

## **CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS:**

### DEGENERATIVE NEUROCOGNITIVE DISEASE AND PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

#### **Background**

Further to ratifying guidelines on the management of concussion in English football in 2015, the FA Expert Panel in Concussion agreed and outlined its main research question for degenerative neurocognitive disease and football. The research question is:

“Is the incidence of degenerative neurocognitive disease more common in ex-professional footballers than in the normal population?”

The panel believe that by answering this fundamental question, the overall long term risks of playing professional football will be better understood and the direction for future research in this area will be significantly better informed.

The research symposium held in 2016, organised in conjunction with the RFU and the Drake Foundation aimed to foster further understanding within the research community of the potentially complex concepts involved in answering this question and structuring valid research in the area of concussion and head injury in sport.

#### **Call for research**

Further to the 1<sup>st</sup> UK Research Symposium on Concussion in Sport and as part of its stated commitment to advance understanding in the area of degenerative neurocognitive disease and professional footballers, the FA in collaboration with the Professional Footballer’s Association (PFA) is calling for submissions for potential research projects for initial assessment, scoping and agreement of funding in 2017. Only studies which address the research question will be considered.

#### **Application Process – Initial proposal document**

Interested parties should submit an initial concept document of no more than 4 pages that will be assessed by members of the FA’s expert panel on concussion, with input from other independent experts as are required in order to establish the potential viability and validity of any application. This initial assessment will be conducted by the panel when they meet in June 2017. On completion of this initial concept stage successful parties will be required to progress to further detailed assessment and approval, including ethical approval and agreement on how the project will be managed to point of completion.

The initial proposal document should include the following:

- Name of research project
- Name, qualifications, organisation, university links and overview of previous research experience for the principal investigator, supporting investigators, people

directly involved in research and any advisors to the project as well as any possible conflict of interest

- A brief outline of the background, methodology and the mechanism by which the study will answer the FA's specific research question
- Expected outcomes of the project
- A summary of the projected costs and timescale of the project
- Telephone number and email address of the person who is the main contact for the submission

Invitation to submit an initial proposal document does not guarantee a successful application. The FA and PFA reserve the right to fund a study in its entirety or only part thereof. All applications should be written in English and financial projections submitted in pounds sterling.

The closing date for submission of this initial proposal document is 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Final proposals and any queries regarding the process should be directed in the first instance to:

Dr Charlotte Cowie, Head of Medicine, Technical Directorate, The FA Group, by email: [charlotte.cowie@thefa.com](mailto:charlotte.cowie@thefa.com)