



**WADA Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group (SSREAG)  
Meeting  
14 September 2021  
Meeting Outcomes**

**MEMBERS**

Rob DONOVAN (Chair)  
Thierry ZINTZ  
Susan BACKHOUSE  
Gretchen LOWERISON  
Sian CLANCY  
Kim NOLTE  
Andrew HEYES  
Leonardo José MATARUNA DOS SANTOS  
Derwin CHAN

**WADA**

Tony CUNNINGHAM  
Kelsey MARTIN

**OBSERVERS**

David PAVOT  
Samuel ST-MARTIN

The [Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group](#) met virtually on 14 September 2021. The main objectives for the meeting were to provide an update on developments since the last meeting and to discuss a focus of activities for social science research (SSR) for year 2 of the SSR Strategy.

The outcomes and key summary of agreements made by the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group are outlined below.

1. Professor Rob Donovan (University of Western Australia, Australia) chaired the meeting and welcomed the members of the Social Science Research Expert Advisory Group (SSREAG) – Prof. Dr. Thierry Zintz (Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium), Prof. Susan Backhouse (Leeds Beckett University, UK), Dr. Gretchen Lowerison (Coreidea Innovation Inc./Bishop's University, Canada), Dr. Sian Clancy (DFSNZ, New Zealand), Dr. Kim Nolte (University of Pretoria, South Africa), Mr. Andrew Heyes (University of Birmingham, UK), Dr. Derwin Chan (Education University of Hong Kong), Dr. Leonardo José Mataruna dos Santos (Canadian University of Dubai, UAE), as well as the observer, Prof. David Pavot, holder of the [Research Chair on Anti-Doping in Sport](#), based at the Université de Sherbrooke in partnership with WADA.

2. SSREAG members stated no conflicts of interest. Members reached consensus and agreed to keep the same Conflict of Interest policy. Supplemental text to the policy will be added to reflect the new structures of the WADA Grant Program.
3. SSREAG was presented with an update on the status of all 2021 SSR Grant Program projects. All projects have been confirmed, post the approval at the May 2021 Executive Committee meeting, and are in the final stages of research agreement signatures and payment authorizations.
4. SSREAG was updated on the year one progress of the SSR Strategy 2020-2024 and the focus for year two for each strategic priority.
5. An update was provided on the 2021 -2022\_SSREAG Work Plan that will guide the work of the group for the remainder of 2021 and 2022. The Work Plan relates directly to Working Groups comprised of members of the SSREAG that were established after the inaugural meeting of the group in February 2021 to support the implementation of the SSR Strategy.
  - a. The Review Panel will be primarily responsible for reviewing and analyzing applications to the 2022 Grant Program to feed into the deliberations of SSREAG. The Review Panel proposed to keep the structure of the Grant Program the same as 2021, with minor updates to improve efficiency in the applications process.
  - b. The Research Translation Working Group will provide advice and guidance, supporting WADA Education Department to finalize a Dissemination Plan for research in 2021. This will help provide greater access to research findings for WADA stakeholders including not only practitioners and researchers, but athletes, media and the general public.
  - c. The key priority of the Regional Development Working Group is to support the development of research capabilities and increase access to research opportunities in traditionally underfunded regions. Activities, including regional webinars, will focus on these objectives.
  - d. The University Development Working Group's activities will be more focused in years two and three of the SSR Strategy, seeking to forge stronger links with the university sector and promoting engagement with anti-doping organizations to improve industry related, and industry-embedded, research.
6. SSREAG discussed different opportunities to enable broader access to research, such as open access journals, pre-print publications and funds to support publication of research. A possible partnership with a journal was discussed, with both advantages and reservations expressed about such a relationship. These various opportunities will continue to be examined and discussed further in future meetings.
7. SSREAG was updated on a planned joint Call-for-Proposals with Fonds de recherche du Quebec (FRQ) with further details to follow after a planned meeting in October.

8. SSREAG was updated on the [SSR Collaboration Platform](#). A [Communique](#) was published on [27 April 2021](#) to promote social science research programs of different international organizations. A survey was also launched at the same time to solicit feedback from researchers and organizations who conduct and use research related to sport integrity. The results of the survey which received 361 responses, are currently being analyzed and will be presented at the next meeting before being published.
9. SSREAG was presented with an update and initial findings of a WADA-led research project focused on athlete vulnerabilities to doping in line with its [Strategic Plan](#). The project is being conducted in partnership with Sherbrooke University, with support from MITACS. To date, a literature review on the research topic has been completed and a survey targeting sports organizations was launched in April to gather their perspectives of athlete vulnerabilities. 574 responses from 89 countries and 35 sports were received and are currently being analyzed and will be published in due course. The members shared their enthusiasm for the project and its interest in the findings thus far.
10. SSREAG agreed that their next meeting will be held in December 2021.