



# GUIDELINES

**PARALYMPIC SPORT DISCOVERY DAYS 2026-27**



The Paralympic Sport Discovery Days Grant Guidelines provide important information on the application process and eligibility criteria. Please review carefully and consult the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at [FAQ - EN](#) prior to contacting the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) with questions about your application.

## **BACKGROUND**

This grant aims to strengthen a critical gap in Canada's Para sport system: athlete identification, recruitment, and athlete transfer. By investing directly in Paralympic Sport Discovery—targeted events designed to identify and engage prospective Para athletes—the program will increase the depth and sustainability of Canada's Para athlete pool.

### **Purpose**

Equip Provincial Sport Organizations and Disability Sport Organizations (PSOs/DSOs), in collaboration with National Sport Organizations (NSOs), with resources to host high-quality athlete identification events. Paralympic Sport Discovery Days are one-day, multi-sport or single-sport athlete identification events where individuals with disabilities can explore Para sport opportunities. These events provide:

- Introduction to multiple Para sports
- Referral pathways to local clubs, PSOs/DSOs, and NSO high-performance programs
- On-site classifiers to provide information on MIC and Para sport eligibility (where possible)
- Fitness assessment and sport-specific testing (collaboration with COPSIN encouraged)

## **ELIGIBILITY**

In addition to the eligibility criteria below, the CPC expects all applicants to be committed to creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for participants, athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers.

Eligible organizations are PSO/DSOs, with demonstrated NSO support for the event, and an identified plan for A) outreach targeting schools and rehab hospitals and B) to integrate identified athletes into the Para sport pathway.

### **Eligible Organizations**



- Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO) / Disability Sport Organizations (DSO), these include provincial-level multi-sport organizations
- National Sport Organizations (NSOs)
- Sport-based non-profit organizations
- Sport-based charitable organizations

### **We do not fund**

- Local Sport Organizations/Clubs
- Municipalities
- Elementary or secondary schools, school boards
- Foundations
- For profit organizations
- Agencies of federal or provincial governments (e.g., boards, commissions, corporations and councils)
- Sports not on the Milano Cortina and LA Paralympic program
- Organizations outside of Canada
- Organizations with outstanding reporting due to the Canadian Paralympic Committee

### **FUNDING AVAILABLE**

Grants of up to \$20,000 will be available.

### **Guidelines for submitting your application:**

- Clearly outline the sport-specific pathway identified, and the partners involved, for post Paralympic Sport Discovery Day follow ups. This should include specific plans for how athletes will be connected with clubs, PSOs/DSOs and NSOs. Please submit a formal communication plan for post event follow up.
- Include a promotion plan for your event and partners you will outreach to (example: schools, rehab hospitals, local sport organizations/ clubs)



- Applications must clearly outline how para sport eligibility and classification information will be discussed with participants. If applicable to your event, please list staff experience with the IPC Classification Code.
- Multiple sport organizations are encouraged to work together when submitting applications. For example, an “endurance sport” specific event could include collaboration between NSOs/PSOs from Athletics / Cycling / Swimming / Triathlon.
- Be specific in describing your target athlete(s) for this event. Is it initial athlete ID, transfer athletes, or both?

### **APPLICATION PROCESS - What is required?**

1. Complete the application form. It will ask you to provide 4 main components:

- A. Core Organization Details
- B. Project Information
- C. Financial Information & Budget
- D. Final Checklist & Signature

2. All applicants must include either a financial statement summary from the most recently completed operational year, or a letter of endorsement from your organization’s financial representative.

3. To submit the application, complete the fillable web form at the following link on the CPC funding page <https://paralympic.ca/funding-opportunities>. Once complete, attach the application form and required supporting documents.

**IMPORTANT** Once the online web form is completed and submitted, you cannot make changes to the application. Please make sure all documentation is complete before starting the online web form.

### **SELECTION PROCESS – How are the recipients chosen?**

The CPC’s application review process consists of the following steps:

#### **Step 1: Receipt of application and initial review by the CPC**



- Verifies that the organization and application meet the eligibility requirements.

**IMPORTANT** Please note that any incomplete applications will not be considered and applicants who fail to properly complete the application process will not be notified.

### **Step 2: Review and decision by the Application Review Team**

- A group of knowledgeable individuals with representation from NSOs, CPC staff and other Para sport experts will comprise the Review Team. This team will review eligible applications and make funding recommendations.
- Single sport applications will be reviewed by the respective NSO
- Collaborative and multisport applications may be reviewed by the CPC, the pertinent NSOs, or a combination thereof, depending on how many sports are involved.
- Applications will be reviewed based on individual merit.
- Applicants must clearly demonstrate that their event is aligned with the requirements listed under the “*guidelines for submitting your application*”. Applications done in conjunction with the NSO will receive a higher priority.
- Preference will be given to applicants that have matching funding.

### **Step 3: Notification of decision to applicant**

- The applicant will receive a notification of the decision. If the applicant is successful, they will receive a Letter of Agreement, which must be signed and returned within two weeks of receipt, or the recipient risks withdrawal of the funding offer.
- Upon receiving a signed Letter of Agreement from the successful applicant, funds will be distributed approximately 4-8 weeks later.
- Applicants who are not successful will receive a letter briefly outlining the reasons for the decline.

### **SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS – What if my organization is selected?**

Organizations that are selected will be required to sign a Letter of Agreement that details the terms and conditions of the grant. These include:

- The organization will receive 75% of the grant upon signing the Letter of Agreement, with a 25% holdback to be paid upon receipt and review of the required reports.



- Final Reports will detail successes, challenges, and key impacts. The Final Report Templates will be provided with the Letter of Agreement and are due on the date specified in the Letter of Agreement
- Completion and submission of a final budget with copies of receipts/invoices for all project expenses

### ***Please Note***

*Athletes are asked to sign a waiver expressing consent for their information to be shared with the CPC. All information will be kept confidential and used for primarily statistical purposes. The CPC may follow up with the athlete individually if the athlete gives consent.*

*A comprehensive list of successful applicants and their respective applications may be made available to our government partners at the federal and provincial levels, as well as publicly via the CPC communication channels.*

### **QUESTIONS – Who do I contact?**

Please first refer to these guidelines and to the FAQs available here: <https://paralympic.ca/funding-opportunities>

Should you still have questions, you may email [grants@paralympic.ca](mailto:grants@paralympic.ca) but please be advised that during periods of high demand responses may be delayed. Thank you for your understanding.

## **Appendix**

### **PARALYMPIAN SEARCH LESSONS LEARNED**

- Be specific and targeted in the promotion of your Paralympic Sport Discovery Day.
  - Who are you recruiting? (e.g., transfer athletes, Para sport athletes already playing your Paralympic sport?)



- Who are you promoting the event through? (e.g., schools, rehab hospitals, local sport organizations/ clubs?)
- What sports are you targeting for your event?
- Paralympic Sport Discovery Day sport and/or athlete selection criteria that should be considered:
  - Clear history of conversion of athletes from ID to HP.
  - Athletes who may demonstrate trajectory toward strong future performance, or athletes with prior Para sport experience interested in transfer opportunities.
  - Sports with a pathway to support the development of HP Paralympic athletes. Are there established local training programs for identified athletes to join?
- Have a well-developed plan to engage with all athletes after the event and engage them in ongoing training and competition opportunities.
- Paralympic Sport Discovery Day follow-up should include a letter to each athlete outlining:
  - Test results (if applicable)
  - Identified sport contact information, development or club opportunities nearby with concrete training dates.
  - Other sports that could be a fit for the athlete, w/ club, provincial sport information.
- Plan for classification information sharing to better support athletes to transfer to another sport that may be a better fit.

### **ATHLETE TRANSFER KEY PRINCIPLES**

Key principles for athlete transfer programs and initiatives (adapted from Dehghansai, N., & Green, A. 2023)

- Athlete-centered focus
  - Ensure your event is designed with the athletes' best interest at the forefront
  - Consider what resources the athlete would need to access during the transition (e.g., financial, technical, and medical support)
  - What would be required to support the athlete when adjusting to the new training environment? (e.g., equipment, sport demands, DTE)
  - Ask questions to understand the specific reasons why the athlete is exploring transfer opportunities, as well as their needs and wellbeing with their current sport.



- Provisional classification
  - Athletes' classification can impact their development in a specific sport. Therefore, systemizing the process to ensure athlete classification occurs early in the transfer is important to aligning expectations.
- Ensure psychological support during the acclimatization period in the new sport.
- Deliberate programming
  - Allow sufficient time for athletes to develop in the recipient sport, without pressure for strong performance outcomes early after the transfer to minimize injuries and burnout.
  - Ensure athletes have access to an experienced coach who can provide individualized plans based on previous sporting experience and training history.
  - Check out [Brianna Hennessy's](#) story where she discusses the nuances of trying a new sport through her athlete transfer experience.
- Avoid a singular focus
  - Athlete transfer is one method of Athlete ID, however, sport organizations should continue to develop athletes through the entirety of the Paralympic sport pathway.
  - There is no "right" way to progress through Para sport. Check out the multi-sport journey of [Weldon, Picton, and Ouellet](#) when considering how best to support athletes participation in multiple sports.
- Strong network relationships
  - Collaboration and communication between sport organizations ensures staff are well connected to share knowledge and identify potential transfer opportunities.
  - Collaborative and flexible coach support to balance training load and schedule.
  - Work with other sport organizations that have synergies to develop cross-training opportunities.
  - Check out the article [Collaborative Coaching is key to successful Para Athlete Transfer](#) to read an example in action.

### **INITIAL ATHLETE ID EXAMPLE: PARASPORT QUEBEC**

Two Para sport camps were held prior to the *Festival Jeunesse*. These multi-sport camps, organized in collaboration with rehabilitation centres, aimed to engage potential future Para athletes who are not yet actively involved in Para sport. The camps included wheelchair athletics, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball, and wheelchair rugby.



The *Festival Jeunesse* welcomed a total of 28 athletes — 7 new participants (including the 5 from the camps) and 21 returning athletes already known to the organization. The day included a warm-up session led by a wheelchair tennis coach, followed by sport rotations between wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, and wheelchair athletics (seated throws, wheelchair racing, and frame running).

Between 15 and 20 young Para athletes were identified for further athlete development following *Festival Jeunesse*. Each athlete received an individualized development plan, including specific goals and exercises, and to be delivered by an assistant coach from the national team.

A member of the Parasports Québec team follows up throughout the season, visiting athletes and coaches to monitor progress.

Two *Camps Espoir* are planned. These will include physical testing sessions designed to track athlete progression and prepare them for future high-performance environments, with a long-term view toward the 2031 Canada Winter Games.