



SPÓRT
ÉIREANN
INSTITIÚID

SPORT
IRELAND
INSTITUTE

Statement of Intent

2024-2032

Compiled by:

Sport Ireland Institute
Strategic Development Steering Group

Approved by:

Sport Ireland High Performance Committee
20th March, 2024

Ratified by:

Sport Ireland Board of Directors
26th March, 2024

List of Acronyms

ACT	Athlete Career Transition
ADP	Athlete Development Programme
AFE	Athlete Friendly Employer
ASAS	Accreditation for Student Athlete Support
ASPC	Association of Sports Performance Centres
C&E	Capability & Expertise
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DAC	Designated Activity Company
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HOPS	Head of Performance Support
HOS	Head of Service
HP	High Performance
HPX	High Performance Knowledge Exchange
HSD	Hypermobility Spectrum Disorders
IF	International Federation
IMAG	Institute Management Advisory Group
IOC	International Olympic Committee
ISDSG	Institute Strategy Development Steering Group
JST	Junior to Senior Transition
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSK	Musculo-Skeletal
NGB	National Governing Body of Sport
NOC	National Olympic Committee
OCOG	Organising Committee of Olympic Games
OFI	Olympic Federation of Ireland
PD	Performance Director
PI	Paralympics Ireland
PPA	Performance Partnership Agreement
RED-S	Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport
S&C	Strength & Conditioning
SSI	Student Sport Ireland

Contents

	Page
Foreword	4
Background	6
International Comparator Report	7
Statement Development Methodology	7
Our Purpose, Mission, Philosophy, Values and Key Performance Principles	8
Strategic Assumptions	10
Sport Ireland Institute Core Business	10
Strategic Objectives:	12
1) Performance Services and Support	13
2) Pathway Support	14
3) Partnerships	16
4) Insights	18
5) Development of the Institute on the Sport Ireland Campus	20
6) Unit Review and Alignment	22
Implementation, Monitoring and Review	24
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1 – Psychology (Performance & Clinical) Department Intent	26
Appendix 2 – Performance Nutrition Department Intent	27
Appendix 3 – Performance Physiology Department Intent	28
Appendix 4 – Performance Analysis Department Intent	29
Appendix 5 – Performance Medicine Department Intent	30
Appendix 6 – Rehab/Physiotherapy Department Intent	31
Appendix 7 – Performance Lifeskills Department Intent	32
Appendix 8 – Strength & Conditioning Department Intent	33
Appendix 9 – Capability & Expertise Department Intent	34

Foreword

The Sport Ireland Institute was established by the Irish Sports Council (now Sport Ireland) in 2007 with a mission to produce sporting champions for Ireland by creating an environment which influences, supports, and ensures that talented Irish athletes achieve sustained levels of excellence in elite sport. We have a precise role in supporting the development of athletes from junior to senior ranks, to major Games and ultimately to the podium.

Sport Ireland has invested incrementally in the Sport Ireland Institute since its establishment with the position of the Institute as a key pillar of the High Performance System further enhanced by the publication of the Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy 2021-2032. The Institute budget has grown to in excess of €4.7 million and a team size of 73 in 2024.

Significant development milestones of the Sport Ireland Institute since its inception include:

- The opening of the Sport Ireland Institute High Performance Training Centre in 2016.
- The recruitment of a team of top level sports science, psychology, lifeskills and medical practitioners who have supported many Irish elite athletes across a range of sports to European, World and Olympic/Paralympic podium success.
- Development of a managed support service delivery model in the form of annual Performance Partnership Agreements with the Performance Leadership (Performance Directors (PDs), Head Coaches and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of High Performance (HP) Funded Sports.
- Based on innovative management and world-renowned leadership models, the Institute reconfigured its structure to a complex matrix model of performance support consisting of Heads of Service (HOS), focussed on leading quality of science and medicine services together with Heads of Performance Support (HOPS), focussed on leading integrated multi-disciplinary support teams embedded in the HP Sports. The creative tension inherent in this matrix ensures that leaders at all levels have high challenge and high support for their decisions and that our athletes benefit from the depth of scrutiny that all service provision is subject to.
- The strong working relationship for the betterment of Irish sport with the Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI) and Paralympics Ireland (PI) with the Institute as the 'Official Performance Support Delivery Partner' for both organisations. This has secured the core principle of continuity of care for athletes throughout Games cycles across a host of support disciplines and the embedding of Sport Ireland Institute team members within Irish Olympic and Paralympic Teams.
- The rollout of a comprehensive Capability & Expertise Strategy focussed on the professional development of CEOs, PDs, Coaches and Service Practitioners with a communities of practice approach within HP sports. This document supports and values the people in our system in their professional development which is set in the specific context of their needs and challenges in the Irish system. The ongoing professional development of the people around the athlete is a hallmark of a relentlessly improving high performance system.
- Development of an athlete Games Transition Programme to support athletes before, during and after their Olympic /Paralympic Games experience and a host of other athlete lifeskills supports including Accreditation for Student Athlete Support (ASAS) and the Athlete Friendly Employer Network (AFE).

- In collaboration with the Sport Ireland High Performance Unit, development of key support policies for athletes, including the Athlete Welfare Policy, Medical Reserve Fund, Maternity Policy and the Athlete Career Transition (Retirement) Support Scheme.
- The development of a quality assurance process for sport science practitioners leading to “Institute Accredited” status (transferred to the newly established Irish Sport & Exercise Sciences Association in 2024).

This statement of intent aims to build on sixteen years of growth and success for the Sport Ireland Institute and maps our priorities in performance support delivery to Irish High Performance Sport over the coming years, focused on the Olympic and Paralympic Games of Los Angeles 2028 and Brisbane 2032. We look forward to working with the performance leadership of the high performance sports in implementing this plan and in so doing enhance the prospect of podium success for Ireland’s elite athletes.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Úna May". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Úna May
CEO, Sport Ireland

Background

The Sport Ireland Institute has been committed to supporting high performance athletes achieve podium success for Ireland at World and European level since its inception. The primary driver of the Irish HP System, supported by Sport Ireland, has been targeting success at Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Institute has partnered with HP sports on delivering this target since 2007.

As the Institute has grown (most notably with the opening of the High Performance Training Centre in early 2016), the Sport Ireland Institute Team, in consultation with stakeholders in high performance sport, has identified priorities for the period 2024-2032. This Statement of Intent has been developed to align with other overarching strategies.



Sport Ireland is the statutory authority tasked with leading, advocating and providing direct funding for the development of sport in Ireland. It works with National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGB's), the OFI and PI to *'champion high performance sport – helping Irish teams, athletes, and support staff to be the best they can be and to be successful on the world stage.'*

This Statement of Intent for the Sport Ireland Institute has been developed to provide direction and contribute positively to the performance targets of the Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy 2021-2032 and the Sport Ireland Statement of Strategy 2023-2027 which are as follows:

Irish High Performance System	Targets 2024	Targets 2028
Increase in number of medals at junior and senior European and World level	270	290
Increase in the number of medals at successive Olympics & Paralympics	17-23	20-26
Number of Olympic & Paralympic Games events with Irish athletes in Top 10 positions/Finals	45-55	49-60
Country ranking in the Olympic Medal Table	55	Top 50
Country ranking in the Paralympic Medal Table	25	Top 20

The Sport Ireland Institute is cognisant of the ever-changing and evolving environment of high performance sport. It will be adaptable in delivering this Statement of Intent to ensure Ireland keeps pace with its global competitors. Continued reviews will be conducted during the Statement's lifetime.

1 <https://assets.gov.ie/15979/04e0f52cee5f47ee9c01003cf559e98d.pdf>

2 https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/document/2021-06/strategy_eng.pdf

3 https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/document/2023-09/strategy_FINAL.pdf

International Comparator Report

To advise on our direction of travel as the Sport Ireland Institute, an international comparator report was prepared to see how similar state funded institutes of sport in Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland and the UK, operate across a number of pertinent headings.

The areas of interest examined across all institutes were:

- 1) Governance and organisational structure
- 2) Current strategic objectives/priority areas
- 3) Key service offerings/programmes of interest
- 4) Targets and how they are assessed/measured
- 5) Impactful partnerships

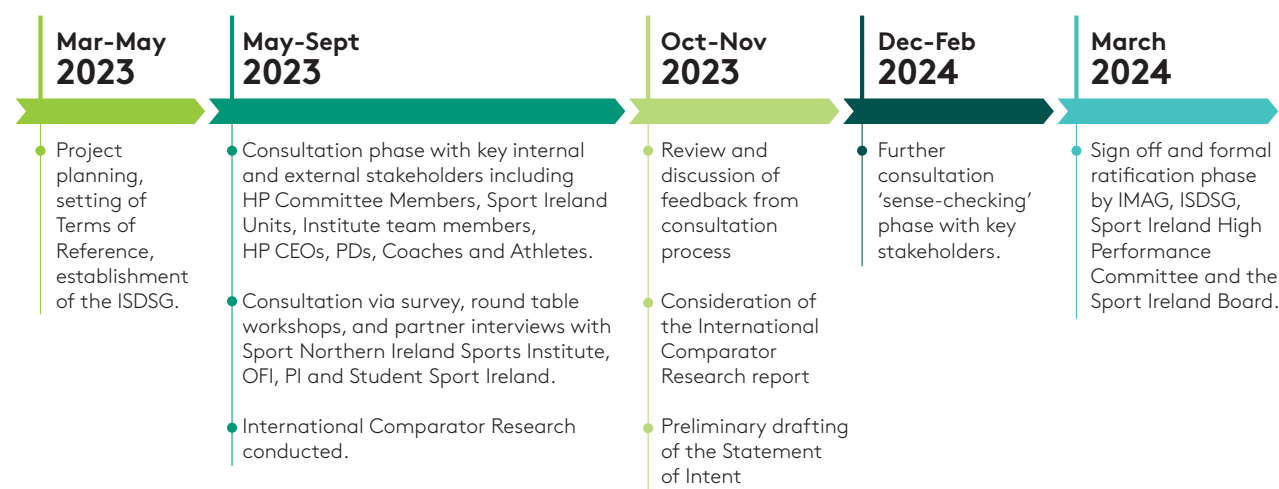
Information relating to the above was collated through a combination of desk-based research and information exchange/consultations with identified individuals.

While significant differences in approach and budget are evident across the institutes examined, most have their key development areas and core sports they support. The international comparator report has provided significant insight for the Institute Strategy Development Steering Group (ISDSG) and has informed much of the thinking on the development of this document.

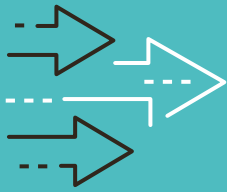
Statement Development Methodology

The development of this Statement of Intent followed a similar Appreciative Inquiry process used to develop its predecessor from 2018-2024. Driven by the ISDSG consisting of a range of expertise from all levels of the organisation and consulting widely with key internal and external stakeholders, this Statement of Intent clearly lays out the areas of focus for the Institute over the coming two Olympic and Paralympic cycles.

The methodology used to develop this statement is illustrated below:



Our Purpose



“To provide expert led performance support, planning, delivery, evaluation and development with high performance athletes, their support personnel and their NGB to sustain Team Ireland success at major European and World Championships and the Olympic & Paralympic Games.”

Our Mission



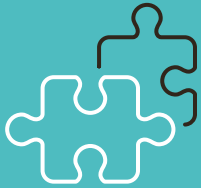
Our mission is to
DRIVE Excellence,
CREATE Solutions, and
IMPACT Performance

Our Philosophy

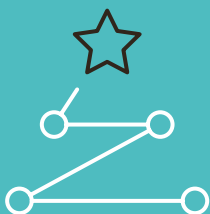


“Our athletes and the people who support them are at the heart of everything we do.”

Our Values



Key Performance Principles



#BelievePerformAchieve

We **BELIEVE** that Irish sport has the requisite athletic talent, coaching capability, performance support expertise and developing high performance support system to secure sustained podium success at major global events.

Our team will **PERFORM** relentlessly, leaving no stone unturned, to support athletes, their coaches and performance support teams, in their quest to achieve their maximum potential.

Irish athletes, their sports, and support personnel, will ultimately **ACHIEVE** success with the Sport Ireland Institute as their partner in performance.

Strategic Assumptions

In setting the strategic objectives for the Sport Ireland Institute for the period 2024-2032, we do so with the following assumptions:

- We will deliver the priorities listed in this Statement of Intent as additional resources to support them are secured over the lifetime of this plan.
- Our primary focus is on the delivery of performance support (solutions that impact performance) to Irish athletes.
- We work in partnership with the performance leadership of each HP sport (CEO, PD, Head Coach) to support them in the delivery of their performance vision for their sport.
- We will consolidate and maintain the performance support work we are currently doing with senior athletes in the priority sports.
- We will create bespoke solutions to performance questions using our multi professional team in partnership with the HP sports programmes we work with.
- We will continue to support the formation of multi professional teams around each sport and athlete.
- Our team have a continual learning and improvement ethos and will actively provide and seek feedback on the delivery of support services to athletes and sports.
- Enhanced Lifeskills Supports and the development and rollout of the Capability & Expertise Strategy will remain as central support services provided by the Sport Ireland Institute.
- We will continue to appropriately resource our Operations Department as a key support element to the entire team and operations of the Institute.
- We will adapt and evolve to the changing landscape of Sport Ireland and other key stakeholders over the term of this Statement of Intent.

Sport Ireland Institute Core Business

The Sport Ireland Institute will further evolve and mature with the delivery of this Statement of Intent. In 2024, this growth is on the back of fifteen years support to the Irish high performance system. While every effort will be taken to deliver in full on the plan as outlined, this will be conducted alongside our core business areas of:

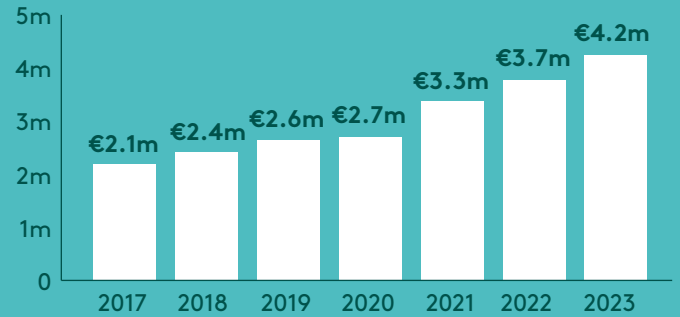
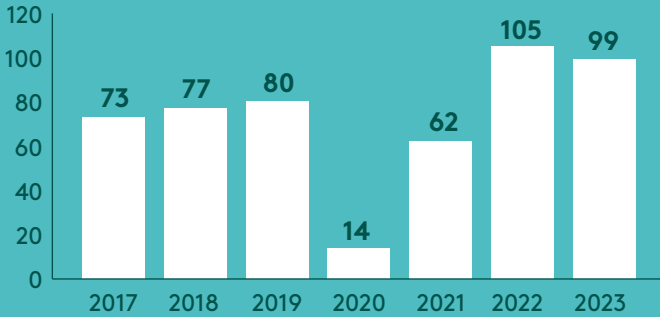
- 1) Sports science, psychology, medical and athlete lifeskills support.
- 2) Performance leadership support with planning and programme delivery.
- 3) Capability and expertise programmes supporting the professional development of high performance personnel in the NGB's we support and our own team.
- 4) Multi-disciplinary research and projects that impact athlete performance e.g. Concussion, Sleep, Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S), Body Composition etc.
- 5) Operation and development of the High Performance Training Centre at the Sport Ireland Campus.

HIGH PERFORMANCE MEDALS

Number of Irish high performance system major medals won*



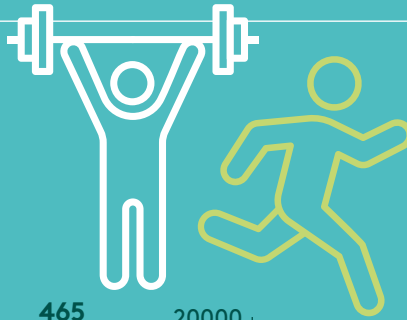
TOTAL INSTITUTE EXPENDITURE



*A major medal is a medal won at senior or non-senior (e.g. youth, junior, under-21, etc.) level, at European Championships, World Championships, Olympic & Paralympic Games by Sport Ireland funded NGBs and athletes. It may also include a medal at World Cup finals that is the equivalent of a World Championships.

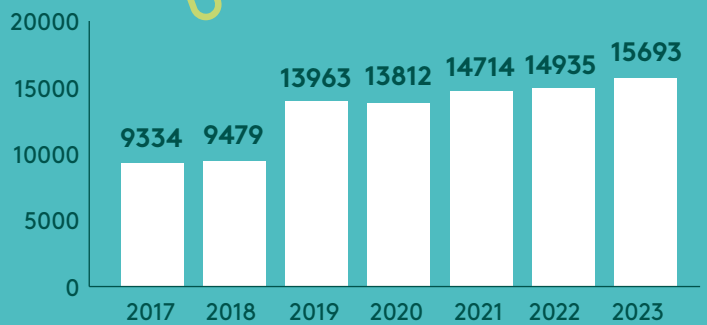
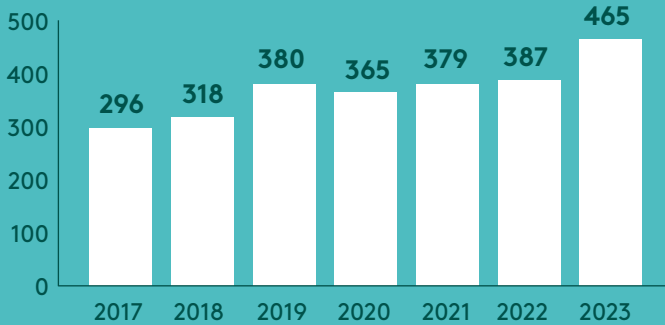
ATHLETES

Number of athlete's using Sport Ireland Institute Facilities and/or Performance Support Services



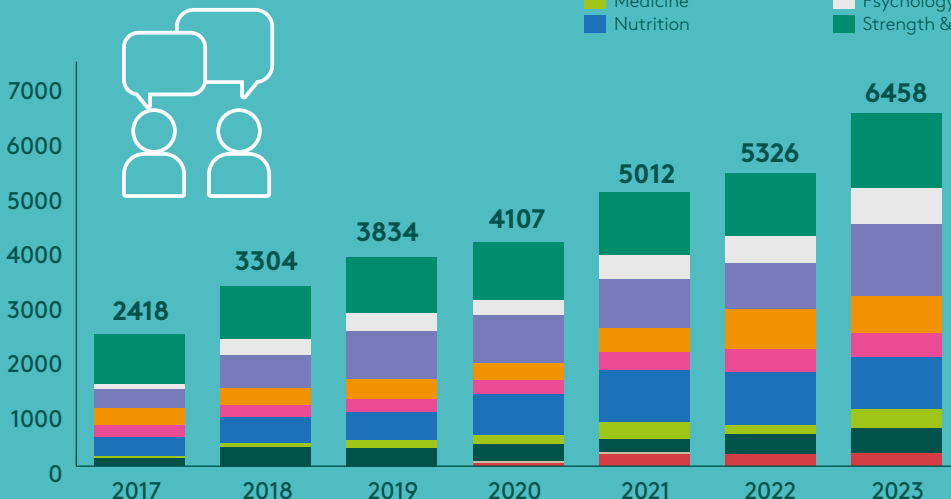
FOOTFALL

Institute high performance centre footfall

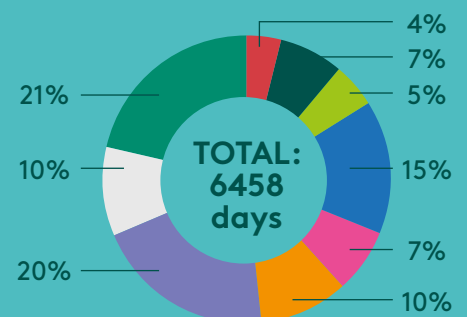


SUPPORT DAYS

- Capability & Expertise
- Coach Development
- Lifeskills
- Medicine
- Nutrition
- Performance Analysis
- Physiology
- Physiotherapy
- Psychology
- Strength & Conditioning



2023 service days per discipline



TOTAL: 6458 days

2020

Strategic Objectives

2024-2032



Sport Ireland Institute Strategic Objectives 2024-2032

Performance Services and Support

Delivery of excellent performance services and support, that impact performance of Irish high-performance athletes on the global stage.

Pathway Support

To develop a tiered, aligned system of pathway performance support with HP NGBs to build and sustain Ireland's future athletic talent and prepare them for global event performance.

Unit Review and Alignment

As a business unit of Sport Ireland we will review our internal structure to deliver on our intent and ensure alignment with other units supporting High Performance.

Development of the Institute on the Sport Ireland Campus

Develop the Institute environment and maximise our position at the heart of the Sport Ireland Campus.

Partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with key organisations that will grow and sustain Irish athlete success on the global stage with a specific focus on the Olympic & Paralympic Games of LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032.

Insights

Grow and maximise the opportunities emerging to impact Irish athlete performance in the global arena via greater use of Insights, Research, Innovation and Data handling.

STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

1

Performance Services and Support

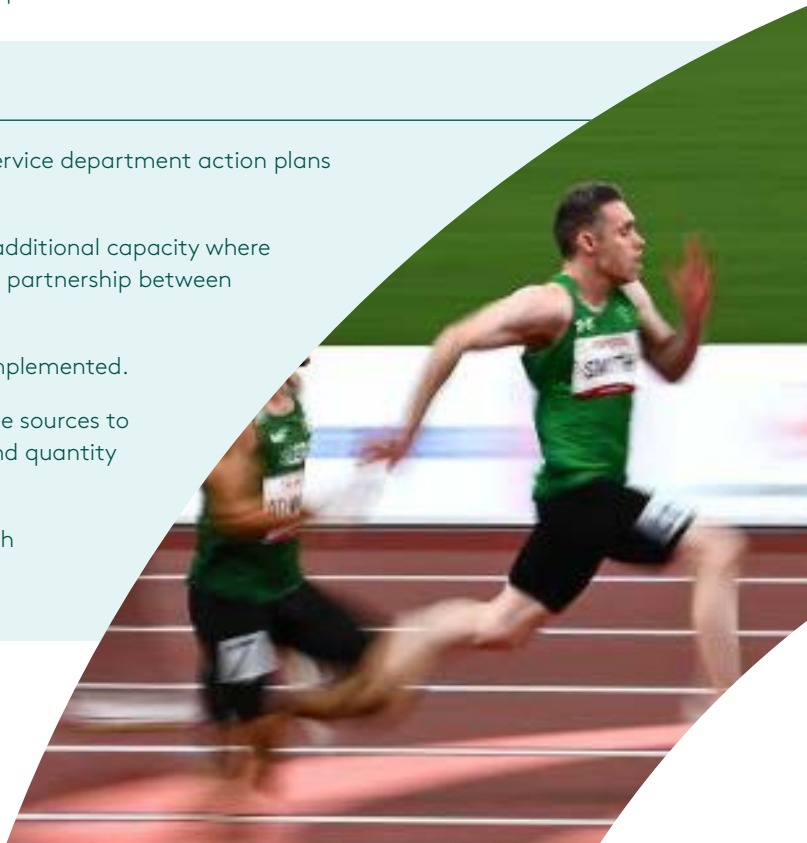
Delivery of excellent performance services and support that impacts performance of Irish high-performance athletes on the global stage.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 1.1 Each service discipline team in the Institute, led by their Head of Service (HOS), will deliver a service specific action plan to advance their service area over the period of this statement of intent. (See appendices 1-9).
- 1.2 The Head of Performance Support (HOPS) roles will be further developed to lead our performance impact in our partner sports. This will include:
 - A focus on developing HOPS skillsets amongst our team.
 - Further opportunities will be presented to the Institute team to act as HOPS with our HP sport partners.
 - A formal Head of HOPS position will be considered.
 - HOPS will drive direction of future support to sports via services requested and solutions sought and will be given greater involvement in the allocation of resources to sports (currently rests with Heads of Service).
- 1.3 The position of HOS will be reviewed to ensure the correct balance in focus between strategic leadership of the service and service delivery.
- 1.4 HOS and HOPS will work together to enhance the quality and impact of our support.
- 1.5 Incremental increase in investment to core support services (from public and private sources e.g. NGBs) in response to demand from HP Sports we partner with. This will be done via annual Performance Partnership Agreements with the core HP Sports.
- 1.6 Development and rollout of a High Performance Wellbeing and Engagement programme focused on the mental health of athletes and performance support staff supporting them.
- 1.7 We will identify and report on a series of performance metrics for the Institute (other than support to medal success) to monitor our ongoing growth, delivery and performance on an annual basis.

Measures of Success

- 1.A. Development and successful implementation of service department action plans over the term of this Statement of Intent.
- 1.B. HOPS roles with HP sports reformatted and with additional capacity where required to impact a deeper performance support partnership between the Institute and the HP Leadership of HP sports.
- 1.C. HOS role review completed and change actions implemented.
- 1.D. Level of investment growth from public and private sources to deliver enhanced support service depth, quality and quantity to athletes and HP sports.
- 1.E. Institute monitoring metrics system developed with regular reporting of progress to the Sport Ireland High Performance Committee.



STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

2

Pathway Support

To develop a tiered, aligned system of pathway performance support.

The role of pathway development in the Irish HP system rests with each NGB. Sport Ireland Institute will work closely with each NGB to advise and support the ongoing growth of their HP programme, including the pathway. The actions listed below will be conducted in partnership with NGBs to support their vision for their pathway athletes.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 2.1 Create a Pathway Support Lead role focussed solely on support programme development and delivery to identified pathway talent.
- 2.2 Review the designation process, curricula, delivery and resource requirements of the existing 'Athlete Development Programmes' (ADP) at the Institute, NGB's and Internationally and seek to roll out similar programmes to a greater number of sports.
- 2.3 Support Sport Ireland Coaching Unit's work around the development of quality coaching programmes in NGB's, including the targeted approach to fully developing NGB coaching pathways. Institute will provide support to Sport Ireland Coaching in programme development relative to sports science and medicine education for coaches.
- 2.4 Develop a 'Pathway Curriculum' across a range of sport science, psychology, medical and lifeskills services for delivery to identified talent cohorts.
- 2.5 Partner with regional institutions, e.g. Universities to ensure aligned delivery of national HP and pathway programmes across the island.
- 2.6 In partnership with the HP NGB's, a programme will be developed for a limited select group of exceptionally talented young athletes, who will receive wrap around dedicated Institute support.

Measures of Success

- 2.A. Recruitment of Pathway Support Lead role.
- 2.B. Review of the ADP programme offering completed and its more extensive rollout offering to HP sports.
- 2.C. Sport Ireland Coaching programmes for pathway athletes with a development lens in the areas of sport science and medicine education for coaches completed with appropriate expertise from the Sport Ireland Institute.
- 2.D. The Pathway Curriculum across the sport sciences, psychology, medicine and lifeskills is developed and successfully rolled out to pathway athletes of the HP sports.
- 2.E. Regional institutions providing aligned supports to pathway athletes in partnership with the Sport Ireland Institute.
- 2.F. Institutes talented athletes pathway programme developed and in operation each year from 2026 from across the HP Sport NGB's.



STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

3

Partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with key organisations that will grow and sustain Irish athlete success on the global stage with a specific focus on the Olympic and Paralympic Games of LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032.

The Sport Ireland Institute has grown with the support of Sport Ireland, the Department of Sport and a series of performance partnerships with key organisations. The development of new partnerships will continue to be focussed on enhanced service delivery to athletes, performance support personnel and the development of the High Performance Centre at the Sport Ireland Campus.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 3.1** Consolidate aligned performance partnerships with the HP Leadership of HP funded NGB's to develop sustained systems of performance development and success, and deliver on the targets of the Irish High Performance Strategy 2021-2032 in doing so. We will do this via:
 - Ongoing review and development of the PPA between the Institute and HP NGB's.
 - Providing greater capacity in enhanced HOPS roles in their support to NGB's on our behalf.
- 3.2** Review our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the OFI after the Paris 2024 Olympic Games against the mutually agreed objectives. Following the review, we will seek to enhance our partnership with the OFI to further support Irish athletes on the path to LA 2028.
- 3.3** Review our MOU with PI after the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games against the mutually agreed objectives. Following the review, we will seek to enhance our partnership with PI to further support Irish athletes on the path to LA 2028.
- 3.4** Work closely with Student Sport Ireland (SSI) to build a cohesive and aligned action plan that brings the HEI's more to the centre of the HP system and further improves the impact of their support on the HP system in Ireland. Key actions to be delivered (in alignment with the HP Strategy 2021-2032) include:
 - Grow the ASAS Programme and secure a wider network of accredited higher education institutions on the island. Establish joint objectives, develop insights over existing delivery and identify appropriate student dual career support enhancements across the accredited network.
 - Research partnerships.
 - Student placement.
 - Aligned performance support delivery across the HP system led by Institute practitioners and supported by NGB and HEI practitioner teams.
 - Establish Institute regional support for HP athletes with HEI partners.
- 3.5** Enhance existing and develop new partnerships with other bodies that support the Institute to deliver on its intent to athletes and HP sports such as:
 - Ireland Active (Skillnet)
 - Irish Sport & Exercise Sciences Association (Professional development and Professional Accreditation)
 - Enterprise Ireland (Sport to Start Up)
 - Multiple organisations who contribute to the Athlete Friendly Employer Network
 - Insight/Science Foundation Ireland
- 3.6** We will continue to develop the reputation and recognition of the Sport Ireland Institute by developing international relations with other similar Institutes globally and the Association of Sports Performance Centres (ASPC).
- 3.7** With external support, explore a commercial support offering to seek appropriate third party private investment and in-kind support that enhances our ability to drive performance excellence with athletes and sports. These partnerships will be actively supported by Sport Ireland's Communications & Marketing Team.

Measures of Success

- 3.A.** Full review completed of the PPA procedure and policies to reflect system needs for the LA 2028 cycle and to impact on athlete performance.
- 3.B.** Complete reviews of the Institute MOU with the OFI and PI from the Paris 2024 games and secure enhanced performance support delivery agreements with both parties for the LA 2028 and the Brisbane 2032 Games cycles.
- 3.C.** Finalise an action plan with SSI to improve the impact of Higher Education sector support on the HP sport system in Ireland with actions across domains including ASAS, research partnerships, student placements, support delivery by HEI practitioners and regional support hub development.
- 3.D.** Retention of partner supports for Institute programmes and identification of new opportunities, and recruitment of new partners, to support our mission.
- 3.E.** Development of new opportunities and partnerships across the ASPC membership globally that can impact Irish athlete performance and enhance the reputation of the Institute and its team of practitioners.
- 3.F.** Complete a commercial support offering for the Institute's assets and go to market to secure higher levels of commercial support for Institute programmes and services.



STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

4

Insights

Grow and maximise the opportunities emerging to impact Irish athlete performance in the global arena via greater use of Insights, Research, Innovation and Data handling.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 4.1. In partnership with the Research & Innovation Unit, develop a clear policy on the curation and delivery of applied research projects in the Sport Ireland Institute targeting impact on Irish athlete performance at major championships.
- 4.2. Adapt the terms of reference of the Institute Research Working Group to reflect the revised policy.
- 4.3. Appoint an Institute Head of Research & Performance Solutions to identify, support, coordinate and manage all aspects of Institute research and performance question solutions development undertaken by the team.
- 4.4. We will continue to support appropriate performance research that will drive impact by positioning the Institute as the enterprise partner with select PhD, Professional Doctorate or Post Doctoral Studies.
- 4.5. Appoint a Post Doctoral data analyst scientist to conduct an audit of the range of athlete performance data retained by the Institute across multiple applications & identify 4-5 target data insight projects that will impact performance at LA 2028 for Team Ireland.
- 4.6. To align and support the Research & Innovation Unit's Tech Conference offering, we will run an annual HPX Symposium in the area of Data Handling, Analytics, Insights and Performance Analysis focussed on the high performance sector.
- 4.7. Develop a working group to enhance our understanding of the influence, opportunities and potential risks of advancing technologies on HP sport. This group of Institute, HP, Research & Innovation Unit members and industry experts will develop an action plan of a phased approach where Irish HP sport can leverage the considerable expertise which exists in the Irish tech landscape.
- 4.8. Develop a mechanism to ensure high value projects undertaken by the Institute Team, such as the Sleep Project and the Menstrual Cycle Project, have a legacy value that practitioners across the team have a clear pathway to implementing learnings into their current practice. Where appropriate this legacy value will extend to the wider sport system in Ireland e.g. Education programmes offered by Sport Ireland, Women in Sport programmes, Sport Ireland Coaching development programmes etc.



Measures of Success

- 4.A.** Research curation policy in high performance domain agreed across business units in Sport Ireland.
- 4.B.** Role development of Head of Research and Performance Solutions completed and successful recruitment of the post.
- 4.C.** Sport Ireland Institute partners in at least one postgraduate or post-doctoral research project per annum.
- 4.D.** Appointment of a post-doctoral data analyst in partnership with a 3rd party, delivery of the data audit report and the successful completion of 4-5 data projects by the end of 2025.
- 4.E.** Hosting of HPX Data Symposium annually from 2025 onwards.
- 4.F.** Finalise the terms of reference and identify the composition of the working group to explore the advancing technologies on HP sport. Advancing the groups work with the completion of the action plan.
- 4.G.** Successful application of Institute projects and research to programme/service offerings in day-to-day support offering and wider general public education where appropriate.

STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

5

Development of the Institute on the Sport Ireland Campus

Develop the Institute environment and maximise our position at the heart of the Sport Ireland Campus.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 5.1** In collaboration with the Sport Ireland Campus Development Unit, develop a phased development plan (identifying best in class facilities/equipment or new innovations) that sustains the Sport Ireland Institute as the primary choice for Irish athletes to access their Performance Support.
 - Secure planning permission for an extensive reorganisation and extension of the Institute High Performance Centre at the Sport Ireland Campus to include, but not limited to:
 - Boxing High Performance Centre
 - Performance Physiology Centre
 - Extended Strength & Conditioning Facility
 - Enhanced Medical and Rehabilitation Centre
 - Institute Thinking Centre
 - Continuously invest in HP equipment renewal and replacement to ensure the Institute remains at the cutting edge of support delivery.
- 5.2** Regularly review the facilities and specific purpose spaces at the Institute to assess their ongoing fitness for purpose. Where necessary, re organise the High Performance Centre to optimise our service offering to athletes and performance support personnel, taking into consideration other facilities for HP athletes on the Sport Ireland Campus e.g. Athletes Lounge at the Sport Ireland Longbarn.
- 5.3** Continue to focus on the work environment for our team at the High Performance Centre and ensure our environment and work practices support their delivery of our mission.
- 5.4** Contribute positively to meet Sport Ireland’s Sustainability and low emissions targets by completing a review of energy usage, emissions, work practices and develop an action plan to play our part in addressing the challenges from climate change.
- 5.5** Actively contribute to the development of other facilities benefitting HP athletes on the Sport Ireland Campus such as athlete accommodation, athletes hub, 400m running track and perimeter trail loop, velodrome & badminton centre and the cricket oval. This includes specific needs of certain athletes such as para-athletes (accessibility) and student athletes (study spaces etc.).
- 5.6** Seek the ‘Athlete Voice’ and the views of other key stakeholders on the ongoing development of the Institute High Performance Centre as a performance and training environment.



Measures of Success

- 5.A.** Finalise the phased development plan for the Sport Ireland Institute's High Performance Centre on the Sport Ireland Campus.
- 5.B.** Planning application submitted to Fingal County Council and subsequent securing of planning permission for the multi-phase development programme for the Institute.
- 5.C.** Progress on delivery of the phased development plan on site.
- 5.D.** Biannual review of the HP centre completed to optimise the performance environment for athletes and the work environment for Institute staff.
- 5.E.** Complete sustainability review of the Sport Ireland Institute building and work practices completed and action plan agreed for implementation.
- 5.F.** Mechanism for securing ongoing athlete input to Sport Ireland Institute service development and facilities identified and in operation with at least an annual engagement to evaluate and monitor progress of the Institute against athlete needs.



STRATEGIC
OBJECTIVE

6

Unit Review and Alignment

As a business unit of Sport Ireland, we will review our internal structure to deliver on our intent and ensure alignment with other units supporting High Performance.

It is essential that the Institute continues to monitor our internal alignment within Sport Ireland to ensure our continued development, effective delivery but also contribute to the achievement of Sport Ireland's Statement of Strategy 2023-2027 and subsequent strategies. Continuous review of our internal structure is essential to ensure we remain fit for purpose to support the HP systems goals. In doing so, we aim to raise our profile, raise awareness, improve knowledge and enhance our reputation.

Actions to achieve this objective:

- 6.1** A review of the role, function and organisational structure of the Sport Ireland Institute Unit within Sport Ireland will be undertaken in 2024.
- 6.2** The recommendations made to sustain the future growth and performance of the unit for the coming period up to 2032 will be considered for implementation by the High Performance Committee and the Board of Sport Ireland.
- 6.3** The Sport Ireland workforce plan will be amended, if applicable, to respond to the human resource needs of the unit arising from the organisational structure review and the roles required to deliver on this statement of intent.
- 6.4** We will further optimise cross-unit collaboration opportunities with colleagues in Sport Ireland to advance the High Performance System and agenda in Ireland. The key areas include:
 - 6.4.1 High Performance Unit:** Athlete Voice, Athlete Welfare, Performance Planning & Investment, Carding system enhancement, Data insights & intelligence, HP Coaching system development, and pathway supports.
 - 6.4.2 Sport Ireland Coaching Unit:** Coaching pathway development and coach support programmes, including the One Good Coach Programme developed with Jigsaw (Athlete and Staff Wellbeing programme development). Where appropriate, collaboration on pan European Erasmus+ projects.
 - 6.4.3 Women in Sport Unit:** Enhanced programme development and support targeting the HP Female Athlete.
 - 6.4.4 Research & Innovation Unit:** Research programmes and investment, HP Innovation action planning.
 - 6.4.5 Marketing & Communications Unit:** HP communications, Event management & support, Partner recruitment, servicing and activation.
 - 6.4.6 Campus Development Unit:** Design, planning & delivery of the Institute development plan & advisory on the wider Campus Masterplan.
 - 6.4.7 Organisational Development & Change Unit:** Support in the development of professional development programmes for HP support professionals.
 - 6.4.8 Sport Ireland Facilities DAC:** Support the DAC in the delivery of its objectives in support of the HP systems and programmes at Sport Ireland Campus facilities.

Measures of Success

- 6.A.** Commission and complete the independent review of the Sport Ireland Institute with recommendations for the future role, remit, function and structure provided for consideration by the executive and the HP Committee.
- 6.B.** Progress on the delivery of the Institute workforce plan.
- 6.C.** Extent of Sport Ireland Institute engagement with other business units on a cross unit collaboration basis to support our mission to impact athlete performance.



Implementation & Review

- ▶ The delivery of the overall statement of intent, including measurement of key performance objectives will be overseen by the Institute Management Advisory Group (IMAG).

- ▶ The ISDSG will reconvene annually to review delivery progress against intent and to amend or reshape strategic objectives or the delivery actions to suit the contemporaneous performance and economic environment we are operating within. This group will make recommendations to IMAG on statement delivery, review and amendment as and when appropriate.

- ▶ Progress reports will be issued to the Sport Ireland High Performance Committee twice annually.

- ▶ The Annual Activities Report of the Sport Ireland Institute will detail progress of the implementation of this Statement of Intent.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Psychology (Performance & Clinical) Department Intent	26
Appendix 2: Performance Nutrition Department Intent	27
Appendix 3: Performance Physiology Department Intent	28
Appendix 4: Performance Analysis Department Intent	29
Appendix 5: Performance Medicine Department Intent	30
Appendix 6: Rehab/Physiotherapy Department Intent	31
Appendix 7: Performance Lifeskills Department Intent	32
Appendix 8: Strength & Conditioning Department Intent	33
Appendix 9: Capability & Expertise Department Intent	34



Appendix 1

Psychology (Performance & Clinical) Department Intent

“The Institute psychology practitioners facilitate opportunities (through collaboration) for sports to develop their athletes and staff holistically, helping shape values-driven cultural environments that are sustainable for future high-performance generations.”

- AP1.1** Conduct a full review of the Institute Psychology Department to ensure best practice delivery for HP athletes targeting the Olympic & Paralympic Games.
- AP1.2** Develop the Institute psychology team and service to ensure best practice delivery and in accordance with any future regulatory framework that is likely to emerge.
- AP1.3** Establish a formal model of external supervision to support the work of our psychology team.
- AP1.4** Develop and rollout a specific Performance Psychology and Clinical Psychology curriculum for Irish HP sport across the sport and clinical psychology network.
- AP1.5** Lead in the development and rollout of the Athlete and Support Staff Wellbeing & Engagement Programme in collaboration with the Institute Capability & Expertise, Performance Lifeskills and Medicine Departments.
- AP1.6** Optimise the development of the psychology department by utilising emerging digital technologies. Use of these new technologies to improve education and engagement of athletes and staff for major championships.
- AP1.7** Application of new research methods to aid our clinical psychology and performance psychology support offering e.g. Psychophysiology and Biofeedback.
- AP1.8** Develop an appropriate onboarding/induction programme with the HPU for new entrants to the International Carding Scheme that supports a successful transition into HP sport.

Appendix 2

Performance Nutrition Department Intent

“The Nutrition Department’s primary aim is to optimise the performance of athletes by developing customised nutrition plans and strategies that are tailored to the specific needs of each athlete, considering their sport, training regimen, and individual goals.”

- AP2.1** Address the barriers of access and availability to adequate fuelling by moving towards full catering provision on site at the Sport Ireland Campus and other high performance centre locations of the sports we support.
- AP2.2** Develop the Performance kitchen to enhance the knowledge and nutritional behaviours of athletes from pathway right through to senior levels. To integrate this provision with live skills to ensure athletes can also look to achieve formal educational attainment which may enhance career opportunities in their transition out of sport.
- AP2.3** To remain at the forefront of sports nutrition, the department will continue to develop the current program of research and innovation. This would involve conducting studies, collaborating both nationally and internationally, and staying updated with the latest scientific advancements in the field of sports nutrition. By exploring innovative approaches, we can provide athletes with the most effective nutritional strategies.
- AP2.4** Continued collaboration with sports science and medical teams involved in the care of athletes to deliver transdisciplinary solutions to problems that may be impacting health and performance ensuring nutrition plays a key role in the overall support system.
- AP2.5** Education and Knowledge Transfer: Education and transfer of knowledge to athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders is key. This would involve workshops, seminars, and educational sessions to enhance awareness about the importance of nutrition in Olympic performance.
- AP2.6** Harness new educational methodology in educational delivery and measure outcomes systematically. By empowering athletes and their support teams with knowledge, we can promote long-term success beyond the 2024-2028 Olympic cycle.

Appendix 3

Performance Physiology Department Intent

The physiology team specialise in optimising human performance through a comprehensive understanding of the physiological factors that influence athletic ability and overall athlete well-being. We will continue to support athletes, coaches and sports with tailored strategies and support to positively impact performance

AP3.1 Focus on a comprehensive and integrated physiology approach encompassing aspects of training, recovery and physiological adaptation by:

- Targeted testing and monitoring programs developed to improve specific performance metrics.
- Increase number of athletes utilising training load and wellness reporting
- Female athlete focused support.
- Individualised interventions for optimal adaptation to training stimuli and challenges.
- Utilisation of Institute environmental chamber to prepare athletes for training and competition in adverse environmental conditions including heat, humidity and altitude.

AP3.2 Define a structured physiology support model for pathway athletes to guide their development and performance optimisation by:

- Increase delivery of physiology support to pathway athlete programs.
- Develop thorough physiological assessments to establish baseline data relevant to both sport and age population with regular review to track progress.
- Increased delivery of educational workshops and resources to support athletes and coaches.
- Focus on building solid training foundation considering different stages of growth and maturation.

AP3.3 Advancing our understanding of human performance, optimising training methodologies and improving overall athlete well-being by:

- Integrating cutting-edge technologies to keep physiology service delivery at world-class level including development of bigger testing facilities and lab space.
- Implement evidence-based practices and integrate innovative approaches.
- Continue to develop research and academic links between physiology and third-level institutions to enhance physiology service delivery.
- Prioritize professional development opportunities for physiology team through upskilling, CPD and internal learnings.

AP3.4 Collaborate and inclusive to foster a comprehensive and supportive environment benefiting athletes, coaches and practitioners:

- Increased interdisciplinary collaboration through focused projects, cross-disciplinary learning and regular information sharing within the Institute.
- Ensure diversity in applied research projects to enhance application of general findings across various populations.
- Consideration of cultural factors to understand unique needs of athletes from diverse backgrounds in design of training programs, testing plans and performance strategies.
- Increase engagement globally within physiology network to share best practices, research findings and knowledge exchange.
- Focus on accessible education and resources for all athletes, developing materials that will cater to diverse audience needs.

Appendix 4

Performance Analysis Department Intent

“The core role of the analyst is to develop approaches for the systematic collection of performance related data, both video (subjective) and numbers/metrics (objective) and to utilise this information to assist coaches, athletes, support staff and PD’s to prompt behaviour changes, enhance decision making and judgements. The primary focus of the role is on translating data into actionable insights that can be used to impact performance.”

AP4.1 Advance the skill set – focus on advancing data literacy skills, a range of skills which will enable our ability to read, interpret and communicate about data in context and critically assess it to transform into actionable insights.

AP4.2 Capability – advance our knowledge and understanding of how a range of technological advancements i.e. analytics, computer vision and potentially AI can be leveraged to advance the capabilities of the Performance Analysis dept.

AP4.3 Capacity – continue to build engagement and grow demand for performance analysis support from the HP sports.

AP4.4 Foster links for applied research and collaboration with academia to strengthen evidence base of the utilisation and impact of performance analysis in our operating reality.

AP4.5 Ensure a high-quality performance analysis support service is continually tailored to needs of the high performance coaches, athletes and performance systems which we service.

AP4.6 Develop a range of tools and solutions, consistently creating engaging and interactive performance reports by leveraging technological advancements and ensuring all performance metrics collected are integrated effectively in order to enabling the embedded analyst to respond promptly to coaches performance questions.

Appendix 5

Performance Medicine Department Intent

The medical team aims to provide a holistic world class sports medicine service, delivering cutting-edge medical support to high performance athletes, that positively impact their health, well-being and performance. We use international best practice to optimise the health and performance of athletes, whilst always considering their current and long term health.

- AP5.1** Continued development of practitioners with a blend of expertise and specialities to work to a gold standard in a multisport high performance sport environment.
- AP5.2** An audit of medical practices at Sport Ireland Institute to be conducted to ensure compliance with international best practice sports and exercise medicine.
- AP5.3** Development of clear outcome measures to guide best practice in relation to optimal athletes health and performance.
- AP5.4** Support NGB's in the development of good practices and procedures to advise and oversee on the health and wellbeing of young athletes and support their transition to senior level. Support early medical assessment to help inform talent identification with regards to growth and maturation.
- AP5.5** Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders in medical service support to HP athletes on a national level (e.g. OFI and PI) and internationally (IOC, OCOG's, NOC's, IF's).
- AP5.6** Development of partnerships with third level institutions for research and innovation to inform best medical practice in high performance athletes.
- AP5.7** Lead and collaborate with other Institute departments and national governing bodies on national policies related sports medicine, e.g concussion, athlete health.

Appendix 6

Rehab/Physiotherapy Department Intent

“The rehabilitation team will continue to deliver quality assured and effective physiotherapy provision to elite athletes; mitigating risk of injury, managing injuries and optimising rehabilitation systems in performance focussed environments. Our support will consider the athlete as an individual and their specific needs.”

AP6.1 Embed an interdisciplinary approach to our service by advancing collaborative approaches and prioritising wellbeing within performance teams and sporting environments.

AP6.2 Support the development of an enhanced performance pathway by delivering an accessible national performance network of practitioners for the development of future talent, while providing our elite athletes with the support they need to become world class.

AP6.3 Broaden our expertise to foster a culture of diversity and inclusion. This will include:

- Female athlete: pelvic health, MSK health through the pivotal life stages, concussion, and sleep.
- Disability sport outside of the “Big 3”.
- Neurodiversity and HSD in Sport.

AP6.4 Expand our support to identified pathway athletes by scoping how we best support the junior to senior transition (JST). Utilising ongoing research projects in Irish HEI’s examining youth development, maturation, and injury risk we will identify metrics to monitor with our specific cohorts to minimise injury risk and maximise ability in development stages.

AP6.5 Optimise health and performance through use of data we will implement a robust athlete monitoring system on injury history, recovery progress and performance metrics, thereof optimising health and performance through their journey from pathway to elite performer.

AP6.6 Develop a data management feedback system involving athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders to continuously assess the effectiveness of physiotherapy services. This feedback will be used to make informed adjustments to protocols, programmes and services ensuring a dynamic and responsive approach to athlete care.

Appendix 7

Performance Lifeskills Department Intent

Our aim as a team is to provide a comprehensive suite of athlete life skills services to enable Irish athletes to achieve their full potential through education, career and performance life skills support. We take a system wide approach to create an environment that is more conducive for performance in sport and life in general, as well as a focus on developing the individual skills needed for athletes to manage within that environment. When retirement from competition inevitably arrives, we want athletes that are content with their past and excited for their future.

- AP7.1** Evolve the ASAS Programme by securing a larger network of accredited higher education institutions and raising the bar of student athlete support by the creation of tiered system of accreditation to recognise higher standards.
- AP7.2** Consolidate the AFE Network to include all organisations across all sectors of the society and expand on the networks ability to become a key driver for education, skills and CPD delivery to Irish athletes and key support staff working in the HP sector.
- AP7.3** In concert with the ACT Retirement Support Programme, directly target experienced and knowledgeable athlete retention within the HP sport system by developing pathways to the Pursuit of Excellence Programme (Coaching), offering athlete leadership development support, and creation of an athlete alumni network to support the ongoing development of Irish HP sport.
- AP7.4** Review the impact of the Paris 2024 Games Transition programme and develop an enhanced programme offering for athletes and staff for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic & Paralympic Games.
- AP7.5** Develop a pathway athlete specific lifeskills support programme to assist young Hp athletes with early career education and employment options that align with the Hp athlete lifestyle and the HP programme needs of their sport.

Appendix 8

Strength & Conditioning Department Intent

The Strength and Conditioning department will strive to enhance the relevant physical capacities of elite Irish athletes' through innovative and integrated training practices. We will deliver training interventions which are closely aligned with the technical coaching models of the sports we work with. We aim to lead with evidence-based methodologies while also acknowledging the interpersonal aspects of improving athlete performance.

- AP8.1** Ensure a high-quality S&C support service to high performance athletes and high performance sports is maintained.
- AP8.2** Develop (formalise and align) partnerships with Irish 3rd level institutions to enhance the breadth of S&C service we can offer, and enhance the flexibility of training options for athletes, nationwide.
- AP8.3** As part of the Institute building expansion, develop the Institute HP Training Facility as a standout facility in Ireland with clear points of difference to other training facilities.
- AP8.4** Conduct a scoping exercise to determine the need to develop a regional network of S&C coaches and training hubs (or partner facilities) aligned to the practices of the SI Institute.
- AP8.5** Develop an S&C focused 'Women in Sport' pilot project targeted at mitigating the increased injury risk in young female athletes and to help overcome the psycho-social factors which can inhibit female participation in S&C practices.
- AP8.6** Improve the integrated research profile of the Sport Ireland Institute S&C team via University collaboration and the implementation of 1-2 PhD programs over the term of the strategic plan.

Appendix 9

Capability & Expertise Department Intent

The Capability & Expertise teams role is to support the Professional development of all those that surround and impact the performance of the athletes, including CEOs PDs Coaches Sports Science and medical staff as well as athlete leaders. This is provided through communities of practice, workshops, peer learning, mentoring and individual bespoke supports. C&E also supports learning in the broader community as a whole through the HPX and the Research and Innovation function of the institute.

AP9.1 Continue to evolve the current Capability and Expertise strategy to meet the needs of the HP Community.

AP9.2 Review with Stakeholders the effectiveness of and the needs for each of the Capability and Expertise programmes post Paris 2024

AP9.3 To work with High Performance Coaching and establish a long-term strategy for the positioning and objectives of the Pursuit of Excellence programmes

AP9.4 Continue the implementation of the use of Communities of Practise as an integral method of learning and development of the core groups supported by the Institute – CEO's, PDs, Coaches, Performance Support Personnel and Sport Science and Medical Practitioners.

AP9.5 Introduce a Community of Practise for Athlete Leaders

AP9.6 Work with a variety of stakeholders to further develop our approach and investment in Innovation and Research as a means of improving our expertise capacity and know-how to impact performance of Irish athletes at major championships.



SPÓRT
ÉIREANN
INSTITIÚID

SPORT
IRELAND
INSTITUTE