



SPORT FOR MOBILITY

CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH GRANT SCHEME

JULY 2025

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SPORT FOR MOBILITY

For the next four years (2025-2028), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) will deliver a wide range of transformational sport development initiatives to its members as part of the Sport for Mobility (SfM) project. Benefitting all IPC members, the primary aim of the SfM project is to advance the work and capabilities of IPC members in three priority areas:

Athletes: Supporting athletes is at the core of the IPC's programming. This area will develop the fundamental building blocks for long-term success, including talent identification, competition opportunities, and access to mentors, coaches and classifiers.

Leaders: The success of athletes relies on the dedication and leadership of changemakers within the Paralympic Movement. Initiatives in this area support the development of disability inclusion champions equipped to drive positive social change worldwide through Para sport.

Participation: Initiatives in this area focus on working with IPC members to create opportunities for persons with disabilities to engage in Para sport, many of them for the first time.

As part of the SfM project, the IPC is offering International Federations (IFs), International Organisations of Sport for the Disabled (IOSDs) and Recognised International Federations (RIFs), in collaboration with the scientific community, the opportunity to apply for the IPC Classification Research Grant (the **Grant**). The Grant scheme is explained in further details in this document.

Where the term IF is used within the document, it also captures IOSDs and RIFs, unless explicitly addressed otherwise.

1.2 CLASSIFICATION

Since its earliest beginnings, classification has been the fundamental basis of Para sport, providing criteria for determining who is eligible to compete in order to establish a framework that allows for fair and meaningful competition by minimising the impact of athletes' impairments on the outcome of competition. Para sport classification systems are critical to the IPC's ability to achieve its mission to lead the Paralympic Movement, oversee the delivery of the Paralympic Games, and support IPC members to enable Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence. In particular, such classification systems allow the IPC's members to enable Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence by providing a framework for competitive sport for persons with disabilities. This unique framework groups

athletes into sport classes which aim to ensure that the impact of impairment is minimised, and competition outcomes are determined by sporting excellence.

The 2025 IPC Classification Code (the **Code**) requires IFs to carry out multidisciplinary classification research to: 1) ensure that their classification systems meet the requirements for best practice classification; and 2) monitor the quality of their assessment systems and improve their evidence base. Doing so will ensure integrity and credibility within classification and Para sport competition.

The grant will enable IPC members to enhance their classification systems through multidisciplinary research. The outcomes will benefit all IPC Members and athletes, enhancing the integrity, credibility, and fairness of Para sports competitions. Research outcomes will contribute to development of Para sports' classification systems and will have the potential to be translated into practice, which is seen through the changes in the IFs' classification rules and practices.

2 CLASSIFICATION RESEARCH GRANT SCHEME

2.1 THE AIM

The purpose of this Grant is to support the development and improvement of best practice and evidence-based classification systems in Para sports. The 2025 IPC Classification Code sets out the requirements in respect to best practice classification systems and classification research (articles 62 and 63), and this Grant is envisaged to support IFs in meeting the requirements under the Code by providing opportunities to enhance their classification systems and processes through multidisciplinary classification research. Projects may include individual IF initiatives or multi-sport and multi-organisation collaborative projects. While projects are ordinarily submitted through an IF, the IPC may also consider direct funding agreements for proposals led by universities, research institutions, or independent researchers, especially if the project aligns with IPC priorities and has significant potential impact.

Through this Grant, IFs have the opportunity to apply for funding for any project directly linked to enhancing classification systems and processes. Examples of projects and activities eligible for funding under this Grant include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing existing and/or developing valid, reliable and practical methods for measuring eligible impairments;
- Reviewing existing and/or developing valid, reliable and practical methods for measuring key performance determinants;
- Determining the impairment-performance relationship, minimum impairment criteria and sport classes;

- Reviewing existing and/or developing valid, reliable and practical methods for classifying athletes into sport classes;
- Reviewing and/or developing processes surrounding classification;
- Exploring the use of innovative methods, computer science and other technological advancements (which could include artificial intelligence (AI)) in classification;
- Assessing the impact of adaptive equipment;
- Improving the scientific evidence supporting classification; and
- Improving consistent and fair athlete assessment practices across Para sports.

The IPC strongly encourages research projects with experimental design which focus on building the evidence to strengthen and develop Para sports' classification systems, especially in respect to reviewing and developing minimum impairment criteria and sport class boundaries, and the corresponding methods to do so.

The resulting research will benefit all IPC members and athletes by strengthening the overall classification framework, enhancing transparency, and promoting trust in Para sport competitions.

2.2 BUDGET

The Grant is envisaged to cater for research projects and activities of different complexity and duration, divided into four budget bands:

- a) from EUR 125,001 to EUR 250,000;
- b) from EUR 90,001 to EUR 125,000;
- c) from EUR 65,001 to EUR 90,000; and
- d) up to EUR 65,000.

2.3 TIMELINE

The Grant will be delivered via two rounds of applications, one in 2025 and one in the second half of 2026. Table 1 provides an overview of the important deadlines for the first round of applications. A similar approach will be taken for the second round, with further details to be shared at a later date.

Table 1: Schedule for the first round of applications

Activity		First Call 2025
Call applications	for	7 July 2025

Application period	Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis between 7 July 2025 and 30 September 2025*
Open call to facilitate applications	22 July 2025 at 12:00 CEST
Selection period	On a rolling basis between 7 July 2025 and 30 September 2025*
Communication of outcomes	Ordinarily up to four-six weeks after the application deadline
Contract review and signing	Ordinarily up to four weeks after the communication of approval
Grant implementation period	7 July 2025 onwards - 31st October 2028
	Projects may vary in duration and whilst they may start earlier than the implementation period per call, they must be completed by the end of October 2028
Funding	
1 st instalment (80%)	Following contract signing
2 nd instalment (20%)	Following project completion and final report submission
Grant report	At the end of the project and mid-term reports, for multi-year projects an additional report is required in January of every following year (2027 and 2028) Final deadline to submit reports for projects running until the end of the grant implementation period is 31 January 2029

* The application and selection period may continue beyond 30 September 2025 until the end of December 2025, depending on the number of applications received and approved.

2.4 APPLICATION CRITERIA AND ELIGIBILITY

Only complete applications will be reviewed by the IPC. Applicants with complete applications will ordinarily be informed of the results of their application within four-six weeks following the application period, i.e., by November 2025 for the first call and by November 2026 for the second call.

Applications can be submitted by:

- International Federations (IFs);
- International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled (IOSDs);
- Recognised International Federations (RIFs); and
- Universities or other research institutions (ideally through the IFs)*.

*Independent applications from universities or other research institutions may be considered in exceptional cases; the IPC will give preference to applications coming from IFs. Applications from universities or other research institutions should include endorsement in a written format from the relevant IF(s).

Although not mandatory, endorsement letters can also be obtained from National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) in respect to all project applications (i.e., irrespective of whether they are submitted by IPC members or other stakeholders).

Each IF is allowed to submit multiple applications if they wish. For example, this could be in relation to research projects addressing the classification system for athletes with physical impairment, vision impairment or intellectual impairment, or in relation to different aspects of the IF's classification system (for example, one project related to defining the minimum impairment criteria and a different project related to the impact of equipment on athletes within one or multiple sport classes). In such cases where the IF applies for multiple grants, the IF must assign a priority number to each proposal, ranging from 1 (highest priority) to N (lowest priority), where N is the total number of proposals submitted. This prioritization must be clearly indicated in the submission.

2.4.1 MANDATORY AND DESIRABLE APPLICATION CRITERIA

To be eligible for the funding, the applicant needs to meet all of the following mandatory criteria:

- IF is in good standing with the IPC (if applicable).
- IF has no outstanding IPC grant reports or unresolved issues from previous IPC grants (if applicable).
- The Grant application must include a research project, and activities directed towards development and improvement of best practice and evidence-based classification systems in Para sports.
- The proposed project employs an appropriate research design: experimental, quasi-experimental, longitudinal, or cross-sectional. The research design is supported by a data collection strategy that includes an optimal sample size of international-level athletes, to ensure the validity, reliability, and generalisability of the findings.
- The principal investigator (PI) of the Grant application and research proposal must be associated with a university, research centre, an IF and/or

a NPC, and have proven experience in research in the relevant field (for example, sport science and health science).

- The Grant application and research proposal must include ethical approval of the project design by the relevant academic partner or at minimum, documentation proving that such request has been made. In the event that approval is obtained subsequent to the submission of the Grant application, proof of the approval must be subsequently provided to the IPC.
- The Grant application and research proposal must be carried out in accordance with the applicable data protection laws.
- The Grant application must align with the requirements under the 2025 IPC Classification Code, and the conceptual framework for evidence-based classification in Para sport (David L. Mann, Sean M. Tweedy, Robin C. Jackson & Yves C. Vanlandewijck (2021) Classifying the evidence for evidence-based classification in Paralympic sport, *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 39:sup1, 1-6).

The following criteria are not mandatory, but strengthen the Grant application:

- The Grant application is tied with a research centre or university.
- Endorsement and support from relevant organisations (IF/IOSD/RIF/NPC/NF) in disseminating the information about the research project and facilitating data collection (e.g., access to international pool of athletes, subject to obtaining relevant consent).
- Collaborative research project design including multiple organisations and potential impact on multiple Para sports.
- Study design reflects real-world condition and sport-specific relevance.
- The study has a focused and testable research question or hypothesis.
- Demonstration of how research outcomes can be translated into practice, such as changes to IF's classification rules or procedures.
- Commitment by the applicant to bear additional costs of the project which would not fall within the scope of the Grant application (i.e., co-funding).

Project durations may range from 12 to 36 months (i.e., projects must be finalised by 31 October 2028), depending on the starting date, the scope and the corresponding budget plan. Both one-year and multi-year proposals will be considered, as well as projects focused on individual sports or multiple sports.

2.5 PAYMENT CONDITIONS AND COSTS OVERVIEW

The Grant will be paid by the IPC to the Grant recipient by means of bank transfer to the bank account provided by the Grant Recipient in its application, in instalments as outlined below:

- First instalment: 80 per cent of the Grant will be paid within 30 days of both parties signing an agreement documenting the terms of the Grant (the **Grant Agreement**).
- Second instalment: 20 per cent of the Grant will be paid upon the IPC's approval of the final reports which must be submitted in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

The IPC is not responsible for reimbursing currency exchange gains/losses incurred by Grant recipients. Any currency exchange gains/losses must not be included in budgets and actual reports. The IPC will however bear any bank transfer costs associated with the payment of the Grant.

Notwithstanding the below criteria in sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2, the IPC reserves the right to determine the eligibility of costs on a case-by-case basis and/or during application review and during review of annual reporting/audits.

2.5.1 ELIGIBLE COSTS

The below costs are eligible for the Classification Research Grant (but subject to the various conditions set out in this section 2.5):

- **Personnel Costs:** Salaries, social security contributions, and other employment-related costs are eligible for researchers, technicians, and other staff directly working on the project.
- **Travel and Accommodation:** Expenses for travel, accommodation, and subsistence related to project meetings, conferences, fieldwork, and visits to collaborating institutions.
- **Equipment:** Costs for purchasing, leasing, or renting necessary scientific equipment and infrastructure. For expensive equipment, only the depreciation cost during the project's duration will be eligible.
- **Consumables and Supplies:** Costs for materials, reagents, chemicals, software licenses, and other necessary consumables required for the research.
- **Data Collection and Analysis Costs:** Costs related to recruitment of participants, implementing the testing protocol, and software for data analysis.
- **Publication Costs:** Expenses related to publishing research findings, including open access fees.

- **Dissemination and Communication:** Costs for organizing workshops, conferences, and other activities to disseminate the research results.
- **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):** Costs associated with protecting research outcomes, such as patent applications.
- **Ethics Requirements:** Costs related to fulfilling ethical requirements, such as obtaining ethical approvals.
- **Data Management and Open Access:** Costs for preparing and sharing research data according to open access principles.
- **Recruitment Costs (in some cases):** Justified costs for recruiting research staff, especially for international researchers.
- **Visa and Work Permit Costs (for international researchers):** Expenses related to obtaining necessary permits for researchers moving to the host country.
- **Translation costs:** related to the research project.

Items not listed above may be considered on a case-by-case basis, unless they are specifically listed under ineligible costs.

Grant Recipients are solely responsible for identifying, budgeting for, and remitting any taxes, duties, or similar charges arising under applicable tax laws in connection with the implementation of the project. The IPC is not liable for such tax-related costs and cannot reclaim them itself. Grant Recipients are therefore required to budget on a gross basis, inclusive of all applicable taxes.

2.5.2 INELIGIBLE COSTS

Generally, excessive, unnecessary, or careless expenditures are not eligible for funding. Also, costs that contradict the purpose of this Grant as outlined under section 2 are not eligible. Additionally, please note that for reporting purposes, informal and illegible receipts and invoices related to costs incurred during implementation will not be eligible for funding.

Examples of ineligible costs:

- Per diem allowances;
- Excessive overhead costs arising from service agreements with universities or other institutions, including indirect personnel costs;
- Costs around building infrastructure which are not directly linked to the project; and
- Costs around customised pieces of equipment that would benefit individual participants in the study (for example, prosthetic devices, wheelchair and other adaptive equipment).

The IPC reserves the right to determine which costs are considered ineligible during application review and during review of annual reporting/audits.

2.6 APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the Grant, an online application form ([link](#)) must be completed and supplemented with additional documents within the identified timeframe.

For the successful completion of the form, it is strongly recommended to first gather all the necessary information to complete the application.

2.6.1 APPLICATION FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS

The form is envisaged to consist of the following sections:

- Identification of the applicant;
- Research project title and summary (including details on the targeted Para sport(s), impairment group(s) and, if applicable, the stage within the conceptual framework for classification research);
- Project details including:
 - objectives of the project;
 - rationale towards how it supports a Para sport's classification system;
 - detailed research methodology including hypothesis, research design, data collection strategies, study participants, approach to data analysis;
 - timeline of activities;
 - key performance indicators;
- collaborators or partners;
- budget details (with proposed costs being quoted in Euros; the [Oanda Currency Converter](#) can be used for an accurate exchange rate);
- endorsement letter(s) from IPC member organisation(s);
- ethical approval or the application to obtain such (in the latter case, proof of approval must be provided to the IPC once obtained or the application may be denied and/or considered incomplete);
- confirmation of secured funding in addition to the funding requested for this project (not mandatory, but desirable); and
- information on previously secured funding (if applicable).

Instructions: Please read carefully the Grant guideline document before completing the application as well as the details in the application form. When completing the form, it is recommended to print and/or save the application form for documentation purposes; the option to do so is available after pressing the 'submit' button.

Please ensure that the final application form and the budget proposal are submitted by one of the legal representatives of the respective organisation, taking into consideration the information related to the eligibility of costs described in sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 above.

2.7 SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be carried out by the Selection Committee, which is appointed by the IPC.

The Selection Committee will assess the criteria listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Selection criteria

Criteria	Sub-criteria
Scientific Rigor & Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear research question or hypothesis related to classification. • Well-justified methodology. • Evidence-based approach, including data collection, statistical analysis, and ethical considerations.
Impact on Athlete Classification & Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to ensure fair competition within the sport. • Potential to improve classification accuracy and consistency. • Addresses gaps or challenges in the current classification system.
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novelty of the approach, concept, or technological integration or advancements. • Potential to introduce new insights or methodologies to classification. • Differentiation from existing classification systems or methods.
Feasibility & Implementation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear timeline and milestones for development and implementation. • Logistical considerations. • Resource constraints. • Appropriate budget planning and allocation.
Team experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and qualifications of the project team. • Collaboration with relevant experts, institutions, or governing bodies. • Track record in similar research or classification-related work.

- The IPC reserves the right to update the selection criteria and scoring at any point during the first and second Grant selection periods, in which case the IPC will inform the applicants and update the Grant scheme.
- In addition to the criteria in Table 2, the Selection Committee will have the right to exercise discretion in approving the applications and distributing the funding in respect to the following identified priorities:
 - Split across eligible impairments groups (PI, VI, II);
 - Sports on the Paralympic Games programme and outside of the Games programme;
 - Individual and team sports, summer and winter;
 - Identified risk areas, particularly with compliance with the Code;
 - Spread across different stages of the conceptual framework for classification research;
 - Spread across development of new methods and tools and reviewing the existing ones;
 - Any other criteria and/or priorities that the Selection Committee and the IPC identify.
- Based on the assessment of the selection criteria, the budget bands and the available funding for the first round of applications, as well as the discretion to prioritise, a list of approved applications will be announced.
- The selection process is ordinarily envisaged to be completed within one month of the deadline for the application period. Exceptions to this may apply, for example, in cases where the applicant is requested to revise the application.
- During the selection process, the IPC will reserve an opportunity to contact the applicants with a request for further information, clarification, or with identification of potential collaboration opportunities. This may lead to revised project applications being considered.
- Following the selection process, feedback will be shared with all applicants, with the following outcomes as an option:
 - **Approved:** IPC approves to grant funding to the submitted project application;
 - **Revision / Pending:** IPC requests changes or clarification in order to further assess the project application; or
 - **Rejected:** IPC rejects the application due to not meeting the criteria, submitting sub-standard application, or for other reasons at the discretion of the IPC.
- The IPC reserves the right to share only the final decision with the applicant, and/or a more detailed assessment against the selection criteria at the IPC's discretion.
- The process will be repeated during the second round of applications.

3 GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

Following the communication of the application outcome, the Grant recipient will have a period of four weeks to present the required documents (e.g. bank number, Institution agreement, contract, signatures), to receive the first instalment equalling to 80% of budget and to start the project implementation.

The duration of each project will depend on the proposed timelines and approval of the IPC, with a potential project span between July 2025 and October 2028. Minimum recommended project duration is 12 months.

3.1 AGREEMENTS

Following the communication of the application outcome, the Grant recipient and the IPC will sign a Grant Agreement that contains the terms of the Grant.

A template agreement will be developed and shared by the IPC.

3.2 CHANGES TO APPROVED APPLICATIONS

Should it become necessary to make any changes to the approved activities, budget, implementation timeframes, beneficiaries etc., the Grant recipient is required to seek pre-approval from the IPC.

Should there be other delays, challenges with the implementation or any other circumstances that affect the delivery of the Grant, the Grant recipient is required to notify the IPC.

3.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Regardless of the project duration, all projects must submit reports mid-way through the project and at the end of the project. Additionally, for multi-year long projects, further reports will be requested at the start of each year (i.e., in January 2027 and January 2028).

Reporting is mandatory and is carried out through an online survey completed by the responsible person, who must be designated as such by the successful applicant.

The final report (a standardised template will be provided) will have a 3-month period timeline for delivery after the end of the project execution. It will cover the achievements of the proposal, outcomes and financial expenses. This report will be assessed and approved by the responsible department at the IPC, ordinarily within a period of 60 days.

3.4 REPORTING

Grant recipients must submit a narrative and financial report to the IPC according to the timelines listed in section above. A link to the online reporting form will be made available to the IF/IOSD upon signature of the Grant Agreement. The online report form requests research outcomes as well as the financial expenses report.

For the financial reporting, for any expenses in currencies other than Euro, please note that the Euro exchange rate to be used in the financial report must correspond to the rate that was used by the bank at the time of the Grant transfer (i.e. the rate used by the bank to convert the Grant transfer into local currency).

Complete and accurate books and records as well as all original supporting documents must be kept by the Grant recipients. The Grant recipients must keep all original receipts, or legible copies, of all purchases made in relation to the Classification research grant in an electronic format that prevents changes to the file (for example protected PDF files. The IPC reserves the right to request receipts and/or any other supporting documents for any Grant expenses).

Should Grant recipients not fulfil the reporting requirements, it will receive an invoice to pay the determined amount back to the IPC. In case of IPC members, should the invoice remain unpaid, the relevant member sanction process will be initiated.

3.5 AUDIT RIGHT

The IPC reserves the right to request additional documents (i.e., invoices, receipts) to support the narrative and financial reports. The IPC, also, reserves the right to withhold payments if it suspects the improper or ineffective use of funds.

4 DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND RESULTS

The IPC will provide an opportunity for the Grant recipients to present their research outcomes at dedicated forums, conferences and meetings. A targeted classification research forum is scoped to be organised in 2027-2028 to serve as an opportunity to disseminate knowledge, network and explore further opportunities to collaborate on classification research. The goal of this forum is to bring together IPC members and researchers to discuss the future of classification, guided by data-driven results from the Grant projects and other independent research within the field. A bi-annual VISTA Conference is another platform that can be utilised to share and present the progress and outcomes of the Grant projects. Other conferences and seminars within the field are available.

A key expectation for Grant recipients is the public dissemination of their research outcomes through publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals and presentations at both international and national conferences, while ensuring appropriate protection and acknowledgment of intellectual property rights associated with the research.

The IPC will have the right to refer and/or use any of the research projects and/or findings of Grant recipients in its own publications and material, without infringing any proprietary rights.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of difficulties completing the Grant application form, or if you have questions, please contact the IPC at classificationresearch@paralympic.org before the submission deadline.

6 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following documents may be useful in preparing the Grant applications:

- 1- [2025 IPC Classification Code and International Standards](#)
- 2- [Classifying the evidence for evidence-based classification in Paralympic sport](#)
- 3- [Position Statement on background and scientific rationale for classification in Paralympic sport](#)
- 4- [IPC Classification website](#)