ATHLETICS IN CANADA DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. **Purpose**

Athletics Canada (AC) and its Provincial/Territorial Branches (Henceforth referred to as "Governing Bodies") are committed to good governance, ethical conduct, and fostering a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment in athletics at all levels – National, Provincial/Territorial, and Club.

The Governing Bodies recognize that diversity strengthens sport and that equitable and inclusive practices are essential to the growth, sustainability, and excellence of athletics in Canada. The Governing Bodies are committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout their leadership, governance, policies, programs, services, and activities.

This Policy forms part of the Governing Bodies' overall National Safe Sport Program and is intended to ensure that individuals from underrepresented groups have a full and equitable range of opportunities to participate, contribute, and lead at all levels of athletics, including as athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, administrators, and leaders.

2. **Scope**

This Policy applies to all individuals and members involved in athletics in Canada including but not limited to:

- Athletes
- Coaches
- Officials
- Administrators and Board or Committee members
- Employees and contractors
- Volunteers
- Integrated Support Team (IST) members

This Policy applies to conduct occurring within, or in connection with:

- Athletics Canada
- Provincial and Territorial Branches
- Local clubs and affiliated organizations
- Events, programs, and activities sanctioned or otherwise recognized within the athletics system

3. **Participation**

The Governing Bodies are committed to enhancing the quality of, and increasing participation in, athletics by fostering inclusive, equitable, and accessible environments across all programs and activities. The Governing Bodies will:

- Support inclusion, equity, and access for Under-Represented Groups across all levels and disciplines of athletics;
- Promote and communicate the value of diversity as a strength that enhances participation, performance, leadership, and community within athletics;

- Identify and reduce systemic, structural, and attitudinal barriers that may limit participation in programs, competitions, education, training, and coaching opportunities;
- Ensure individuals from Under-Represented Groups have equitable access to participation and advancement opportunities;
- Address incidents of maltreatment, including discrimination, harassment, and exclusion, in accordance with the Athletics in Canada Codes of Conduct, the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) or applicable Provincial/Territorial equivalent, and other Safe Sport policies.

4. Programming

The Governing Bodies are committed to developing and supporting programs that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within athletics. The Governing Bodies will:

- Ensure equitable access and outcomes are key considerations in the design, review, and delivery of programs, services, and policies;
- Develop and support initiatives and programming intended to reduce barriers and increase participation among Under-Represented Groups;
- Collaborate with partner organizations and stakeholders to promote inclusive program delivery practices;
- Monitor, evaluate, and continuously improve diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives using appropriate data and feedback mechanisms.

5. Decision-Making and Governance

The Governing Bodies will encourage balanced representation from Under-Represented Groups within governance and decision-making structures, including Boards of Directors and committees.

- The Governing Bodies will work toward achieving gender parity on their respective Boards of Directors, recognizing that balanced representation strengthens governance and decision-making.
- Governing Bodies shall require that where Athlete Director positions exist on Boards of Directors they include:
    a) at least one athlete representing each gender identity; and
    b) at least one Athlete Director who is a para-athlete.
- The composition of any Committee, other than an Executive Committee, should include a minimum of one member of each gender, where reasonably achievable.
- Governing Bodies shall take proactive steps to promote diversity within governance and decision-making structures, including representation from equity-deserving and underrepresented groups such as women, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

6. Human Resource Management

The Governing Bodies are committed to equitable and inclusive human resource management practices and will, where applicable:

- Promote flexible and family-friendly workplace practices where operationally feasible, including flexible scheduling, remote or hybrid work arrangements, and job-sharing opportunities;

- Provide and maintain physically and psychologically accessible workplace environments;
- Maintain healthy and safe work environments, including smoke-free workplace standards;
- Use equitable, transparent, and non-discriminatory recruitment and interview practices;
- Maintain compensation practices consistent with the principle of equal pay for work of equal value;
- Provide access, where appropriate, to employee wellness supports and Employee Assistance programs.

7. Communications

The Governing Bodies will:

- Ensure Under-Represented Groups are portrayed fairly and respectfully in promotional materials, media, and official publications;
- Use inclusive and gender-neutral language in communications wherever appropriate;
- Promote diverse representation in storytelling, marketing, and public engagement initiatives.

8. Ongoing Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Governing Bodies commit to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations into all aspects of organizational planning and operations, including:

- Technical and athlete development programs;
- Governance and leadership practices;
- Business operations and partnerships;
- Sponsorship and marketing initiatives;
- Media and communications strategies.

9. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The Governing Bodies will regularly monitor and evaluate progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives and will use findings to inform continuous improvement in policies, programs, and practices.

10. Definitions

The following terms apply within this Policy:

- **Diversity** – The presence and meaningful integration of individuals with a range of identities, backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives within an organization or activity.
- **Inclusion** – The intentional creation of environments where individuals feel welcomed, respected, valued, and able to fully participate regardless of personal characteristics.
- **Equity** – The fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all individuals, recognizing that different individuals may require different supports to achieve comparable outcomes.
- **Under-Represented Groups** – Individuals or communities whose participation or leadership in athletics has historically been limited due to systemic or structural barriers. These may include, but are not limited to:
    - Women and girls
    - Indigenous Peoples
    - Persons with disabilities
    - Racialized individuals and visible minorities

- LGBTQ2S+ individuals
- Newcomers to Canada
- Individuals from low-income backgrounds
- Individuals from rural, remote, or northern communities
- Older adults and youth facing participation barriers