



ATHLETE ACCELERATE IMMERSION EXPERIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

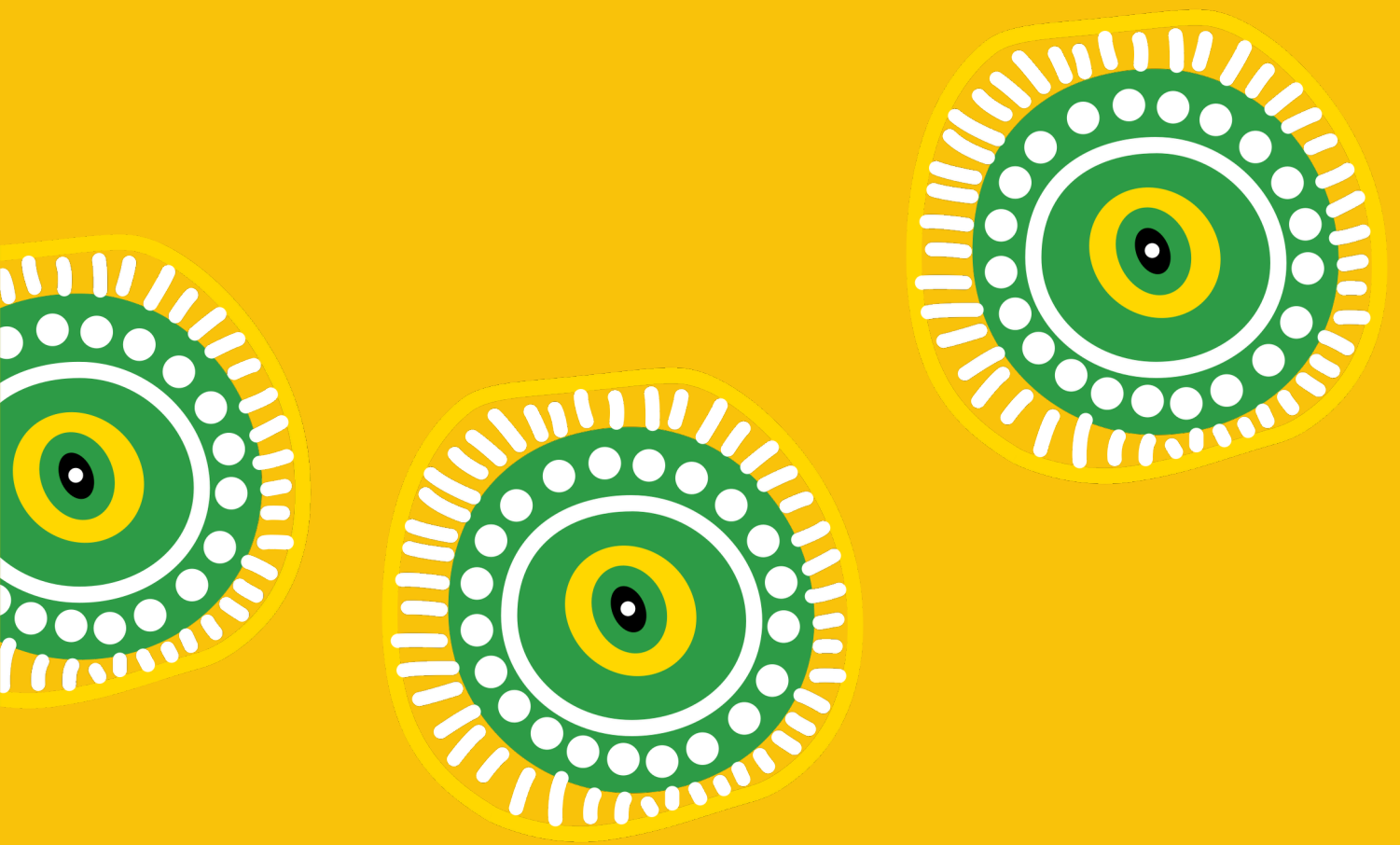
Grant Guidelines 2024-25



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission



AIS



AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its offices are located, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the people of the Yugambeh Nation and the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The ASC extends this acknowledgment to all the Traditional Custodians of the lands and First Nations Peoples throughout Australia and would like to pay its respects to all Elders past, present and future. The ASC recognises the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrates the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



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INTRODUCTION

The AIS Athlete Accelerate Program assists retired women athletes transition into roles in sport by providing them with personal, career, and skill-building development. The program is evolving to also offer an employment-enhancing immersion experience, which allows the participants to develop role-specific expertise, broaden their networks, and connect with leaders and potential mentors in the sports system. This experience can help to address the challenges faced by both retired athletes and the sports sector, which is seeking to benefit from the employment of women and work towards creating a more equitable and diverse sport system.

Objectives of the Program

The AIS Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Grants Program aims to:

- Increase career pathway options for women athletes to transition into the sport sector workforce.
- Increase the number and visibility of women athletes in leadership roles in sport by providing an accelerated pathway to these roles.
- Leverage the talent and experience of high performance women athletes by providing them with opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, leadership and networks to contribute to the sports industry.
- The immersion experience will build on the information delivered during the Accelerate Program by providing participants with hands-on experience to apply new knowledge in a specific sport sector role.

Important dates

Activity	Key date
Applications open	Monday 2 December 2025 9:00am (AEDT)
Applications close	Friday 30 May 2025 5:00pm (AEST)
Type of grant opportunity	Demand-driven (eligibility-based)
Immersion experiences to be completed by	30 November 2025

*Applications must be submitted **before** 5:00pm AEST. Late or incomplete applications will **not** be accepted.

*Applications will be assessed on a monthly basis. Applicants will be notified via email regarding the outcome of their submission. However, applications may close early if the funding allocation is exhausted due to the demand-driven nature of the grant activity.

Please note the time differences for each state below:

- QLD, NSW, ACT, VIC, TAS: 5:00pm
- SA & NT: 4:30pm
- WA: 3:00pm



Contact

For any questions about the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program:

Email: accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au

Business hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am-5:00pm (AEST) excluding national and VIC holidays

Website: www.ais.gov.au/career-and-education/ais-athlete-accelerate-program

GRANT GUIDELINES

Overview

The AIS Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Grant is designed to provide employment-enhancing experiences for current and alumni AIS Athlete Accelerate Program participants in the Australian sport sector. The immersion experience will enhance their development in role-specific expertise, broaden their networks, and enable connection with leaders and potential mentors in the sports system.

Activities and experiences covered under the Grants Program must show a demonstratable connection with personal, career, and skill-building development. While not an exhaustive list, examples of experiences covered by the Program may include the following:

- Michelle is a coach seeking to enhance her coaching expertise by attending the 2024 U21 World Championships in Morocco. This opportunity will allow Michelle to gain international coaching experience, observe top competitors, and build professional networks. The Grant can assist by providing financial support during this crucial developmental phase.
- Anna is seeking to enhance her expertise in managing neurodivergent athletes by attending practice and game sessions with a NSO and Professional Sporting Organisation. This opportunity will assist in gaining insights from their successful programs, developing new skills, and building professional networks. The Grant can help by funding the necessary expenses for this important learning experience.
- Jasmine is the Assistant Coach and an Australian Senior Women's Team and Head Coach for an Australian U18 Youth Girls squad. She wishes to enhance her coaching skills by attending 5 camps and 4 international tours in 2024, including trips to Chile, New Zealand, India and Singapore. This opportunity will allow her to gain mentorship, upskill in game technology, and manage athletes in high-pressure environments. The Grant can support by covering the costs associated with these valuable commitments.
- Kylie is passionate about leadership and wellbeing and their impact on workplace culture. Her immersion experience involves developing a pilot leadership and wellbeing program at a State Sporting Organisation, which she aims to pitch to other sporting organisations. This will include reviewing the current environment, exploring best practices, and designing, implementing and evaluation the program. The Grant can assist by funding the expenses necessary for this significant project.

Funding

Funding for this program has been provided through the Australian Government's 2023/24 Federal budget. The program funding has been designed to support the applicant to engage in an Immersion Experience with an approved organisation. Funding is available in two forms:

- funding provided directly to the applicant; or
- funding provided to the organisation.

A total funding pool of \$50,000 (GST exclusive) is available for allocation through the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program. The maximum grant amount available to any individual or organisation is \$10,000 (GST exclusive). The final grant amount will be determined by the Grant Approver (EGM, ASC) as part of the assessment process. The amounts may vary between applicants and may not be the full amount applied for. Successful applicants are required to enter an Agreement with the ASC. A one-off payment will be paid upon signing of an agreement.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program, the applicant must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Current or Alumni member of AIS Athlete Accelerate Program.
- Have a letter of support from an eligible organisation that they are engaging with for the Immersion Experience, confirming the organisation's commitment to the applicant and the experience.
- Have a professional development and/or career plan that demonstrates how the Immersion Experience will benefit their career pathway.
- Has no outstanding Women Leaders in Sport program acquittal and/or grant reporting requirements to the ASC.
- Is not currently employed by the ASC.
- Supporting organisation is not named by the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse on its list of "Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme".

Please note:

- Eligible organisations include local, state, or national sporting organisation, national sporting organisation for people with disability (recognised in the [Australian Sports Directory](#)), National Institute Network, the Australia Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia, or Commonwealth Games Australia.
- The ASC may at its sole discretion, offer an applicant special consideration if an eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances. Please contact accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au if you have any questions about your eligibility.



Letter of support

A letter of support must accompany the individual grant application (uploaded at time of application). The letter of support should be written by an Executive Level member of the Organisation (i.e., CEO, COO, HP Manager).

Please limit the supporting letter to one page.

Please note that you cannot be the endorser of your own application. If you cannot find a suitable endorser, please contact accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au for guidance.

The below information must be provided in the letter of support:

- Confirmation of the Immersion Experience on behalf of the organisation.
- Confirmation from the Organisation that any funding awarded directly to the organisation under the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program is to be used solely for the purpose of the Program.
- Clearly outline how the organisation will support the applicant during the experience and, where possible, potential future opportunities.
- Clearly outline how this opportunity will provide the applicant with a meaningful experience.
- The organisation to identify what their contribution may be to the experience (e.g. in-kind, financial, travel, accreditation, etc.)

Requirements

Successful grant recipients will be required to do the following:

- Enter into a grant agreement with the ASC and abide by the terms and conditions (Appendix 1)
- Promptly notify and seek approval from the ASC if you are no longer involved in the supported activity, if the supported activity has been delayed/postponed due to circumstances, and/or there has been a change of activity type.
- Complete an acquittal report and provide proof of payment using the template provided by the ASC, including receipts within 30 days of completing the experience.
- Complete a reflection report (both the applicant and the organisation).
- Participate in a program evaluation to enable program development past the pilot stage.

Eligible expenditure items

This funding must go towards one or a combination of the below items:

- Travel costs for the purpose of participating in a training camp, competition, event, or other approved experience (including domestic and international, flights, accommodation, meals, and incidentals).
- Income (including to supplement time taken away from the applicant's substantive role).
- Parental support costs (babysitting, childcare, costs associated with the child travelling to the experience including travel, equipment hire, food, and having a partner/relative present as a carer.)

Ineligible expenditure items

The funding is not available for the following:

- Short courses, professional development programs, university fees or university degrees.
- Coaching equipment.
- Ongoing membership fees.
- Materials such as stationery, IT equipment, office equipment or sporting equipment.
- One-off conference fees.
- Competition fees.
- Software licenses.

Please note that additional travel and accommodation support will be considered for those living in rural or remote areas, and the estimated costs will need to be provided in the application form.

PROCESS FOR APPLICATIONS

1. Ensure you meet the **eligibility criteria**.
 - a. Check the detailed information contained in these guidelines.
 - b. Read and understand the **Terms & Conditions** outlined in Appendix 1.
2. Confirm Immersion Experience with your organisation.
3. Obtain a **letter of support**.
4. Gather details of the Immersion Experience
 - a. Dates for the Immersion Experience
 - b. Funding amount requested, included any associated travel, accommodation or parental costs.
 - c. Website links
5. **Apply online** via ASC website.
6. **Submit application** – Applicants are responsible for ensuring they have successfully submitted their application on time. Applicants will receive an automated email receipt once the application is submitted successfully. Please keep a record of this email.

Please note:

- Only one application per person will be accepted.
- If you would like to discuss the possibility of submitting video responses to address the assessment criteria, please email accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au.



- For applicants who submit video responses to address the assessment criteria, they will still be required to complete the other components of the application form and submit in line with the process.
- The application process will take approximately 30 minutes to complete if you have all the required information.
- If the application cannot be completed in one session, you can save the application and return to it later using your login details.
- You will have access to your application after submitting but you will not be able to amend an application once submitted. Should you have any issues post submission please email accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au.
- Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the information within the application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* and may result in your application being excluded from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately using the details below.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you. However, we do not have to accept additional information or requests from you to correct or change your application after the closing time.

If you need further guidance on the application process or wish to withdraw a submitted application, please contact:

Email: accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All applications will initially be assessed by the ASC against the eligibility criteria. All eligible applications will proceed to be assessed by the Assessment Panel against the selection criteria. The Assessment Panel consists of officers employed by the ASC.

Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis.

During the assessment process, the ASC may require further information about your organisation or application and may seek to source this information from applicants or from other external sources.

The Assessment Panel will assess the eligible applications and provide recommendations to the Grant Approver. The Grant Approver (EGM, ASC) will make the final decision regarding the approval of the grant, the grant amount to be awarded and the terms and conditions of the grant awarded. The ASC reserves the right to recommend and approve grant amounts that may differ from the amounts requested in applications. There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

Assessment considerations

To support applicants in understanding the assessment process, below is a list of considerations that will guide decision-making by the Grant Approver (EGM, ASC). This is purely a framework for consideration (as opposed to mandatory requirements) and applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. No weighting will apply to the assessment considerations and each applicant will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If you have any questions, please contact accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au.

Submission Review

- Does the application clearly outline the purpose, benefit to individual, and budget of the experience?
- Does the application align to the objectives and purpose of the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program?

Project sustainability

- What is the impact/benefit of the proposed Immersion Experience to the applicant, the supporting organisation or the sport?
- Demonstration of how the proposed immersion experience will benefit the applicant with career development.
- Has the applicant been offered similar opportunities in the past?

Risk Identification

- To what extent does the applicant have the ability to successfully carry out the Immersion Experience given their current work and personal time commitments?
- Is there any other risk associated with successfully completing the Immersion Experience?

Budget

- How appropriate is the grant application in terms of the funding requested?
- Has the grant application received a letter of support/endorsement?

NOTIFICATION

All applicants will be notified via email of the outcome of their application including:

- Any funding amount to be awarded; and
- The specific terms and conditions of any funding offer.

Successful applicants will enter into an agreement with the ASC in relation to the grant funding which will be substantially based on the sample terms and conditions at Appendix 1 to these guidelines.



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest could arise if the applicant and ASC staff, an assessment panel member or advisor:

- Has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process,
- Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant.

Applicants will be asked to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest, the ASC must be informed in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest regarding ASC staff will be handled in accordance with ASC Conflict of Interest Policy. Assessment panel members will also be required to declare any conflicts of interest.

CHILD SAFE

The ASC is committed to Australian sport environments that are safe, supportive and friendly for children. The ASC Child Safe Policy outlines our commitment to child safeguarding, and the obligations and responsibilities of our people and stakeholders to protect children. All grant recipients will be bound by the ASC [Child Safe Policy](#).

The ASC has adopted the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. All organisations will be expected to adopt and implement the National Principles for Child Safety and ensure that all child related personnel are compliant with legislation relating to the employment or engagement of people working with children, including Working With Children Checks and mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect. Organisations must provide evidence to the ASC, upon request, of compliance with child safety requirements.

The ASC is a participating organisation in the National Redress Scheme and has adopted the Australian Governments Grant Connected Policy. An applicant will not be eligible to receive funding if their Immersion Experience is connected to an organisation that is named by the [National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse](#) on its list of [“Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme”](#).

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The ASC will treat any personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Personal information can only be disclosed to someone for the primary purpose for which it is collected unless an exemption applies.

Personal information submitted via the online application is collected by the ASC for the purpose of considering applications for the WLIS program.

The personal details of successful applicants (including name, home state, sport, the value of the grant awarded and a brief description of the purpose for the program) may be released by the ASC to the public and the media for the use of promotional and educational purposes.

To view the ASC's Privacy Policy please visit: sportaus.gov.au/legal_information/privacy_policy

ENQUIRIES AND FEEDBACK

If you have any questions regarding the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience program, please email accelerateprogram@ausport.gov.au.

If you wish to lodge a complaint regarding the program this can be done via the Australian Sports Commission's complaints form ausport.gov.au/contacts/feedback-and-complaints



APPENDIX 1 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. If the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) decides to offer a grant under the Athlete Accelerate Immersion Experience Program (**Program**) to the applicant, the grant will be awarded subject to any terms the ASC sets out in the applicant's letter of offer, these terms and conditions, and the Program Guidelines (as updated from time to time) (**Agreement**).
2. The ASC will make a single payment of the Grant amount to the successful applicant (**Recipient**) or the applicant's chosen organisation (**Organisation**) subject to sufficient funding being available to the Program, and the Recipient complying with this Agreement.
3. The Recipient must:
 - a. Complete the immersion experience with the nominated organisation for which the grant is awarded by 30 November 2025;
 - b. Promptly notify the ASC if the Recipient becomes aware that they no longer fulfils the Eligibility Criteria (as set out in the Program Guidelines) for the receipt of the Grant;
 - c. Only use the grant for the purpose of undertaking the immersion experience;
 - d. Keep records detailing the use and expenditure of the grant, and make them available to the ASC or its authorised representatives, on request;
 - e. Provide to the ASC within 30 days of completion of the Immersion Experience:
 - i. a statement and accompanying evidence in the form required by the ASC, verifying that the immersion experience has been successfully completed and the Grant has been spent in accordance with this Agreement; and
 - ii. a report on the Activity, in the form required by the ASC;
 - f. Promptly repay to the ASC, any amount of the grant which has not been used on approved expenditure of the Immersion Experience.
4. The Recipient:
 - a. declares and warrants, at the date of agreeing to these terms and conditions, that they have not at any time been found to have breached any anti-doping rule or policy applicable to the Recipient, and has not engaged at any time in any conduct that constituted a breach of any anti-doping rule or policy applicable to the Recipient;
 - b. agrees to maintain a high standard of personal behaviour expected of an athlete representing Australia; and
 - c. agrees not to do anything to bring the Recipient, the ASC, or the Recipient's National Sporting Organisation into disrepute.
5. Without limitation to any other rights of the ASC, if the ASC reasonably believes, at any time following the award of the Scholarship, that:
 - a. the Recipient has provided false or misleading information in the application process;
 - b. the grant has been spent other than in accordance with this Agreement;

- c. the Recipient will not complete the immersion experience, or has otherwise breached any of its obligations under this Agreement; or
 - d. the grant amount is additional to the requirements of immersion experience, then the ASC may by written notice, require the Recipient to repay to the ASC, at the ASC's absolute discretion, all or part of the grant. The amount notified must be repaid within 30 days of any such notice.
6. The Recipient must, if requested by the ASC, co-operate with the ASC in relation to promotional and educational initiatives regarding the Program and the ASC's Athlete Accelerate Program activities.
 7. The personal details of Recipients (including name, home state, sport, the value of the grant awarded and a brief description of the purpose for the grant) may be released by the ASC to the public and the media for the use of promotional and educational purposes.
 8. If the Recipient is under 18 years of age, they must also obtain agreement of their parent or guardian to these terms and conditions and the Program Guidelines prior to entering this Agreement.
 9. The Recipient agrees to indemnify the ASC and its officers, employees and contractors against any claim, loss or damage arising in connection with undertaking the immersion experience, or a breach of this Agreement. This obligation to indemnify the ASC will reduce proportionally to the extent that any act or omission involving fault on the part of the of the ASC, contributed to the claim loss or damage.
 10. This Agreement does not create a relationship of employment, or agency between the Recipient and the ASC.
 11. This agreement is governed by the law of the Australian Capital Territory.



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