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Welcome to the August BUCS Football Development update as we prepare for the start of the 2026/27 season. There is plenty happening across the network, with opportunities for university staff, student leaders, coaches and clubs to get involved ahead of the new academic year. This month's update includes registrations opening for our Football Development Network Day and Club Committee Leaders events, the return of our regional HE x County FA Working Groups, Women's Leadership Programme Accelerator opportunities, funding available across the wider game, and new opportunities to support and showcase university futsal. Please take a few minutes to review the updates below and share relevant opportunities with colleagues, students, clubs and partners across your networks.

UPDATES:

1. **[Registrations Open: BUCS Football Development Network Day 2026/27](#)**
2. **[Higher Education x County FA Working Groups – Save the Date for Meeting 1](#)**
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[Registrations Open: BUCS Football Development Network Day 2026/27](#)

Registrations are now open for the BUCS Football Development Network Day, taking place on Friday 11 September 2026 at Coventry Building Society Arena. Our first Football Development event of the new season will bring together university staff and students from across the sector to connect, share best practice and hear key updates on the development of football and futsal within higher education. This season, we are also inviting universities to bring their Football and Futsal Club Presidents, helping strengthen connections between university staff and student leaders ahead of the new academic year.

The day is free to attend and will include updates from the BUCS Football Development Team, shared learning from across the network, discussions around the evolving football landscape and information on programmes, opportunities and support available throughout 2026/27.

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Registration Link: <https://www.bucs.org.uk/events-page/football-development-network-day-2026-27.html>

Registration deadline: Friday 28 August 2026

Please reach out to [Sean Lofting](#)/ [Alai Ayyakannu](#) for any queries.

Higher Education x County FA Working Groups – Save the Date for Meeting 1

We're continuing to run our six Higher Education x County FA Working Groups this season, bringing together universities and County FAs across priority regions to share updates, collaborate locally and build stronger relationships between the sectors. The first meeting of the season for each group is confirmed for the following dates:

- **North-East** – Monday 7 September, 11:00
- **Yorkshire** – Wednesday 9 September, 11:00
- **Birmingham** – Wednesday 9 September, 13:00
- **Liverpool** – Thursday 10 September, 11:00
- **Manchester** – Thursday 10 September, 13:00
- **London** – Thursday 17 September, 10:30

Please make sure relevant university colleagues & CFA colleagues in your region have these dates in their diaries. If you want joining information and the link, please email kelvin.newell@bucs.org.uk

Registrations Open: Club Committee Leaders Events

Our Club Committee Leaders (CCL) Events are back this October, bringing student leaders together from across the country for a day of learning, networking, and sharing ideas to help drive their clubs forward. Registrations are now open, and you can find the event booking links below:

Dates and Venues:

- [Midlands](#): 8th October - City Ground, Nottingham
- [North](#): 13th October - St. James Park, Newcastle
- [South](#): 6th October - St Mary's, Southampton

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Key Information:

- Registration deadline (Students): **23 September 2026**
- Accreditation Lead Approval deadline: **30 September 2026**
- All attendees must be approved by their institution's Accreditation Lead by the deadline

Please encourage your club leaders to sign up and if you have any questions, please reach out to [Beth Edwards](#).

BUCS & FA Women's Leadership Programme: Accelerator Applications Open

Applications are now open for Learning & Development Accelerators for the BUCS and FA Women's Leadership Programme 2026/27, delivered in partnership with Women in Football. Accelerators play an important role in supporting female and non-binary university students aspiring to work in football, providing mentoring, coaching and tailored support throughout their personal and professional development journey. This is a great opportunity for colleagues from across football, sport and higher education who are passionate about developing people, mentoring future leaders and supporting the next generation of talent.

- The role is voluntary, with travel expenses covered alongside food and accommodation associated with programme delivery.
- Applications close at 12pm on Friday 28 August 2026.

Please visit the [BUCS website](#) to view the Accelerator Role Profile, Recruitment Pack and Line Manager Recommendation & Supporting Statement Form, as well as the application link.

For any questions, please contact [Beth Edwards](#) or fawlp@bucs.org.uk.

Aldi Sports Fund - Grassroots Funding Opportunity

Aldi has launched its new UK-wide Aldi Sports Fund, offering eligible grassroots sports clubs funding of up to £3,000 to support local delivery. Funding can contribute towards essential costs including equipment, kit, coaching, training programmes and facility hire. While this opportunity is aimed at grassroots clubs, we encourage universities to share it with community football and futsal clubs within your networks, particularly clubs you partner with through student placements, volunteering, coaching

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or community engagement. It could provide valuable additional investment to strengthen local provision and create further opportunities for participants and volunteers.

For clubs in England and Wales, applications require a short submission of no more than 200 words outlining the club, how the funding would be used and the impact it would have on the local community. Funding levels and application windows vary by location, so please review the full eligibility criteria before applying.

Find out more and apply through the [Aldi Sports Fund](#) webpage.

BUCS Members Fantasy Football League 2026/27

The BUCS Members Fantasy Football League is back for the new season! Plenty of BUCS staff and colleagues from across the membership have already joined, and we'd love to see even more of the network involved this year. Whether you're carefully planning every transfer or just backing your favourite players, it's a great way to add a little friendly competition across the BUCS community throughout the season. Make sure you create your team and join the league before the first matchday deadline at 18:30 on Friday 21 August.

- League join code: **lu4j09**

Good luck for the season – and let the bragging rights begin!

Football Foundation - More Funding Opportunities

As universities plan their football and futsal provision for the new academic year, we encourage institutions to explore the range of funding opportunities available through the Football Foundation. Funding is available across a variety of facility and infrastructure areas, including goalposts, portable floodlights, 3G pitches, small-sided facility improvements, changing pavilions and clubhouses, fencing, grass pitch improvements and maintenance equipment, alongside specific programmes such as the Lionesses HERe to Play Fund.

Some opportunities may be accessible to educational establishments where facilities are available for community use, so universities with community-facing football facilities or partnerships are encouraged to review the available funds and eligibility requirements.

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Explore the current funding opportunities and guidance here: [Football Foundation: What We Fund](#)

Total Futsal - New Platform Supporting the BUCS Futsal Community

We're pleased to share the launch of Total Futsal, a new independent media platform founded by BUCS alumnus Ben Stevens, who developed his passion for the game while at the University of Liverpool. Launching on 19 August, Total Futsal aims to increase the visibility of English futsal through dedicated journalism, storytelling and coverage from across the game. A key focus will be shining a greater spotlight on the BUCS futsal community, including its clubs, players and stories, helping showcase an area of the game that is continuing to grow across universities.

- **To mark the launch, Total Futsal is offering BUCS futsal clubs and members their first month of membership free.**

Universities are encouraged to share the opportunity with their futsal clubs, committees, players and wider networks. Total Futsal is also keen to hear directly from universities interested in collaborating on stories or showcasing the work happening within their futsal programmes.

For collaborations or story ideas, contact Ben Stevens, Founder & Journalist, at ben.s@totalfutsal.news.

Job Opportunity: Football & Futsal Development Officer - UA92

UA92 is currently recruiting for a Football & Futsal Development Officer to join the Sport92 team. The role offers an exciting opportunity to support and develop football and futsal provision within a higher education environment, working across participation, competition and wider student development. We encourage you to share the vacancy with anyone in your networks who may be a good fit.

If prospective applicants would like an informal conversation before applying, they can contact Danielle Rodwell-Farrell at danielle.farrell@ua92.ac.uk.

View the role and apply here: <https://ua92.ac.uk/about-ua92/work-at-ua92/football-futsal-development-officer/>

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Football For Future 2026 Summer Academy

Football For Future is launching its 2026 Summer Academy, a two-day immersive football experience for young people aged 14–21, combining practical football activity with an introduction to careers, opportunities and some of the wider issues shaping the modern game. The programme includes UEFA-qualified coaching, a Premier League stadium tour, a non-league club experience, media and match-reporting activities, a professional player Q&A, and sessions exploring areas including player representation, sustainability and social impact.

Participants will also receive an accredited certificate, professional sports photography, lunch and local transport as part of the experience. The cost is £120 per day. Universities are encouraged to share the opportunity with relevant students and wider networks, particularly young people interested in developing their understanding of football both on and off the pitch.

Find out more and book a place: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/footballforfuture>
