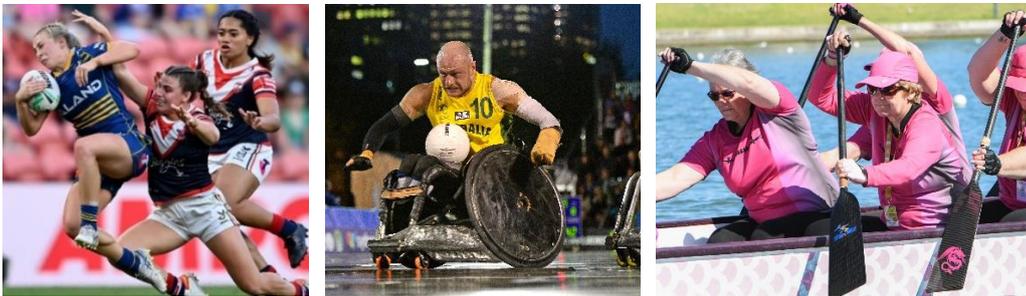


Pre-Budget Submission to Treasury

For consideration in the 2024-25 Federal Budget

Building on the work of the Health, Education and Sport cross-sector Collaboration on Physical Activity

Presenting



*Cost effective measures to maximise the opportunities of
the Green and Gold runway to the
Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games*



Canberra, January 2024

Cost effective measures for Australian sport to maximise opportunities of the Green and Gold runway to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Introduction:

The Confederation of Australian Sport (CAS) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Federal Government for consideration in the 2024-25 Federal Budget and beyond.

CAS is the independent, not-for-profit industry organisation supporting the work of Australia's 90 National Sporting Organisations (NSO) with a particular emphasis on community level sport to achieve 'Sport for All'.

Since 2014 CAS has been working with over 80 national organisations across Health, Education and Sport to build collaboration for a cross-sector approach to promoting the benefits of sport and physical activity from a preventive health perspective. By example these collaborating organisations included the National Heart Foundation, Australian Primary Principals Association, Australian Secondary Principals Association and the Australian Health Policy Collaboration.

Within this submission CAS is particularly pleased to be working in partnership with two peak bodies who will each be available as expert contributors for greater input and explanation of their specific interest measures.

We refer to our collaboration with:

- Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability (ASAPD) – for Measure 4.
- Women Sport Australia (WSA) – for Measure 5.

CAS on behalf of the Health, Education and Sport Cross-sector collaboration has made previous submissions to the Australian Government for consideration including to:

- Pre-Budget Submissions to Treasury in 2016, 2018, 2021, 2022 and 2023
- Consultation process for the development of 'National Sport Plans' released in 2018 and soon 2024
- Consultation process for the 'National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030'²⁶ released 13 Dec 2021 which incorporates 'Increasing Physical Activity' of one of the seven Focus Areas.

The National Sport Plan *Sport 2030* was a good plan, broadly supported by the industry but did not realise its potential because key elements of the plan were not adequately funded, particularly in the sport participation area. Essential elements of Sport 2030's 12-year horizon were only funded for the first 2 years. We hope that funding for the new National Sport Plan - will provide consistent and sufficient funds to ensure that **Sport maximises the opportunities of the Green and Gold runway to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympics!**

Sport in Australia – particularly at community level is under enormous stress at the moment. CAS acknowledges the contribution of the Federal Government via covid-19 assistance programs such as Job Keeper but highlights the acute financial hardships and the participation and volunteering deficit still being felt by 85% of organisations across the sector. Sport Australia's research¹⁶ and the CSIRO 2022 report *The Future of Australian Sport. Megatrends shaping the sport sector over the coming decades*²⁷ signals that participation levels of community sport have not fully recovered.

NSO/NSOD Participation funding is currently less than 5% (\$17.3 m) of the Australian Sports Commission annual budget of \$350m. Access to a further \$8m-\$9m is welcomed through the competitive 'Play Well' grants program but even so equates to less than 8% of the total budget being allocated to Participation. Federal Government Funding for Sport Participation and physical activity was severely hit with a reduction from \$41m in 2018-19 to \$17.6m in 2022-23 (a 58% decrease). Paradoxically this support was further reduced to \$17.2m under the current Government seeking to 'enhance Australia's health through Sport'.

The overall funding deficit of *Sport 2030* has been counterproductive and in many instances has stalled effective program development and prevented important gains from being consolidated and embedded within sport. These are the essential gains that ensure future sustainability for community organisations and private providers, particularly when trying to recover from the covid-19 pandemic and cope with the CPI increases of the past 2-3 years which has severely impacted available resources in real terms.

In mid-2023 CAS canvassed the opinions of NSO/NSOD CEOs to determine the highest priority issues facing their sport in the coming period. The order of initiatives presented in this proposal represents the ranking of priority given by NSO/NSOD CEOs in the Survey undertaken in November 2023.

This submission proposes a number of cost effective measures that will *maximise the Green and Gold runway* for achieving Australia's *Sport 2030*⁷ Vision to be the "world's most active and healthy sporting nation".

Requested Government Investment: **\$79.735m in 2024-25**

SUMMARY OF COST EFFECTIVE MEASURES

The following Cost Effective measures will 'enhance Australia's health through Sport' by contributing to the objectives within the National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030 and the National Sport Plan.

1: Increased support for National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) Participation funding following the covid-pandemic

- Enable NSOs and NSODs to revitalise community level sport through a capacity building Revitalising Participation Fund
- Budget: \$25m per year for 4 years (Total \$100.0m over 4 years)

2: Increased support for Coaching and Officiating Development

- Provide NSO/NSODs with funding support for Coaching and Officiating system development.
- Budget: \$3.0m per year for 4 years (Total \$12.0m over 4 years)

3: Allowing sporting organisations direct access to the benefits of charitable status - removing the monopoly of the Australian Sports Foundation

- Implement required legislative change to enable sporting organisations to access the benefits of charitable status and support the implementation process for community sporting entities.
- Remove the current monopoly of that the Australian Sports Foundation has on providing tax-deductibility on donations to sport.
- Budget: \$200,000 in year 1 (and \$200,000 over years 2&3) (Total \$400,000 over 3 years)

4: Increasing funding to support sport for people with a Disability

- Support for three dedicated projects that will ensure greater access to and effectiveness of current disability-inclusive participation in sport to achieve important health and well-being outcomes.
- Budget: \$660,000 per year for 2 years (Total \$1.32m over 2 years)

5: Increasing funding to support female participation in sport

- Support for dedicated projects and a certification scheme that will ensure greater access to and inclusive participation in sport for females.
- Budget: \$675,000 per year for 2 years. \$300,000 per year for years 3 & 4 (Total \$1.95m over 4 years)

6. Reducing financial barriers to sport participation in disadvantaged communities and embed social prescribing into the Primary Health Care system

- Embedding Social Prescribing into the Primary Health Care system – undertake scoping project
- Establish a 'Tackling Inequalities Fund' to ensure participation in sporting activity is more affordable for families, particularly those from low SES communities.
- Budget: \$50m per year for 4 years (Total \$200m over 4 years)

7: Support the National Indigenous Sports Foundation to guide relationships and maximise opportunities for indigenous peoples through sport

- Support for the work of the NISF will provide a greater understanding and inclusion of the needs of indigenous Australians generating benefit to indigenous sportspeople and the broader community.
- Budget: \$200,000 per year for 3 years (Total \$600,000 over 3 years)

Total Government Investment requested in 2024-25: \$79.735m (\$316.27m over 4 years)

PRIORITY ACTIONS EXPLAINED

1: Increased support for National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) Participation funding following covid-pandemic

Why is this measure essential?

Building committed, sustainable and supported community sporting organisations and clubs is essential to achieving the stated objectives of Australia's Long Term National Health Plan, the National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030²⁶ and the current National Sport Plan *Sport 2030*⁷ and the about to be released updated National Sport Plan.

Enshrined within these Federal Government plans is the target to reduce Physical Inactivity by 15% and to maximise the potential for involvement in sport to make contributions to physical health and mental wellbeing.

An important part of this strategy is to provide a comprehensive menu of sporting opportunities catering to a broad cross-section of the community. In an environment of reduced corporate sponsorship opportunities and pressure on the existing, diminishing volunteer structures the support of Government funding has never been more important.

New, innovative, inclusive programs catering for broad community needs will not readily occur without Government funding support. Participation program funding is more effectively and efficiently provided at national level through NSO/NSODs for use across Australia rather than expecting smaller scale, fragmented inputs from the jurisdictional level to filter through.

Recent examples of how effectively Federal Government funding can be applied is highlighted in the following [Case Studies summary](#) . A series of short video vignettes <https://www.sportforall.com.au/case-studies/>

The recent implementation of these community-facing Participation programs shows that even smaller NSOs/NSODs are able to achieve highly effective and important outcomes with relatively modest resources.

As stated earlier Research from Sport Australia¹⁶ and the Australian Sports Foundation indicates around 85% of sporting organisations were severely impacted by Covid-19 and even after 3-4 years require assistance to rebuild their capacity to deliver desired physical and mental health outcomes, employment outcomes and their important contribution to community development. Coupled with the inflationary impacts of the past 2-3 years the level of resources available to sport in real terms has severely diminished.

“Redressing the barriers to encourage sport participation throughout the community will require both investment and action from all levels of governments, the sport industry and the establishment and strengthening of new and existing partnerships to achieve the vision proposed in Sport 2030²⁰.”

Increased Government funding to National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) in the form of a grants program will facilitate regeneration and participation growth at community level. Currently less than 5% (\$17.3 m) of the Australian Sports Commission annual budget of \$350m is provided to NSO/NSODs towards participation outcomes. Access to a further \$7-\$8m is potentially available through a competitive 'Play Well' grants program meaning that less than 7% of the total budget is allocated to Participation.

This proposed measure would partially redress the reduction from \$41m in 2018-19 to \$17.3m in 2023-24 (a 58% decrease) by the Federal Government from the current Sport Australia budget that was allocated to programs that specifically support Participation.

Restoring Sport Australia – 'Move It Aus' funds:

Unfortunately, the 2020/21 Federal Budget released in October 2020 removed the funding of important Physical Activity and Participating funds that Sport Australia promoted under the banner "Move It Aus".

Removing funding for programs after only one or two years is incredibly frustrating and counter-productive. NSOs and NSODs spend a large amount of their limited resources applying for and gearing up for new government programs. In the case of the Active Ageing program, for example, this required a whole new approach, research and thinking to provide quality initiatives with a preventive health focus.

For the program to be de-funded after only 2 years means that most of the program benefit and infrastructure was lost, trained staff drifted away, the important trust, goodwill and energy of the volunteer networks needed for a successful program was undermined and confidence in the system was diminished.

The **Move It Aus** Participation initiatives were extremely valuable and largely successful in achieving behavioural change and underpinned the thrust of trying to get more Australians active. Participation at grass-roots level is a vital part of an NSO/NSOD's future success and this pool of funds must be reinstated as a matter of urgency.

Evaluation of the Move It Aus Participation Grant Program¹⁵ released in February 2021 showed that "43% of participants who engaged with a funded project reported increases in their physical activity behaviours."

Whether or not the Program names remain the same is irrelevant what is most important is that the target areas of support including Active Ageing and increasing grass-roots participation are re-instated.

Establish the National Sporting Organisation – Revitalising Participation Fund

Enable NSOs and NSODs to revitalise inclusive community level sport through a dedicated Revitalising Participation Fund. This funding is in addition to the funds allocated through Sport Australia for NSO/NSOD Participation investment which was \$17.3m for 2023-24.

The Participation Fund would provide funds for the development and implementation of programs that will increase the numbers of Australians participating in sport and improve access and quality of the experience.

Proposal: Allocate an additional fund of \$25m per year for 4 years to assist all National Sporting Organisations implement specific community participation growth initiatives.

Proposed Use of the Funds by NSOs and NSODs

Capacity building and professional development initiatives which may include:

- Development and implementation of targeted Participation programs
- Capacity building through the employment and training of key staff
- Building on inclusive practices
- Needs assessment, program and resource development
- Coaching and officials education, accreditation and professional development
- Training and support for Club management and operations including Volunteer support
- Assisting sport to develop program offerings that will be flexible in format and access to maximise convenience for participation by time-poor individuals
- Assistance to Clubs to ensure financial sustainability and quality delivery over the long term

Principal users of this measure

National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs (over 20,000 aligned to NSO/NSODs)

National Health network (a range of organisations operating at national, state and/or local levels)

- Health Promotion Organisations including highly respected organisations dealing with chronic conditions impacted by obesity and overweight and mental illness.

Budget: Additional \$25m per year for 4 years (\$100m over 4 years)

2. Increasing Support for Coaching and Officiating Development

Why is this measure essential?

National Sporting Organisations (NSOs and NSODs) would greatly benefit from access to support for their Coaching and Officiating development programs, particularly programs focussing on community level sport.

In 2016 the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) 'retired' the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) and the National Officiating Accreditation Scheme (NOAS) and ceased any pretence of support for coaching and officiating programs.

Between 2006 and 2016 the number of ASC employees working in the coaching and officiating area reduced from 26 to 1.

The quality of the Coaching and Officiating systems at NSO/NSOD level in a large number of sports and across the sport industry declined markedly during this time.

In 2021 the ASC (then operating as Sport Australia) announced that it had prioritised Coaching and Officiating as a 'new Strategic Pillar'. Sport Australia advised NSO/NSODs that it would provide a resource to support NSO Coaching and Officiating programs and would establish the Sport Australia Learning Centre to provide an on-line interface for the programs and databases of NSOs.

Unfortunately, it appears that the access by NSOs/NSODs to the Sport Australia Learning Centre continues to incur significant set-up and ongoing operational costs if the sport wishes to include sport specific elements to its 'portal'.

Whilst the ASC's new interest in Coaching and Officiating is heartening it is insufficient to meet the industry requirements and there is no long term budgetary commitment by the ASC to Coaching and Officiating, particularly at community level. CAS believes that it is essential that NSOs/NSODs are supported to ensure their systems are robust, tailored, cutting edge and sustainable.

It is clear that the potentially high level of ongoing fees to be charged by the ASC will ensure that many of Australia's 90+ NSOs will not be able to afford to take part. Decreasing overall ASC Participation funding to NSO/NSODs places further pressure on essential program areas such as Coaching and Officiating.

This situation is clearly to the detriment of Australian sport, particularly to the grass-roots sporting community.

On-line access to general principles and resources currently provided through the ASC is an efficient way to provide potential coaches and officials with basic information. However, on-line learning is only one part of the total blended learning requirement and should in no way replace the face-to-face interaction with skilled coach educators and instructors.

A specific allocation of funds for the enhancement of NSO/NSOD Coaching and Officiating programs is required and any relevant service that could be provided by the ASC should be done so without charge.

The use of existing industry expert collaborative organisations such as the Australian Coaching Council (ACC) should be engaged as it has the required expertise and experience to assist NSO/NSODs with specific program development.

Targeted Outcomes:

- Sport specific program and resource development
- Leadership, advocacy and promotion of the important role of coaching and officiating
- Cross-sport collaboration and sharing of best practice
- Ongoing education, professional development and wellbeing of coaches and officials throughout the system from grassroots to HP.

Funding required: To provide funds of \$3.0m per year to be allocated towards as specific support for NSO/NSOD Coaching and Officiating system and resource development.

While this is only a fraction of the total amount required across the sector it would provide a meaningful boost to capacity and standards, particularly to the smaller and less well resourced NSO/NSODs.

Principal users of this measure

This solution has benefits for:

- Community Sports Clubs (over 20,000 clubs)- from 90 x NSO and NSODs
- Coaches and officials from community sporting clubs
- Beneficiaries: Members of community sporting clubs and casual/social users of community sporting facilities (14.1 million)

Budget: \$3.0m per year for 4 years (\$12m over 4 years)

3: Allowing sporting organisations direct access to the benefits of charitable status - removing the monopoly of the Australian Sports Foundation

Why is this measure essential?

Currently the Australian Sports Foundation has a monopoly on providing tax deductibility on donations made to Australia's sporting organisations of all levels. This is an issue that continues to cause great consternation among the leaders of the nation's National Sporting Organisations.

After 35 years since the creation of the Australian Sports Aid Foundation in 1986 only 3.7% of the 70,000 community sporting clubs and organisations across Australia access the benefits of DGR status under the current system.

At a time when the future sustainability of community sport in Australia is under extreme pressure representatives of over 40 NSOs and NSODs have sought the commitment of the Australian Government to take the necessary steps to provide direct access to the benefits of charitable status to compliant community sporting organisations.

By creating the Australian Sports Foundation in the first instance and by providing DGR status to it the Federal Government and Treasury have therefore agreed to forego any taxation revenue from donations made to Sport. So essentially Treasury has already calculated and provided for 100% of donations to sport and we question why all of these donations need to be made through the ASF?

In the submission to the Federal Treasurer, Minister for Finance, Minister for Sport and Assistant Minister for Finance (responsible for charities) dated 14 February 2020 and resent on 6 December 2022 it was demonstrated how community sporting organisations can meet the four designated criteria for Charitable Status under the Charities Act 2013 (Cth).

This submission was also made to the *Australian Productivity Commission Review of Philanthropy* which commenced in May 2023.

The submission seeking sport's access to the benefits of charitable status is provided directly and proposes the necessary measures be considered by the Federal Government that may include:

1. **Amending current legislation to recognise Sport** within the Charities Act 2013 (Cth):
 - Acceptance within Part 3 - Definitions of Charitable Purpose clause 12 (1) (a) Advancing Health and/or (k) Any other beneficial purpose ..., and
 - Reversing the ATO Tax Ruling TR2011/4 to remove the wording that specifically refers to Sport as a 'Not Recognised' purpose; or,
2. **Creating a new category within the legislation** that specifically references and includes community sport as an approved purpose.

In the words of two National Sporting Organisation CEOs:

"This will arguably be the most important, visible and significant demonstration of Government support for community sport in over 30 years." Neil Dalrymple (in 2022 as CEO of Bowls Australia)

"Providing DGR status to community level and club sport will raise the status of sport in the minds of the public equivalent to those of other charitable and social service organisations that already receive DGR status. The success of sport in Australia is built on grassroots clubs and participants at an equal level of importance as other DGR group are to their causes and purpose" (Cam Vale – in 2020 as CEO of Baseball Australia)

Concerns about the performance of the Australian Sports Foundation (ASF)

Concerns expressed by representatives of NSOs and NSODs.

- 5%-6% of each donation to sport is retained as a commission by the ASF essentially for providing the donor with a tax deductible receipt.
- One sporting organisation reports that the ASF charged it \$12,000 for one donation. This is not an isolated case as revealed in the February 2022 Senate Estimates questioning of the ASF by Senators Don Farrell and Rex Patrickson.
- Sporting organisations believe they are equally capable of issuing compliant tax deductibility receipts.
- Questionable claims about amounts raised by the ASF when it is actually the individual sporting entity that raises the funds. The ASF withholds funds from sport rather than contributes to them. The 2016 ASF annual report states *“Our new five-year strategic plan has been finalised and we are excited about the opportunity to achieve further dramatic growth in funding for sport. ... the “Road to 100” has just begun, as we set our sights on raising \$100m a year for sport within 5 years.”*
- *Since 2016 and now after the 5 years since the ‘Road to 100’ five-year target of \$100m was set – in 2020 the ASF managed \$43.7m in donations – withheld \$2.6m of the donations and was short by \$56m (less than half) of its target.*

After 35 years since the creation of the Australian Sports Aid Foundation and with only 3.7% of the 70,000 community sporting clubs and organisations currently accessing the services of the ASF it is time to allow sporting organisations the opportunity to generate local donations and funds directly. It has been extremely problematic requiring supporters to donate through a third party instrument that they assume to be a government body that then withholds part of their donation as a commission or a tax.

This measure should cost the Federal Government no more than it has already budgeted because it has already granted the ASF the rights to provide a tax deduction on all donations made to all eligible Australian sporting organisations.

The fact that only \$45m-\$50m is claimed as a tax deduction by current participants of ASF fundraising represents a large saving to the Government and perhaps that is why the Federal Government is as yet unwilling to provide the tax benefits of charitable status directly to Australia’s not-for-profit sporting organisations.

Of the 70,000 community club organisations, NFP providers and commercial operators currently delivering sport it is estimated that a maximum of 20,000 entities would be able to comply with the four criteria of charitable status with the vast majority of these being affiliated directly to NSOs. Thus, a manageable number of additional charitable organisations would be approved and direct communication with and education of these following implementation could be done in an effective and streamlined manner.

Following the required change to the Charities Act to allow Amateur/community Sport to access the benefits of charitable status this measure recommends funds be used to inform and educate eligible sporting entities on the administrative processes required for access and implementation. This process could be effectively undertaken nationally within 2-3 years.

Principal users of this measure

National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs aligned to NSOs (over 20,000)

Budget: total \$400,000 over 3 years

4: Increasing funding to support sport for people living with a disability

Why is this measure essential?

Engagement in sport offers people living with disability parallel advantages across the realms of physical, psychological and social well-being, aligning with the benefits observed amongst the general population.

Extensive research from both Australia and abroad underscores the favourable connection between disability-inclusive participation in sport and various health and well-being outcomes. These include enhancements in cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal health, heightened social interaction, boosted self-assurance, expanded avenues for independence, improved fitness levels, enhanced technical ability, and refined communication proficiency.

Notwithstanding this, of the nearly 20% of Australians living with a disability, only one in four individuals in this group participates in sport. The 2016 Australian Sport Commission (ASC) AusPlay survey revealed that people living with disability were 10% less likely to engage in sport or active recreation at least once a week compared to the general population, and this difference cannot be attributed to a lack of interest.

Furthermore, ASC research indicates that 75% of individuals living with disability involved in sport desire more participation, and 83% of those who are inactive express a desire to become more active.

NSO's face challenges in relation to initiating and growing social and active pathways for people living with disability and require assistance to develop and execute sport programs that are inclusive and accommodate a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

This support should involve creating opportunities for the design and implementation of engaging and accessible programs specifically tailored for individuals living with disability.

Potential initiatives might involve:

- Providing comprehensive training for coaches, instructors, and officials to adapt methods and facilities for individuals living with disability.
- Establishing certification programs to ensure staff members are well-prepared for inclusive work.
- Hosting inclusive events and competitions that showcase a variety of adaptive sports.
- Embracing technological advancements, such as adaptive equipment, virtual reality training, and specialised apps, to enhance sport participation.
- Executing marketing campaigns that illustrate the diversity of athletes, featuring individuals living with disability participating in various sports.
- Actively promoting and supporting athletes living with disability, creating positive role models to inspire others.
- Forming partnerships with disability organisations, community groups, and schools to promote sport at the grassroots level.
- Conducting community outreach programs to raise awareness about the benefits of sport for individuals living with disability.
- Advocating for national policies that promote inclusivity and accessibility in sport.
- Allocating resources to research programs focused on enhancing sport inclusion for people living with disability.
- Fostering a sense of community and support, providing a platform for sharing experiences and advice.

By adopting these measures, NSOs can play a pivotal role in increasing sport participation among people living with disability, fostering inclusivity and creating a more diverse and vibrant sporting landscape.

This submission recommends funding support be provided towards the following three Priority Projects:

1. The Adaptive Movement Upscaling Project

The Adaptive Movement Upscaling project (TAMUP) will significantly upscale (to a national level) an existing and localised (NSW) database designed and managed by Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT.

The TAMUP project is an important component in assisting people living with disability to discover sport and active recreation opportunities tailored to their needs. A fundamental objective of TAMUP is to bridge the divide between disability and a more active way of life.

This will be achieved by offering a purposely designed user-friendly platform that connects individuals living with disability, to inclusive sports clubs and active recreation programs.

TAMUP is a self-service, web-based platform that will catalogue sport and active recreation service provider programs and services across Australia that are specifically aimed at people living with disability.

Timeframe: 2-years

Funding required: \$500,000

2. Liveability - Creating an environment where individuals living with disability can lead active, healthy and fulfilling lives.

The core objective of this project is to unite individuals living with a diverse range of disabilities in discussions about the significance and practicalities of living active, healthy, and satisfying lives through involvement in sport and active recreation.

It will provide these individuals with a supportive platform to communicate their views to Government, with the intent of making a positive impact on decision-making, policy development related to grant funding, operational systems, and community awareness.

This project will also provide the opportunity to ensure the opinions and experiences of a diverse spectrum of individuals living with disability are sought as part of the process of developing the first Australian disability-specific physical activity guideline.

Finally, this endeavour will bolster the capability of NSODs to engage in ongoing systemic disability advocacy across the sport and physical activity sectors.

Timeframe: 2-years

Funding required: \$650,000

3. National Inclusion Participation Manager

The National Inclusion Participation Manager (NIPM) will coordinate initiatives across ASAPD member organisations (Blind Sports Australia, Deaf Sports Australia, Disability Sport Australia, Disabled Wintersport Australia, Riding for the Disabled, Special Olympics Australia, Sport Inclusion Australia and Transplant Australia) with the purpose of growing participation, fostering collaboration, ensuring inclusivity and improving the effectiveness of sport and physical activity programs for people living with a disability, limitation or impairment.

The NIPM represents a cooperative endeavour aimed at uniting member organisations to establish common goals and objectives for initiatives promoting sport and physical activity participation and ensures these pursuits align with the ASAPD mission.

Timeframe: 2 years

Funding required: \$240,000

Principal users of this measure

National Sport network including:

- ASAPD Member NSODs (8)
- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs aligned to NSOs (over 20,000)

Disability Community including:

- Australians living with a disability (4.4m) – approx. 18% of Australian population
- Increasing access and quality experience for the one million (currently involved in sport)
- Increasing participation from the 3 million not currently involved with sport
- Providers of disability sport opportunities

Budget: total \$1.32 million over 2 years

Suggested Contact:

CAS and the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability (ASAPD) have collaborated closely on this measure.

For further information or expert commentary of this measure please contact:

Dr Phil Hamdorf
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5: Increasing funding to support female participation in sport

Why is this measure essential?

2023 was a monumental year for women's sport in Australia. The highlight of the calendar was, without a doubt, the FIFA Women's World Cup finally landing on Australia (and New Zealand) shores. Matilda-fever then swept the nation with millions of Australians caught up on the health of Sam Kerr's calf, where they could get their hands on a green and gold scarf, and Courtnee Vine filled the country with hope as she kicked the winning goal against France to send the 'Tillies' to the semi-finals.

Days after the Tillies played their quarter-final match against Denmark, the Federal Government announced the \$200m 'Play Our Way' grant, an investment in women's sport to help drive participation for future generations to come. The Play Our Way grant will promote equal access for women and girls sports, build more suitable facilities for teams, and help support more grassroots initiatives to get the next generation of Hayley Rasso's and Mary Fowler's to participate in sport.

We know that Sport and physical activity are important to physical and mental health and wellbeing. Participating in sport also helps to foster a strong sense of community belonging and pride. We also know that Women in Australia are under-represented when it comes to sport and physical activity.

While \$200m sounds like a lot of money, it will just scratch the surface for the many who will be eagerly applying.

What is needed beyond programmatic and infrastructure funding is systemic and cultural change. New money invested in women's sport must have one eye on long term impact. Such impact is only achievable in an environment that at its core allows women to thrive across all facets of sport with barriers to participation being actively addressed and reduced. This can only happen through co-design, using the lived experiences of women and with male allies at their side and a sustained multi-pronged approach.

With a research-based approach to funding, coupled with policy to support the change, we can use the momentum that has been created through the amazing on field results to ensure equity for girls and women in sport is a given rather than a goal - the purpose of Women Sport Australia (WSA).

Gender equality and respect for women must be a whole of sport approach. Policies to support women and girls and programs to reduce barriers need to exist at all levels and across all aspects of sport if we are to level the playing field, and with this comes accountability.

As part of this budget submission, we are proposing a scoping exercise to identify partnership opportunities and collaboration across the whole of sport to pilot new initiatives designed to move research into action and to shift the culture of sport to be more inclusive of women and girls.

An example of this approach was when WSA worked alongside Cadbury with their *Get In the Game* Grants to help over 50 sporting clubs get proper uniforms for their female teams. Research conducted by Victoria University clearly demonstrated the need for change, started conversations and identified ways for barriers to be removed and the seed funding supported clubs to take that research and turn it into action. This opened up the discourse more broadly around the topic and saw sports, such as netball, adopting new policies regarding uniform and topics of taboo, such as menstrual cycles and the impact it has on athletes, soon followed.

If sport is to shift the dial for women and girls, it must start with NSO's and SSO's reflecting the outcomes we expect community sport to uphold and for them to be held accountable. Again, what this looks like requires scoping and while many have women and girls' strategies in place, establishing certification programs to ensure these strategies and programs are actually addressing the issues and are impactful and sustainable is important.

Inspiring more women and girls to participate is one challenge, eased by the Matildas' successes, anti-syphoning laws and broadcasters taking their responsibility more seriously, the *Play Your Way* grant and myriad of programs in place, but keeping them engaged against the odds of systemic and cultural biases and inherent gender based barriers is another. So what does equality in sport look like and how is it measured?

This submission recommends funding support be provided towards the following two Priority Projects:

1. Shifting the dial for women and girls - scoping of the big issues.

Using a research-based approach, and in partnership with gender equality and sport experts (a strong cross sector approach), identify and prioritise the barriers to participation and the systemic and cultural shifts required to increase participation and "shift the dial".

Noting where gaps in funding currently exist, taking the priority list and planning a whole of sport approach to tackling the issue identified. This includes policy creation, seed funding for implementation and profiling the impact/challenge we are facing and using storytelling as a way to highlight and advocate for further change.

Year one would be scoping the project and program design, based on the above key principles. Year 2 would pilot the outcomes of one of the initiatives. Following the success of the pilot, the project could be scaled up or down accordingly.

Timeframe: 2-years with an option for additional years, depending on pilot outcomes

Funding required: \$750,000 (first 2 years)

2. Gender Equality - establishing a certification program for organisations.

The core objective of this project is to create a certification program that holds NSOs and SSOs accountable and provides them with guidance and support on how to ensure gender equity is a given, not a goal - education is key.

By creating a set of measures (quantitative and qualitative) that address gender equality and instilling respect for women and girls with a whole of sport approach, we will be able to set standards and measure not only output, but impact programs are having.

The set of measures, or part thereof, could then be inserted into Federal level grant criteria moving forward to ensure that systemic and cultural norms are being shifted in applicant organisation's backyards and they are not just reaping the surface level benefits of a funding tactic e.g. federal funding for a new community facility built with gender inclusion at the heart but no equitable and fair access policy or booking system being implemented in practice.

Timeframe: 4 -years

Funding required: \$1,200,000

The funding of both of these projects includes the personnel required to establish these assessment and implementation streams, of which Women Sport Australia, as the peak independent body for women and girls in sport in Australia, is happy to play a facilitation role.

Principal users of this measure

This solution has benefits for:

- NSOs and SSOs
- Community Sports Clubs (over 20,000 clubs aligned to the 90 NSO and NSODs)
- Sport and active recreation access points (over 50,000) – clubs, schools, tertiary institutions, private providers
- Members of community sporting clubs and casual/social users of community sporting facilities (14.1 million)

Budget: Total \$1.35m for first 2 years and \$600,000 for the second 2 years.

Total over 4 years - \$1.95m

Option to extend to an additional \$375,000/annum after year 2, depending on the outcomes in years 1-2 of the Shifting the Dial project.

Suggested Contact:

CAS and Women Sport Australia have collaborated closely on this measure.

For further information or expert commentary of this measure please contact:

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6: Embedding social prescribing into the Primary Health Care system – reducing financial barriers to sport participation in disadvantaged communities

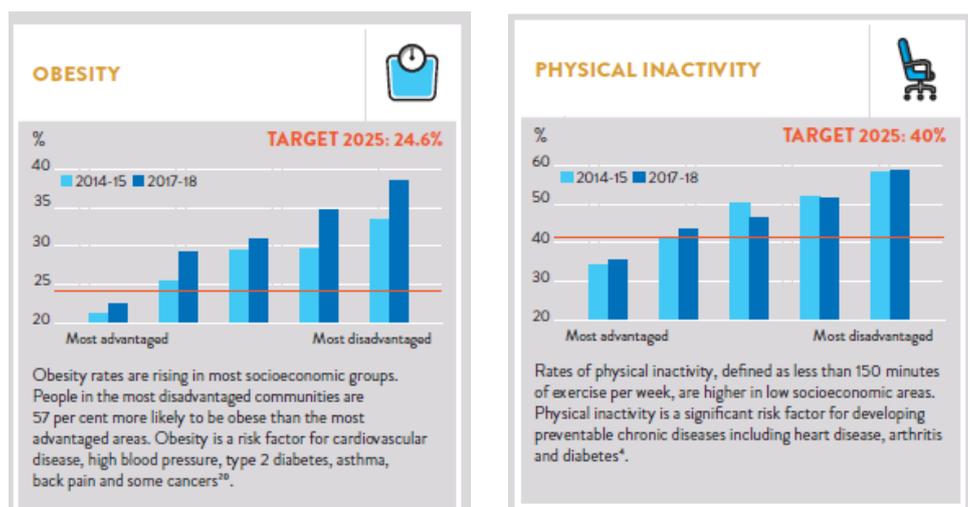
There is a growing concern that health inequities in Australia will increase in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁴ Improving access to evidence-based interventions that are effective across social strata is likely to increase physical activity participation among disadvantaged groups and contribute to reductions in health inequities.²³

Why is this measure essential?

Alarmingly the gap between low and high SES communities is widening.

Participation in physical activity and sport is being adversely affected by a range of factors including high costs and challenges of access and equity and now exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is particularly so in low SES and other disadvantaged communities. Currently less than 20% of children and only 43% of adults are achieving the Government’s Physical Activity guidelines.

Australia’s Health Tracker by Socio-Economic Status²¹ – released in July 2021 reports that people living in the most disadvantaged communities are 57% more likely to be obese than the most advantaged. The charts below shows that rates of physical inactivity and obesity increase as the levels of disadvantage increase. Alarmingly the gap between low and high SES communities is widening, particularly for obesity.



People living in areas of greater disadvantage experience additional barriers to participation and have lower supply of quality exercise facilities and supports than those living in affluent areas.⁴

There are two measures the Federal Government can support to make sport and physical activity more accessible and affordable for all members of the Australian community:

- 1. Embed Social Prescribing of Sport into the Primary Health Care system**
- 2. Establish a “Tackling Inequalities Fund” available to low SES communities**

These measures have been successfully implemented internationally over many years including in New Zealand (Green prescriptions) and the United Kingdom (Together Fund).

These measures will support people with a wide range of social, emotional or practical needs focussing on improved mental health and physical wellbeing.

Part 1: Embedding Social Prescribing within the Primary Health Care system

The Federal Government is strongly encouraged to implement social prescribing of physical activity (with sport as a major component) as a Primary Health Care measure. The WHO says that “Physical activity counselling and referral in primary health care is (cost) effective and a ‘best buy’ strategy for increasing physical activity levels¹⁹.”

The promotion of sport as an important physical activity option is an essential component when instituting social prescribing within the primary health care system. Social prescribing is often as much about mental health as physical health and involves attracting and welcoming people who want to become involved and engaged.

Potential benefactors include people with mild or long-term mental health problems, people with complex needs, people who are socially isolated and those with multiple long-term conditions who frequently attend either primary or secondary health care.

Examples of successful systems internationally include New Zealand’s *Green Prescriptions* and the systems adopted in Denmark and the UK.

The *National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030*²⁶ specifically mentions Social Prescribing twice under *Achievements by 2030*:

- (p39) Enhanced referral pathways to community services to improve health and wellbeing are embedded in the health system at a local level with a focus on self-care support (e.g. social prescribing).
- (p57) Healthcare professionals are trained and supported to provide advice and support to patients to promote physical activity and to engage in social prescribing (connecting patients with community services to improve health and wellbeing)

Australia is well positioned to implement a highly successful system given the strong local networks including Local GP and counselling services, allied health professionals, members of the Exercise Science and Sport Association (ESSA) and the 20,000 NSO affiliated community sport clubs.

The following Social Prescribing policy options are advanced by the Mitchell Institute, Victoria University *Policy evidence brief no. 2020-03. Supporting physical activity promotion in primary health care.*¹⁰

Policy Option 1:

Physical activity promotion in primary health care could target insufficiently active patients through routine screening of patients for physical activity levels, advice from a GP, nurse or potentially other health professional and a referral to appropriately trained practitioners for physical activity counselling.

- Based on the evidence that five sessions of physical activity counselling can effectively increase physical activity, a health care plan could provide for referral for up to five physical activity sessions with an accredited health professional for physically inactive individuals.
- Additional physical activity health workforce capacity could be provided through expansion of the eligibility criteria for provision of physical activity (counselling) under the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Policy Option 2:

Uptake, implementation, and sustainability of physical activity promotion in primary health care could be supported by the following:

- A greater focus on the importance of physical activity in medical training
- Inclusion of Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors in primary care settings could be supported through practice incentive payments or targeted infrastructure funding.
- A national promotion program could be implemented through Primary Health Networks, for which dedicated funding would need to be ensured, to provide implementation guidelines and incentives to primary health care clinics.

Policy Option 3:

To reduce inequities in physical activity, a proportionate universalism approach could be applied to physical activity promotion in primary health care.

- To encourage students from disadvantaged communities to train as Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors, targeted additional scholarships and tuition waivers could be provided.
- Postgraduate Accredited Exercise Physiologists/physical activity counsellors could be encouraged to locate to disadvantaged areas through incentive arrangements based on medical placements, programs and schemes available to medical school students
- Digital and telephone delivery of physical activity advice and counselling provided to increase the reach of physical activity advice and for those living in rural and remote areas.

Part 2: Establish a 'Tackling Inequalities Fund' to address the cost of sport participation in low SES communities

Steps to reduce the cost of participation for all members of the population need to be investigated and implemented, particularly for those from disadvantaged sectors. Many individuals and families struggle to pay for sport participation with estimates for children ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 per year taking into account club fees, coaching fees, travel, equipment and competition fees. Recent cost of living increases have placed additional pressures on family budgets.

The ***Tackling Inequalities Fund (TIF)*** would provide assistance to become active or more active for individuals and families living in areas of low SES areas, culturally diverse communities, disabled people and those with long-term health conditions.

The TIF fund could operate as a voucher system in a similar way to the NSW Active Kids program administered effectively by Service NSW.

Modelled on the "Tackling Inequalities Fund" implemented in the UK a dedicated pool of funds should be made available to facilitate the participation of those from low SES communities to access sport and physical activity options within their local communities.

Additional measures for consideration for the General Public may include personal tax deductions, rebates to sporting clubs, subsidies to sporting associations or other equitable measures. A number of Australian States/Territories have trialled voucher or rebate schemes in recent years and a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of these strategies is extremely encouraging.

Preliminary research from the 2018 NSW Government 'Active Kids' program significantly increased children's physical activity levels and these increases continued over a six-month period. The Active Kids voucher program shows promise as a scaled-up intervention to increase children and adolescents' physical activity participation from 4.0 to 4.9 days per week over a six month period¹¹.

A similar level of take up and effectiveness is anticipated for the Tackling Inequalities Fund.

Principal users of this measure

At Risk Populations:

- Low SES communities
- Indigenous Australians
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALD)
- People with mild or long-term mental health problems, socially isolated and those with multiple long-term conditions

Budget: \$200m over 4 years

7: Support the National Indigenous Sports Foundation to guide relationships and maximise opportunities for indigenous peoples through sport

Why is this measure essential?

Indigenous Australians continue to make a significant contribution to our nation's sport at all levels and yet their voice is seldom heard.

The National Indigenous Sports Foundation (NISF) has been formed to play an important role in the improvement of opportunities for indigenous people in and through the sport. *'Sport has an important place in the lives of Indigenous Australians and is an essential link between a 'healthy body and healthy mind,'* said the former Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians the Hon Ken Wyatt,

Federal Government support for the work of the NISF will facilitate strong relationships with NSOs/NSODs and provide a greater understanding and inclusion of the needs of indigenous Australians.

This greater understanding and advice can be incorporated into the Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) of NSOs/NSODs and other relevant stakeholder groups to provide an effective implementation of the measures within each RAP and in improving conditions for indigenous people participating in sport.

Two key objectives within the NISF Constitution:

- To act as a national voice and health promotion advocate of the health and wellbeing benefits of sport and recreation representing ATSI communities throughout Australia;
- To encourage, create, promote and advance opportunities for improving health and wellbeing outcomes for indigenous communities and individuals through sport and recreation.

Broad Areas of Focus

The following broad areas of focus will be used to guide the NISF's work initially:

- Advocacy
- Planning
- Policy Development
- Promotion
- Communication
- National Network
- Recognition
- Pathways

Building the Foundation – NISF's Initial Work

The following important steps will lay the foundations for NISF's future work.

- Strategic Planning – to take the priorities identified by the Indigenous Sports Summit and mould these into a coherent plan.
- Establishing a communication network with indigenous representatives across the nation who are committed to the advancement of indigenous sport.
- 'Where and how does indigenous sport operate?' - scoping exercise of Indigenous Sport –
 - Mapping where and how indigenous sport currently exists in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.
 - Building a database and contact list of existing programs, facilities and resources
- Accessing the knowledge and data to promote the preventive health contribution that sport makes to indigenous peoples
- Investigating the broadening of pathways for indigenous athletes, coaches, officials and administrators to strive and achieve national selection.
- Recognising the significant achievements of indigenous sports people
 - National Aboriginal and TSI Sports Awards – held in Melbourne Nov 2023 (first since 2003)
 - Indigenous Sport Museum and Hall of Fame.
- Employing management capacity to ensure efficient functioning of the organisation
- Organisational sustainability - developing and implementing the initial NISF Fundraising Strategy

Building Sustainability - Friends of the NISF

In addition to achieving the preliminary foundation goals listed above the NISF will proactively build support from a range of sources essential for future success.

- **Indigenous Sportspeople:** the NISF will seek support and endorsement from current and former Indigenous sportspeople across the sporting spectrum.
- **Individual and Organisational support:**
 - Corporate Australia
 - Philanthropic entities
 - Sporting and community organisations
 - Individuals from the broader community

Sustainability Outcome

Federal Government support of the NISF for management support will lead to greater organisational sustainability in the medium to long term.

Principal users of this measure

This solution has benefits for the broader Indigenous community of 800,000 across Australia including:

- Members of the Indigenous community in metro, regional and remote locations

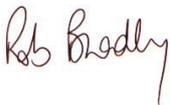
National Sport network including:

- NSOs and NSODs (approx. 90)
- State Sporting Organisations (over 700)
- Community sporting clubs aligned to NSOs (over 20,000)

Budget: \$200,000 per year for 3 years

Contact:

We have pleasure in submitting this proposal for consideration and we are available to answer any questions and provide additional information on request.



Rob Bradley AM
Chief Executive Officer
Confederation of Australian Sport
PO Box 3526 Manuka ACT 2603
For further information: e: cas@sportforall.com.au m: 0412343651

Participating Organisations

Since 2014 the following organisations have participated in the cross-sector collaborative process.

Sporting Organisations

Confederation of Australian Sport
Women Sport Australia
Aust Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability
Archery Australia
Artistic Swimming Australia
Athletics Australia
Badminton Australia
Baseball Australia
Australian Dragon Boat Federation
Bocce Federation of Australia
Bowls Australia
Boxing Australia
Australian Calisthenic Federation
Paddle Australia
AusCycling
Deaf Sports Australia
Disability Sports Australia
Diving Australia Inc
Equestrian Australia
Australian Karate Federation Inc
Australian Lacrosse Association Ltd
Gaelic Football & Hurling Association
Gliding Federation of Australia
Blind Sports Australia
Golf Australia
Gymnastics Australia
Australian Handball Federation
Hockey Australia
Sport Inclusion Australia
Judo Australia
Motor Sport Australia
Motorcycling Australia
Orienteering Australia
Australian Parachute Federation
Polocrosse Association of Australia
Rowing Australia Ltd
Sailing Australia
Shooting Australia

Snow Australia
Softball Australia
Special Olympics Australia
Squash Australia Ltd
Surf Life Saving Australia
Surfing Australia

Education Organisations

Australian Primary Principals Association
Australian Secondary Principals Association
Association of Heads of Independent Schools Aust
Catholic School Principals Association
School Sport Australia
Australian Council of State School Organisations
UniSport Australia

Health Organisations

National Heart Foundation
Australian Medical Association
Active Healthy Kids Australia
Kidney Health Australia
Australian Drug Foundation
Australian Mental Health Council
Dementia Australia
Diabetes Australia
Australian Health Policy Collaboration
Private Healthcare Australia
Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
Arthritis Australia
Transplant Australia
Royal Far West
Stroke Foundation Australia

Sport (continued)

Swimming Australia Ltd
Table Tennis Australia
Taekwondo Australia
Tenpin Bowling Australia
Touch Football Australia
Triathlon Australia
Australian Underwater Federation
Volleyball Australia
Water Polo Australia
Australian Waterski and Wakeboard Federation
Australian Weightlifting Federation Inc
Committee of Sport and Recreation Officials
(formerly CASRO/MSRM) – made defunct 2020
Australian Olympic Committee
Australian Sporting Goods Association
Sport Australia Hall of Fame (SAHOF)
AusActive (formerly Fitness Australia)

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