



IGNITE

THE LARGEST-EVER INITIATIVE
TO EMPOWER THE PARALYMPIC
MOVEMENT IN CANADA



PARALYMPIC FOUNDATION
FONDATION PARALYMPIQUE

IGNITE Change Through Sport

Everyone has a story of being inspired by sport, whether by an event, an athlete, or a single moment.

The Paralympic movement, embodied by the Paralympic Games and the exceptional athletes who compete in them, weaves stories that reach far beyond the realm of sport. This movement has been a catalyst for change, driving inclusivity and accessibility within our communities. It's not only about creating opportunities for individuals with a disability to excel and showcase their resilience; the Paralympic movement is a testament to the potential of human spirit and the power of sport as a conduit for change and unity.

While the Paralympic movement holds profound potential to reshape the world, the athletes and infrastructure that form its foundation face significant obstacles on their journey to triumph. Despite the strides made, there's still an uphill struggle in ensuring full accessibility, fair resources, and holistic support, critical components for the success of athletes with a disability and the progression of the movement.



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IT IS TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE. THE PARALYMPIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA IS IGNITING THE LARGEST-EVER INITIATIVE TO EMPOWER THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT IN CANADA.

We imagine a future where Canadians with a disability are offered ample opportunities to experience the transformative power of sport. We strive to support diverse champions that inspire belief in the potential for greatness, thereby shaping communities across Canada into healthy and inclusive spaces where every person with a disability feels a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Together, we will **IGNITE CHANGE THROUGH SPORT.**



IGNITE Opportunity



EVERYONE DESERVES TO EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF SPORT

Sport is a catalyst for personal growth and health, nurturing essential life skills like resilience, independence, and determination to work toward goals and dreams. Yet, for individuals with a disability, an array of barriers often stands between them and the gateway to sport programs and activities.

Presently, the Canadian Para sport system lacks the full capacity to navigate a Para athlete through every stage of their sporting journey, from the start line to excelling in their chosen sport.





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IT MIGHT SEEM INSIGNIFICANT, BUT IT CAN ACTUALLY HELP YOU REGAIN SO MUCH OF YOUR SENSE OF SELF.

Before I was injured, if people asked me...Who are you? What do you like? Sport and being physically active would have been a big part of it. So, to think that's not part of who I am anymore, to have it totally taken away, really affects your sense of self. For me, getting involved in Para sport made it so that I could transition from being an athlete in one way to being an athlete in another way, and I never had to lose that feeling of who I am.

– LEANNE TAYLOR - PARIS 2024 HOPEFUL, PARA TRIATHLON



We're committed to breaking down these barriers, providing Canadians with a disability the tools they need. This includes financial support for adaptive sport equipment, access to Paralympic sport programs and skilled coaches, and opportunities for specialized training and competitions.

But our ambitions go beyond mere participation; we're forging a path towards inclusivity, belonging, and a vibrant, thriving culture within the realm of sport.



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**EACH ONE OF THOSE ATHLETES IS A HIDDEN
WARRIOR IN THEIR COMMUNITY.**

When I looked around [at the Paralympians who were in Tokyo] I saw so many people that had millions of reasons to give up in life, but they chose one to fight on. Each one of those athletes is a hidden warrior in their community that has overcome so much adversity. Para sport for us saved our lives.

– BRIANNA HENNESSY – PARALYMPIAN, PARA CANOE





Impacts

With your support, we will commit **\$12 Million** by 2028 to Ignite Opportunity.

— **\$2 Million:** Paralympic System Development

We recognize the importance of strong Para sport development programming to support a sustainable Paralympic sport system as well as podium performances. Investment in the Paralympic system funds innovative services and programs to address any existing system gaps and opportunities. This includes building coaching capacities, recruiting new Para athletes, supporting Para sport development programs, and providing competition opportunities.

— **\$5 Million:** Next Generation Athlete Program

Next Generation athlete development programming supports Canada's Paralympic hopefuls who have the potential to excel in their sport at national and international competitions including the Paralympic Games. Funding supports Canada's Next Generation of Para athletes through coaching development, access to specialized training environments, health and wellness support, and sport science programming. Next Generation program funding is **matched each year up to \$1 million** by the Government of Canada.

— **\$5 Million:** Adapted Equipment

The cost of adaptive sport equipment is one of the primary barriers for individuals with a disability to participate in Para sport, whether they are getting started in their community, or in their pursuit to reach elite levels. With the unique needs of each athlete, the sport equipment required can be up to 10x the cost of sport equipment for able bodied athletes. Through this funding, the Paralympic Foundation of Canada will support adaptive sport equipment needs for Para athletes at all levels.

IGNITE Belief



CREATING CHAMPIONS TO INSPIRE BELIEF THAT GREATNESS IS POSSIBLE

Every champion was once a contender that refused to give up. Some of them were lucky enough to find inspiration in a hero, someone they watched on TV or at a live event, creating a spark that ignited the pursuit of greatness.

Think of Wayne Gretzky, who, at age ten, met his idol, Gordie Howe. That encounter changed his life and instilled a belief that he too could become the world's greatest hockey player.





But not everyone has an idol to look up to. Take Greg Westlake, for example. A double amputee before the age of one, he never had an example of someone like him excelling in his beloved sport of hockey. Despite this, through determination and grit, he became a five-time Paralympian and three-time Paralympic medalist in Para ice hockey.

We believe that having the ability to dream and envision greatness in oneself should never be a matter of chance based on a person's disability. This conviction fuels our passion for the Paralympic movement and our commitment to ensure that Canadians with a disability have access to resources to best achieve their athletic aspirations and excel on the world stage.

The Paralympic Games, as one of the world's largest sporting events, represent the zenith of athletic accomplishment for those with a disability. It's a summit that should be attainable for any individual possessing the talent, passion, and determination.

When athletes like Greg Westlake proudly wear the maple leaf and represent our nation, they become more than just competitors; they become living proof of potential. They ensure that others with a disability have a beacon to look up to, an example in whom they can see a reflection of their own possibilities.





Impacts

With your support, we will commit **\$10 Million** by 2028 to Ignite Belief.

— **\$6 Million:** Enhanced Excellence

Enhanced Excellence funding supports high-performing athletes on their journey to the Paralympic Games. It is directed towards coaching and technical leadership, training and competitions, innovative sports science and sport medical support, and organizational capacity to manage an effective high-performance program.

— **\$2 Million:** Games Performance Planning

The Games Performance Planning Fund (GPPF) provides funding to National Sport Organizations to address areas of greatest needs in achieving their Games performance plan. This includes pre-Games staging and site visits for the purpose of inspection, sourcing, and scouting; familiarization activities with athletes and staff including training camps and test events; as well as additional projects required by the National Sport Organization.

— **\$2 Million:** Classification

Classification is the cornerstone of the Paralympic movement. It determines which athletes are eligible to compete in a sport and how athletes are grouped together for competition. Athletes are grouped by the degree of activity limitation resulting from their impairment. Ensuring that athletes are classified prior to competing is crucial to safeguarding the integrity and credibility of the competition. Funding directed towards classification will support sending athletes to classification events or competitions, training classifiers within Canada, and bringing international classifier panels to events in Canada.



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IT'S MADE SUCH A DIFFERENCE, HAVING A CONNECTION TO A ROLE MODEL LIKE GREG.

When I was little, I was introduced to Greg Westlake who has a similar disability to me. It was super cool and I have been able to continue communicating with him over the years. He's given me a few of his sticks and even shared a few tips with me – small things but it has really helped me elevate my game.

**- MATTEO PELLIZARI,
MILAN-CORTINA 2026 HOPEFUL, PARA ICE HOCKEY**

IGNITE Inclusion



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ARE ONE IN WHICH EVERY PERSON IS INCLUDED AND BELONGS

The journey of a Paralympian, from early beginnings to incredible athletic achievements, serves as a testament to what's possible when individuals are provided with opportunities to shine. By celebrating these journeys, we inspire all Canadians and make a global impact, furthering our vision of an inclusive world.





Paralympic sport uniquely drives societal transformation. The Paralympic Games give host cities and nations an invaluable perspective on real accessibility, equity, and inclusivity. The Games highlight the benefits of these principles, showing us that stronger, healthier, and more diverse communities can be built when inclusivity is a cornerstone of planning. This drives home the point that accessibility and inclusion should be embedded in the fabric of our systems and programs from the start.

With the Paralympics as a catalyst, we see the potential for far-reaching social change, improving not only the lives of individuals with a disability, but also enriching society as a whole.

Canada, home to over 6.2 million individuals with a disability - approximately one in six - benefits greatly from their inclusion, not only in sports but in all aspects of life. Their diverse perspectives, experiences, and unique talents deepen our collective understanding and fuel innovation. An inclusive society is one that celebrates the distinct strengths of all its constituents.



Impacts

With your support, we will commit **\$13 Million** by 2028 to Ignite Inclusion.

— **\$8 Million: Performance Recognition Equity**

In Canada, like in many nations, Olympians are recognized for medal performances at the Olympic Games. Currently, however, Canadian Paralympians do not receive any financial recognition for their medal performances at the Paralympic Games. This issue has become a symbol of Olympic and Paralympic inequity. The Paralympic Foundation of Canada is establishing a fund to ensure that Canadian Paralympians will always receive performance recognition for medals won at the Paralympic Games at the same level as their Canadian Olympic counterparts. Paralympic performance recognition will begin at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

— **\$5 Million: Disability Inclusion Initiatives**

Through Paralympic sport, we will lead by example to promote disability inclusion and accessibility. We will support equitable opportunities on and off the field of play for people with a disability through investments and capacity building at each stage of the Paralympic sport journey and beyond. The journey doesn't end after the Games, it carries forward into the next stages of life and the Paralympic Foundation of Canada will invest in employment opportunities, both within the organization as well as amongst partners and we will work with Paralympic athletes to co-create and co-design each of the spaces we work in.



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**I CHALLENGE YOU TO IMAGINE A CANADA WHERE
NO ONE IS LEFT OUT.**

Where disability and diversity is sought out and celebrated, and the needs of everyone are considered from the beginning. A Canada where we are disability inclusive from the start. Our strength lies in the diversity of our people – all of us.

**– CARLA QUALTROUGH – PARALYMPIAN, PARA SWIMMING
MINISTER OF SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

IGNITE

Together, through the transformative power of Paralympic sport, we can **IGNITE CHANGE** across our country and beyond, paving the way towards a truly inclusive world for all.

IGNITING OPPORTUNITY

Everyone deserves to experience the power of sport

\$12 Million

IGNITING BELIEF

Creating champions to inspire belief that greatness is possible

\$10 Million

IGNITING INCLUSION

Healthy communities are ones in which every person is included and belongs

\$13 Million

\$35 MILLION



The **Paralympic Foundation of Canada** is the registered charitable foundation of the Canadian Paralympic Committee.

Our vision is through Paralympic sport, an inclusive world.

We believe Paralympic sport has the power to ignite transformative change in Canada, contributing to a more inclusive nation where people with disabilities are valued for all their capabilities, differences, and diversity.

For more information and to support **IGNITE**, please visit paralympic.ca/ignite

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