

**Press Release**

Embargo: 9.45am on Wednesday 17 April.

**New-look scheme from The FA returns to support retention of adult male football teams**

* ***Grants available for clubs to maintain existing adult male teams***
* ***Application window open until Thursday 6 June 2019***

The Football Association (The FA) is re-launching its adult male retention-focused funding scheme to support men’s 11-a-side community football teams across the country.

The newly-titled *Stay in the Game* scheme will offer existing clubs the opportunity to apply for grants of £750 to help cover the various associated costs of running a football team.

Last year, under the name *Retain the Game,* the scheme helped to support the retention of 2,336 adult male teams across the country, supporting an estimated 55,000 community footballers.

Clubs who benefitted from the grants last year were able to use the funding for matchday and training facility hire, first-aid training and new equipment, whilst also subsidising matchday fees for members of their respective squads.

Paul Simpson, England Under-20s Head Coach, said: **“It’s no secret that we are seeing adult male players move from regular 11-a-side football into other more casual formats of the game.**

**“One of the main reasons is clubs lacking money for things like match fees, facilities hire, new kit and equipment, which can lead to their teams folding.**

**“Last year’s roll-out of the scheme saw some really positive strides and I hope we’ll see men’s 11-a-side teams across the country receive a helping hand.”**

This year, the grants will once again be available to adult male teams in the under-18 to Under-21 category, open-age adult sides and veterans’ teams.

Grassroots clubs that meet the following criteria will be eligible to apply:

* Clubs that operate with two or more adult male teams – Under-18s, Under-19s, Under-21s, Under-23s, open age and vets.
* Clubs that hold the FA’s Charter Standard Award (Adult, Youth, Development or Community).
* Adult clubs that commit to becoming FA Adult Charter Standard within season 2019/20.
* Clubs that have the support of their County Football Association.

The application window for *Stay in the Game* is now open and closes on at **5pm** on **Thursday 6 June 2019**. Clubs seeking more information on the programme should either contact their local County FA or visit <https://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/funding-schemes/stay-in-the-game/>.

*Stay in the Game* is inclusive of players from different ethnic backgrounds, faiths and sexual orientations.

This push to reverse the decline in adult male teams follows the recent *Grow the Game* funding scheme for 2019, which made £1.5 million available for grassroots clubs looking to create new women and girls or disability football teams.

As well as *Grow the Game*, the Football Foundation uses investment from the Premier League, The FA and the Government, through Sport England, to provide enhanced sporting facilities across the country. Since 2000, the Foundation has supported over 16,500 grassroots projects worth more than £1.5bn.

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