



# UniCredit Foundation

## COMPETITION FOR ONE RESEARCH GRANT ON EDUCATION

### 4<sup>th</sup> Edition – year 2026

#### 1. General Rules

UniCredit Foundation announces the competition for **one grant to support education research projects** that will contribute to the improvement of education, in any country of the UniCredit Group perimeter<sup>1</sup>. The competition is open to researchers of any nationality from any university worldwide. **The main goal of this program is to support rigorous, intellectually ambitious, and technically sound research that is relevant to the most pressing questions and compelling opportunities in education.**

#### 2. Details of the grant

The grant is worth **€200,000** (gross of taxes) **for a duration of maximum 3 years.**

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

**We welcome: 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 practitioners** or community members over the duration of the project; proposals submitted by **multidisciplinary and diverse teams** (e.g. by age and gender).

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 practitioners, policy makers, or the broader publics.

#### 3. Eligibility requirements

Proposals to this Research Grant on Education program must be for **academic research projects that aim to study education**, contributing to 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 Economics** (or related academic fields). Graduate students may be part of the research team but cannot be the main PI of the proposal.

**Nationality of the applicants is not relevant** as 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 July 2026**.

#### 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.unicreditfoundation.org/en>**

**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. Project team description<sup>2</sup> 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.
4. Information about the project, including project title, estimated duration, estimated budget, the central research question(s), and a project summary - max 3 pages.
5. A full research proposal including contribution, state of the art, methodology and expected output (including outcomes of interest) - max 7 pages.
6. 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 **April 2, 2026**, 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 academic representative experts of economics and education themes, coordinated by the UniCredit Foundation's Scientific Committee.

In assessing candidates, the Commission will evaluate: the team's academic curricula; 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 grant will be **awarded by May 15, 2026**, by the Chairman of UniCredit Foundation on the basis of the final decision expressed by the Commission as provided for under Art. 6.

#### 8. Requirements for receipt of the grant

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

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

#### 9. Method of payment

The grant is **disbursed in advance every July**, either in multiple instalments or as determined by 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 university regulations. UniCredit Foundation reserves the right not to pay the second/third installment in the event of interruption of the research project.

#### 10. Acceptance of all the conditions of the regulations

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

Milan, 16 December 2025

<sup>1</sup> Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia

<sup>2</sup> 2 PI and Co-PI(s) personal information (1), their CVs (2), and the declaration of consent (6) can be attached to the team description