

Results

Entries should:

- show how the project was monitored and evaluated throughout the project period;
- explain how research, data and insights were used to review progress against the project plan;
- show how the project was linked to the national association's strategy;
- clearly indicate whether business objectives were met or not.

Resources

Entries should:

- explain how the project came to be established and how it was implemented at the level of the organisation as a whole, specific divisions/teams and individual employees;
- detail the external resources employed in the development of this project (e.g. agencies);
- indicate the overall budget for developing and implementing the project;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

This catch-all category captures all initiatives that have improved the way in which your national association works on a day-to-day basis and/or at a strategic level. Entries could, for example, relate to the development and implementation of a new organisational strategy (or a relevant sub-strategy – e.g. a marketing or women's football strategy), a governance reform, the implementation of new IT tools, new education, training or other HR initiatives, the introduction of better financial management methods, the launch of an innovation scheme, efforts to digitise the national association's operations, or a project aimed at making the national association more sustainable. In summary, this category captures all organisational development projects that help the national association to reach its potential and make it more effective and/or efficient in running its operations. We are interested in how the project was developed, what the stakeholder consultation process looked like, how it was launched and communicated (both internally and externally), how it was implemented on a day-to-day basis, and what tools you are using to decide whether organisational development objectives have been met.

8. Stakeholder support initiative

This award is for the best stakeholder support initiative. Entries should focus on activities that are run by your national association in support of its members (e.g. regional associations, leagues, clubs and/or other affiliates), showing how the initiative in question helps the national association, the relevant stakeholder(s) and football in general.

Objectives, approach and action plan

Entries should:

- relate to a stakeholder support initiative run by your national association;
- clearly define and detail the objectives of the initiative, from the perspective of both the national association and the relevant stakeholder(s);
- show how the project gained the support of senior management prior to its launch.

Results

Entries should:

- indicate the project's objectives (from a quantitative and/or qualitative point of view) and the return on investment;
- detail the project's results from the perspective of the national association and the relevant stakeholder(s);
- show how this stakeholder support initiative has benefited football in your country;
- refer to research, data and other authoritative evidence when demonstrating results (which should be measured against KPIs).

Resources

Entries should:

- show the exact role of the national association in terms of involvement, support and resources;
- detail the full range of resources employed in the activation of the programme (partners, agencies, etc.) and indicate the project's budget;
- provide details of any pre- or post-project research;
- show how the project gained the support of senior management;
- explain how another national association could take your idea and implement a similar project in its local market.

Guidance

We are looking for a stakeholder support initiative that is run by your national association for the benefit of football. This could be a market research project that is conducted at national and regional level, providing both the national association and regional associations with access to valuable data and insights. It could be the national association brokering beneficial collective framework agreements on behalf of its members, ensuring that members get a more competitive offer than they would if they had to negotiate individually with suppliers. It could be an initiative run by the national association aimed at funding part or full-time positions within regional associations (e.g. in the field of social media or football development). Or it could be an educational programme designed to train league or club officials in areas such as marketing or communications. Whichever stakeholder support initiative you choose to enter, please be sure to explain why this is a win-win for the national association and the relevant stakeholder(s) and how this initiative benefits football in your country.

Communication policy

Please note that the following communication policy will apply in respect of the 2021 UEFA Grow Awards:

UEFA

- **Social media:** The awards ceremony and projects submitted as part of the application process may be highlighted on UEFA's social media channels.
- **UEFA.com:** An article will be published about the winners and the ceremony.
- **UEFA Direct:** An article will be published about the winners and the ceremony.
- **Pictures:** Pictures from the awards ceremony may be made available after the event.
- **Other channels:** Presentations submitted as part of the application process may be made available to all national associations on the UEFA Grow Hub, UEFA Academy Online or other UEFA platforms. Relevant materials may also be shared via the UEFA Grow Newsletter or other newsletters aimed at national associations. If a national association is not willing to share its presentation with other associations, it should indicate this on the application form. Please note that the ten-minute presentations that are given by shortlisted associations at the virtual UEFA Grow Awards events will be made available to all national associations.

National associations

If you win a UEFA Grow Award, please feel free to announce your success to the outside world. However, in doing so, we would ask you to respect the following:

- If any sponsors or external agencies were involved in the project, subtle references to them are permissible, but please ensure that no direct link is made between them and UEFA. The national association must remain the main driver and 'leading actor' at all times.
- We would be grateful if you could send us, for our files, a copy of any announcement that you publish and any press coverage that you obtain.

Thank you for your understanding and kind cooperation.

Legal disclaimer

The national association certifies that all information, know-how, data, results, inventions and associated intellectual property that is/are made, discovered, created, invented or generated by the national association in respect of its participation in the UEFA Grow Awards is/are owned by the national association and does/do not and will not infringe the intellectual property of any third party. UEFA declines all responsibility and liability in this respect.

UEFA reserves the right to cancel, modify or postpone the Awards at any stage. UEFA will not be liable in respect of any costs or consequential losses suffered or incurred by applicants as a result of such a cancellation, modification or postponement.



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