CIES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY NETWORK

IN COLLABORATION WITH FIFA

Pillai University
From Knowledge to Creation

PILLAI / FIFA / CIES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME IN SPORTS MANAGEMENT

9TH EDITION | 2027–2028

INDIA

WELCOME

Pillai University is proud to associate with one of the finest university networks in the world – the FIFA/CIES University Network – to offer the PILLAI/FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management in India.

Now in its 9th edition, the programme stands as a testament to sustained excellence, having successfully contributed to the development of skilled sports management professionals in India. Established by FIFA and CIES – global leaders in football governance and academic research in sport – this programme combines rich academic content, real-world problem-solving projects, and international collaboration, making it one of the most sought-after courses for aspiring sports professionals worldwide.

Over the years, our alumni have gone on to play significant roles across the sporting landscape – working with leagues, clubs, governing bodies, and sports enterprises in India and beyond. Their journeys stand as a reflection of the programme's quality, relevance, and industry alignment. As we enter this new edition, we look forward to our future cohorts achieving even greater milestones and shaping the next phase of growth in the sports industry.

With the rapid rise of professional leagues, clubs, and sports infrastructure across India, the need for formal education in sports management has never been greater. The FIFA/CIES International Programme, with its globally standardised curriculum and high academic benchmarks, continues to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and industry exposure required to excel in the evolving sports ecosystem. As we enter the 9th edition, Pillai University remains committed to further strengthening this global network and contributing to the advancement of sports management education in India.

With its proven pedigree and growing legacy, the PILLAI/FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management continues to play a vital role in creating the next generation of sports professionals who will drive India's sporting ambitions forward and strengthen the overall sports ecosystem.

I thank you for taking this important step and applying to this globally renowned programme. I look forward to reviewing your application and welcoming you to the 9th edition.

Franav Pillai
Director
PILLAI/FIFA/CIES International Programme
in Sports Management

THE TRAINING OF SPORTS MANAGERS: A NECESSITY

In today's world, sport is confronted with a constantly increasing number of challenges, and a working environment that grows more complex with each passing day.

One can mention poor management of many sports-related entities, the ensuing lack of credibility, a demand for transparency from many partners, the gap between the richest sports organisations and those that have limited resources, responding to increasingly effective doping methods and the threat from illegal sports betting to the integrity of sports results. This non exhaustive list is followed by the challenges of obtaining support from commercial sponsors, the growing complexity related to the organisation of sports events, the migration of young athletes to rich countries, the legal frameworks which grow in size and sophistication day after day, the emergence of new technologies, the development of eSports, the consequences of the pandemic, the global financial uncertainty and the ongoing fight against the still too common threats from racism and nationalistic behaviour in stadiums and on local playing fields.

For all of these reasons, sports managers must, more than ever before, be able to deal with complex situations involving many challenges. Education, therefore, remains one of the best ways to achieve this.

Created in 2004, the FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management aims to provide present and future sports leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to better understand their working environment and to deal with the types of situations modern sports organisation can be confronted with.

The FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management is delivered worldwide by 22 universities, forming part of the FIFA/CIES International University Network.

This innovative network allows students, alumni, professors, experts, coordinators and speakers to interact and share their experiences on both a national and global level.

CIES is proud to partner with Pillai University in the organisation of a new edition of the FIFA/CIES International Programme in India and to contribute to the wider development of sports management in both this country and those on its borders. We can already highlight the excellent work accomplished by Pillai University since the beginning of our cooperation.

Prof. Denis Oswald
CIES Director

PILLAI UNIVERSITY

BUILDING TOMORROW'S LEADERS TODAY

Mahatma Education Society's Pillai Group of Institutions, established in 1970, was founded with the vision of bringing about social and economic transformation through the proactive personal development of every student who became a part of its ecosystem. Under the visionary leadership of Dr. K. M. Vasudevan Pillai and Dr. Daphne Pillai, the trust has grown from a single school into a multi-institution, multi-location educational group delivering quality education from kindergarten to postgraduate levels. Today, Mahatma Education Society educates over 30,000 students annually across its 48 institutions, spread over six campuses in Maharashtra, India.

In recognition of its decades of excellence in education, innovation, and institutional development, the Government of Maharashtra has granted the establishment of Pillai University in 2026. This significant milestone marks the evolution of the Pillai Group of Institutions into a full-fledged university, reinforcing its commitment to academic excellence, research, and holistic student development on a larger and more impactful scale.

The Pillai Group has consistently been known for its innovative teaching practices and world-class infrastructure, while also fostering a strong sporting culture across its institutions. It is a matter of immense pride that the group has produced numerous national and international athletes who have participated in prestigious global platforms such as the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Indian Premier League (IPL), and Indian Super League (ISL). Further reinforcing its commitment to sports excellence, the Government of India has entrusted the group with operating a Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centre at one of its campuses. The centre currently provides high-performance training to athletes from across the country.

The FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management will be conducted under the aegis of Pillai University's Pillai Institute of Management Studies and Research (PIMSR). Established in 1998, PIMSR is one of Mumbai's premier management institutions, offering postgraduate management education and shaping industry-ready professionals for decades.

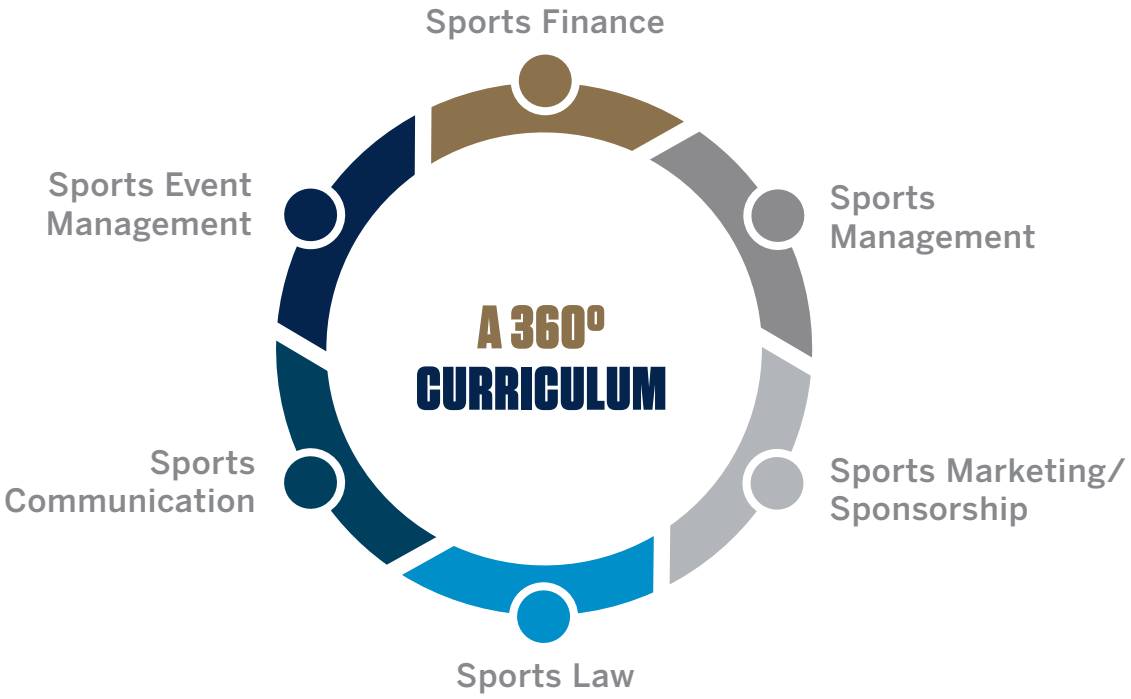
With the transition to Pillai University, the programme is further strengthened by enhanced academic autonomy, global collaborations, and a forward-looking multidisciplinary approach – ensuring that students receive a world-class education aligned with the evolving demands of the global sports industry.

For more information, visit Pillai University's website: https://pillai.edu.in

THE FIFA/CIES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

GENERAL PRESENTATION

The FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management covers all sports. It provides training in 6 essential fields of sports management, namely communication, law, marketing/sponsorship, management, finance and event management.



SESSIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL SPORTS INDUSTRY EXPERTS

During each edition of the FIFA/CIES International Programme, CIES offers students the opportunity to meet industry experts from different backgrounds (e.g. IOC, FIFA, other international federations, continental entities, prestigious clubs, sports event organisers, etc.). These special sessions and lectures also provide an opportunity to exchange viewpoints on current issues in the world of sport and to reflect on how these issues can impact on national sport.

OBJECTIVES

1. To give students a comprehensive view of sports management.
2. To adapt the curriculum to national and regional requirements in sports thanks to the skills and expertise of our academic partners.
3. To combine theoretical education with practical case studies.
4. To help students acquire the tools and knowledge that they can use in their daily sports environment.
5. To organise each year a cycle of special sessions which are delivered by international sports industry experts.
6. To build a network of expertise at both national and international levels.

WHO IS THE FIFA/CIES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME INTENDED FOR?

- **Managers and individuals active in the sports world on a professional or amateur basis** (e.g. national and international federations, continental organisations, NOCs, regional associations, clubs, ministries, municipalities, sport-related companies) who are seeking to broaden or refresh their knowledge of sports management and adapt it to the new realities of the world of sport.
- **Current and former athletes** from the different sports disciplines.
- **Professionals from all backgrounds** (lawyers, economists, journalists, etc.) who wish to diversify, broaden or give a new focus to their professional horizons.
- **Young graduates** who wish to complement their existing academic training with a specific qualification in the field of sports management or wish to start a career in the world of sport.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

OVERVIEW

Calendar
Inauguration 18th September, 2027

- Block One runs from
  18th September to 26th September, 2027
- Block Two runs from
  4th December to 12th December, 2027
- Block Three runs from
  26th February to 5th March, 2028
- Block Four runs from
  6th to 10th June, 2028

Convocation
August/September 2028

Application deadline
08th June 2027

Format
Each of the six modules will comprise approximately 25 hours of teaching and learning activities, to be completed over one academic year. The mode of delivery for 2027-2028 will be by way of a block release system where students are required to attend classes at Pillai University for a block of nine (9) days (Saturday to Sunday) at three different times in 2027-2028 and a fourth block of five days in June 2028.

Language
English

Places available
40 students

Scholarship
A few part-scholarships are available every year and will be awarded based solely on financial need.
We are also proud to announce that Soroptimist Welfare Association (an NGO that works for the welfare of girls and women) has partnered with Pillai University to offer financial assistance through THREE scholarships to needy and meritorious female candidates to pursue the PILLAI/FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management for the academic year 2027-28. Candidates must fill the entire application form and submit a statement of purpose to be eligible for the scholarship. You can access the form by clicking here.

Fees
INR 1,95,000 (inclusive of comprehensive CIES manuals for each module, class hand-outs, international, national and local guest speakers, official excursions, graduation function). Course fee for international students is USD 3,500. Once accepted, and to secure your place, an initial non-refundable payment of INR 75,000 (USD 1,500 for international students) is to be paid within a week of declaration of admission list. The remaining fees must be paid in full no later than 31st August 2027.
An additional charge of INR 15,000 (USD 150 for International Students) will be levied for meals provided in the campus during the 4 blocks.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

COURSE LOCATION

Pillai University
Pillai Institute of Management Studies and Research
Dr. K. M. Vasudevan Pillai Campus, Sector 16,
New Panvel, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra
India - 410 206

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates must hold at least a Bachelor's Degree from a recognized Indian University or a degree from a foreign University as recognized by Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and must be able to demonstrate an interest in sports. Shortlisted candidates are required to undergo a compulsory admission interview with an academic representative of Pillai and a representative of the FIFA/CIES University Network. Since classes are in English, candidates must possess a good command of the language. For exceptional cases* without a Bachelor's degree, candidates must hold at least a Diploma corresponding to at least three years of successfully completed secondary school education/higher secondary school education as certified by appropriate authorities.

* National/international ranked players / officials in active service.

ONLINE APPLICATION

For registrations please log on to:
https://fifacies.pimsr.ac.in/apply

ATTENDANCE AND EXAMINATIONS

Attendance of the four block weeks is compulsory and students must obtain a class attendance mark of not less than 95% for each module. This stipulation is over and above the other academic requirements for the successful completion of each module.
Should it happen that the programme has to revert to online classes the same attendance requirements stipulated above will apply.

KEY DATES

1. Sale of Application Forms: 05th January 2027
2. Last Date of Submission of Forms along with Statement of Purpose: 8th June 2027
3. Intimation of Interview Selection: 9th June 2027
4. Date of Interview: 11th & 12th June 2027
5. Declaration of Results: 14th June 2027
6. Submission of Part-Fee (non-refundable): 15th July 2027
7. Balance Fee Payment: 05th September 2027
8. Course Commencement: 18th September 2027

ACCOMMODATION

Please contact the official listed below for details.
Mr. Amritpal Singh Pannu
Tel: +918452977170
Email: apannu@mes.ac.in

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pillai University
Mobile: +919833709566 / +919323255600
Landline: +912265748000

KEY PEOPLE

Franav PILLAI
Programme Director

Celina JOY
Academic Coordinator &
Head of Communication module

Padmakshan PADMANABHAN
Administrative Coordinator

Rochak LANGER
Head of Event
Management module

Jitendra JOSHI
Head of Marketing module

Betty SIBIL
Head of Management module

Shardul BUVA
Head of Finance module

Srinivasan SAIMANI
Head of Law module

Shaji PRABHAKARAN
CIES Coordinator in India

APPLICATION FORM

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME IN SPORTS MANAGEMENT

PART I

1. Personal information & demographic data

First name _____ Surname _____

Nationality n°1 _____ Nationality n°2 _____

Country of residence _____ Mother tongue _____

Language spoken n°2 _____ Language spoken n°3 _____

Gender ☐ male ☐ female Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

2. Professional activity

Are you a former or current professional athlete? ☐ yes ☐ no

If 'yes', please specify In which sport ? _____

Are you currently employed/working? ☐ yes ☐ no

If 'yes', please specify Your job position _____

Your employer _____

Do you have a second employment/job? ☐ yes ☐ no

If 'yes', please specify Your second job position _____

Your second employer _____

Are you an entrepreneur in sport? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is any of your professional activity linked to football? ☐ yes ☐ no

Is any of your professional activity linked to other sports? ☐ yes ☐ no

3. Voluntary activity (present or past)

Any present or past volunteer activity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'yes', please specify Your voluntary position _____

Your voluntary institution _____

Is your voluntary activity linked to football? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is your voluntary activity linked to other sports? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Contact details & social networks

Mobile phone _____

E-mail _____ E-mail n° 2 _____

Social accounts e.g. Linkedin, FB, Twitter (https link) _____

Applications that are incomplete and do not include all required documentation and certification/notarization WILL NOT be considered.

APPLICATION FORM

PART II – ADDITIONAL DATA REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIVERSITY

1. Personal contact information (capital letters)

Home address

Postal code City Country

Place of birth

Where did you hear about the course?

Are you/were you a student at Mahatma Education Society (MES)?

If 'yes', please provide your course details while you were at MES

Please provide your Identification number

(A certified copy of identification document must be attached to this application)

2. Educational background

Please start with your highest qualification

(A certified copy of your matric/school leaving certificate must be included with your application)

College/School	Location	Period of study	Field of Study

Professional qualification

(Certified copies of certificates obtained must accompany the application)

Date obtained	Prof. firm or educ. institution	Qualification and subject	Result obtained

3. Please submit a Statement of Purpose (not exceeding 1000 words) that includes:

a) Your involvement with sports
b) Your reasons for enrolment to this course
c) Your future professional plans

Place and date Signature

Applications that are incomplete and do not include all required documentation and certification/notarization WILL NOT be considered.

THE FIFA/CIES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY NETWORK

PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

The FIFA/CIES International University Network today includes 22 universities, which deliver the FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management :

THE AMERICAS

- **1** UCA - Universidad Católica Argentina
  Buenos Aires, Argentina (2004)
- **2** UST - Universidad Santo Tomás
  Santiago de Chile, Chile (2006)
- **6** UCR - Universidad de Costa Rica
  San José, Costa Rica (2008)
- **7** UWI - The University of the West Indies
  Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago (2009)
- **10** UNIMET - Universidad Metropolitana
  Caracas, Venezuela (2010)
- **11** FGV - Fundação Getulio Vargas
  Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2010)
- **12** USMP - Universidad de San Martín de Porres
  Lima, Peru (2012)
- **17** UDLA - Universidad de Las Américas
  Quito, Ecuador (2019)
- **18** UPRM - Universidad de Puerto Rico
  Mayagüez, Puerto Rico (2021)
- **19** USA - Universidad Sergio Arboleda
  Bogotá, Colombia (2022)
- **22** TMU - Toronto Metropolitan University
  Toronto, Canada (2026)

AFRICA

- **3** UCAD - Université Cheikh Anta Diop
  Dakar, Senegal (2006)
- **4** MANDELA - Nelson Mandela University
  Gqeberha, South Africa (2007)
- **5** CU - Cairo University
  Cairo, Egypt (2007)
- **21** MSU - Midlands State University
  Harare, Zimbabwe (2025)

ASIA

- **8** BZU - Birzeit University
  Ramallah, Palestine (2009)
- **13** SUAD - Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi
  Abu Dhabi, UAE (2012)
- **16** PILLAI - Pillai University
  Mumbai, India (2019)
- **20** KSU - King Saud University
  Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2024)

EUROPE

- **9** URJC - Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
  Madrid, Spain (2010)
- **14** KU - Kozminski University
  Warsaw, Poland (2014)
- **15** HSE - Higher School of Economics
  Moscow, Russia (2014)

OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

The FIFA/CIES International University Network is based on the principles of partnership, mutual respect and openness. It allows many exchanges among students, teachers, experts, alumni and all the other participants who actively contribute to the Network.

To strengthen links between its members and to offer them new perspectives, the FIFA/CIES University Network has implemented two initiatives, which, over the years, have become central in creating a sense of community and helping to motivate participants: The FIFA/CIES University Network Prize and the FIFA/CIES University Network Scholarships.

7000+
Alumni

130+
Nationalities

90%
Involved in the sports industry

70%
Involved in football

FIFA headquarters, Zurich, Switzerland

ACTIVITIES

THE FIFA/CIES UNIVERSITY NETWORK PRIZE

The purpose of the FIFA/CIES University Network Prize is to reward the best group project presented by the partner universities. The Prize consists of a trip to Switzerland, which includes a visit to the CIES headquarters in Neuchâtel, as well as a day at the FIFA headquarters in Zurich with the "FIFA Master" students. During the visit, participants are also able to attend a series of presentations by FIFA managers.

THE FIFA/CIES UNIVERSITY NETWORK SCHOLARSHIPS

The FIFA/CIES University Network Scholarships allow FIFA/CIES International Programme alumni to finance their participation in the "FIFA Master" course (course registration fees, travel expenses, accommodation, etc.). Candidate applications must meet the criteria defined by CIES and the "FIFA Master" Scientific Committee.

Since the scholarship was created in 2012, over 55 students from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Palestine, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Zimbabwe, have all been awarded scholarships.

OTHER FIFA/CIES UNIVERSITY NETWORK PROJECTS

The FIFA/CIES University Network – with the support of its partners – regularly offers FIFA/CIES International Programme students and alumni the opportunity to attend conferences and seminars on various topical issues related to sports management, as well as the opportunity to attend various international sports competitions.

CIES UNIVERSITY NETWORK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (CIES-UNA)

OBJECTIVES

- To create links between the Alumni of the different FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management in the world.
- To promote relations within the FIFA/CIES University Network and to support activities linked to it.
- To promote the awareness and reputation of the FIFA/CIES International Programme in Sports Management, particularly in the sports industry.
- To represent the interest of the Alumni of the different FIFA/CIES International Programmes in Sports Management in the world.
- To create opportunities for them to meet and join in common activities including ongoing education and professional development.
- To encourage and facilitate networking, professional connections, career support, scholarship and mentorship opportunities.
- To support sports development projects and initiatives proposed by students and alumni.

CIES-UNA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Nasr EL DIN AZZAM
President – CU | Egypt

Taha DIAEY
Vice-President – CU | Egypt

Judith JIMÉNEZ DÍAZ
Vice-President – UCR | Costa Rica

Vincent SCHATZMANN
CIES representative

Vincent MONNIER
CIES representative

CIES – INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR SPORTS STUDIES

CREATING AN IMPACT ON THE WAY SPORT IS MANAGED WORLDWIDE

The International Centre for Sports Studies (CIES) is an independent study centre located in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. It was created as a Foundation in 1995 by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the University of Neuchâtel, the City and State of Neuchâtel.

Using a multi-disciplinary approach (law, sociology, geography, history and economy), CIES provides research and top-level education to the world of sport.

Since its creation, CIES has aimed to be a bridge between the worlds of research, education and sports organisations. It encourages the exchange of knowledge and experience between stakeholders from both academia and the international sports industry. Thanks to its international network of universities and experts, CIES supports and conducts research and education projects all around the world.

CIES RESEARCH

The research conducted by CIES examines sport from multiple angles, with an emphasis on Law, Sociology, Geography, History and Economics. The projects undertaken by CIES are part of both pure and applied research. CIES' research activity is mainly manifested through its publications and the conferences it organises and in which its collaborators actively participate. Moreover, the activities of the CIES Football Observatory and CIES Sports Intelligence have increased CIES' visibility and recognition around the world.

CIES EDUCATION

CIES offers top-level academic education throughout the world at both the national and international level. Moreover, CIES offers programmes for football executives, in collaboration with FIFA.

The CIES supports programmes for:

- Students wishing to deepen their educational background.
- Executives looking to further their education.
- Organisations wishing to hire a qualified graduate.
- Organisations or universities wishing to offer training programmes in sport management or continuing education to their staff.

CIES INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR SPORTS STUDIES

RESEARCH | EDUCATION

ACADEMIC EXECUTIVE

CIES headquarters, Neuchâtel, Switzerland

CIES OFFERS TOP-LEVEL ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES ALL OVER THE WORLD

FIFA MASTER

International Master (MA) in Management, Law and Humanities of Sport

- 3 Universities
- 3 Countries
- 1000 Contact Hours
- Full-Time Programme
- 700+ Alumni
- 90% of graduates working in the sports industry

FIFA/CIES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME IN SPORTS MANAGEMENT

- 22 Universities
- 22 Countries
- 150-200 Contact Hours
- Part-Time Programme
- 7000+ Alumni
- 70% of graduates involved in football

MASTER IN SPORTS LAW

- 1 University
- 1 Country
- 500 Contact Hours
- Full-Time Programme
- 250+ Alumni
- One of a kind in Switzerland

CIES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY NETWORK

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Pillai University
From Knowledge to Creation

Pillai University

#CIESIndia