



Speed Skating Ontario Athlete Support Program 2023-2024

The Speed Skating Ontario (SSO) Athlete Support Program provides support through the Ontario Development Hubs Program and the Ontario High Performance Sport Initiative to athletes who live and train in Ontario and direct financial support to Ontario's top athletes who may be training at National Training Centres and their affiliate programs outside of Ontario.

Purpose

The SSO Athlete Support Program supports athletes pursuing selection to Speed Skating Canada's National Teams and NextGen Development Teams. Based on an athlete's demonstrated potential and commitment to high performance sport, this support allows Ontario athletes to continue to pursue athletic excellence and represent Ontario at the highest levels of national and international competition.

Objectives

- Support athletes in their development as they progress towards the National Teams and NextGen Development Teams.
- Facilitate access to appropriate daily training environments and competitions to pursue high performance sport.
- Provide financial support to offset the cost of training and competition.

ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT HUB PROGRAM AND ONTARIO HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT INITIATIVE

The Ontario Development Hub Program supports athletes who live and train in Ontario. All Ontario based athletes training with an SSO Member Club who qualify for national competitions are provided with coaching at national competitions; the coaches' associated costs to attend national competitions are covered by SSO.

Qualified athletes continuing to train at one of Ontario's member clubs are also invited to participate in the SSO Ontario Development Hubs Program and the Ontario High Performance Sport Initiative. Program costs are supported by Speed Skating Ontario and the Canadian Sport Institute - Ontario.

ATHLETE FUNDING

Period of Eligibility

The criteria set out in this document defines the eligibility and selection criteria for the 2023-2024 season.

Athlete Funding Eligibility

To be eligible for financial support from SSO, athletes must meet all the following requirements:

- a. Be a member in good standing with Speed Skating Ontario and Speed Skating Canada for the current year and the full year prior to funding. Our membership year is September 1 to August 31.
- b. Be registered with an SSO member club;
- c. Be a permanent resident or citizen of Canada;
- d. Be a permanent resident of Ontario; athletes who have left the province temporarily to attend school or pursue training in another province/territory remain eligible for support;
- e. Sign the SSO Athlete Agreement;
- f. Compete, and continue to compete solely for Ontario, wearing the suitable Ontario suit, Club suit, or suit of the regional training centre at which they train;
- g. The athlete must not receive financial support from any other provincial/territorial athlete assistance program or other funding organizations such as RBC Athlete.
- h. An athlete that receives Sport Canada funding (AAP Funding) is ineligible for the SSO Athlete Support Program;
- i. Have a National Athlete membership with SSO and race at national competitions.

Athletes Residing Outside of Ontario

Athletes who are temporarily living outside of the province of Ontario, but within Canada, to attend school or a regional training centre can remain eligible for athlete funding if they:

- Are registered with an SSO member club and SSO as a National Athlete;
- Continue to represent Ontario at national and international competitions;
- Do not receive any funding from another province or territory, the Government of Canada or another country or other funding organizations such as RBC Athlete.

Athletes funded through the Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (AAP):

Ontario athletes who have been nominated and accepted funding through Sport Canada's AAP within the government of Ontario's fiscal year (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024) are not eligible for SSO's Athlete Support Program. Athletes receiving AAP funding or "carding" through Sport Canada will automatically be eligible for Ontario funding through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, provided they continue to represent Ontario.

Funding

The amount of available funding is determined each year by the Speed Skating Ontario Board of Directors. The amount of funding provided to each athlete in a specific year is determined by the number of qualifying skaters and the budget available.

The amount of funding available for the 2023-2024 funding cycle will be determined by the Speed Skating Ontario Board of Directors by December 31, 2023.

Short Track

Athletes eligible for short track funding will be selected using the Canadian Short Track Ranking List established by Speed Skating Canada (SSC), under the direction of the High-Performance Committees (HPC), which will be released after the conclusion of Short Track Canada Cup 1. We expect the national ranking list will be available in early February 2024.

Freedom from bias, discrimination and/or conflict of interest is maintained by adhering to the results of the national ranking list produced and prepared by SSC.

Funding will be awarded in two funding levels (Level One and Level Two). Funding amounts for each level will be determined following the Board of Directors' approval of the total amount of available funding.

Skaters ranked in the top 24 of the Canadian Short Track Ranking List (February 2024) will be awarded Level One funding.

Skaters ranked in positions 25-45 of the Canadian Short Track Ranking List (February 2024) will be awarded Level Two funding.

Long Track

Athletes eligible for long track funding will be selected using the Canadian Long Track Ranking List established by Speed Skating Canada (SSC), under the direction of the High-Performance Committees (HPC), which will be released after the conclusion of Long Track Canada Cup 1. We expect the national ranking list will be available in January 2024.

Freedom from bias, discrimination and/or conflict of interest is maintained by adhering to the results of the national ranking list produced and prepared by SSC.

Funding will be awarded in two funding levels (Level One and Level Two). Funding amounts for each level will be determined following the Board of Directors' approval of the total amount of available funding.

Skaters that achieve two (2) top 24 rankings in an individual distance or in the Mass Start event will be awarded Level One funding.

Skaters that achieve two (2) top 45 rankings in a single distance or in the Mass Start event will be awarded Level Two funding.

Rationale for Selection Criteria

The SSO Athlete Support Program selection criteria are based off of the Speed Skating Canada Ranking Lists after 2 qualifying events for the following reasons.

The use of the SSC Ranking List after 2 qualifying events:

- Provides more qualifying opportunities for funding than selecting from one event alone.
- Increases the opportunity for national racing development.
- Mitigates the risk/impact of having results from a single competition lower than an athlete's potential.
- Mitigates the risk/impact of having injury or health issues around a single event.
- Implements a system that enables more inclusive participation by reducing the need to apply for bye requests.

Athlete Funding Requirements

All skaters must sign an Athlete Agreement which outlines the expectations and requirements of athletes who receive funding from Speed Skating Ontario. See Appendix A - Athlete Agreement.

APPENDIX A Athlete Agreement

ATHLETE AGREEMENT

This agreement is between The Ontario Speed Skating Association
and _____ herein referred to as the athlete.
Name

All athletes accepting funding or support from The Ontario Speed Skating Association must:

1. Demonstrate commitment and dedication to high performance training and competition in speed skating, as well as their intention to pursue training and competition throughout the funding period.
2. Compete, and continue to compete solely for Ontario for the period of the funding agreement.
3. Not be under a sanction that prohibits competition as per the Canadian Anti-Doping Policy or the policies of Speed Skating Canada and The Ontario Speed Skating Association.
4. Follow a training program that is deemed appropriate for their age and development as determined by the athlete's coach.
5. Abide by OSSA's Code of Conduct and Ethics.

A skater who decides to resign, retire, or does not complete the requirements of the Athlete Agreement, will be ineligible for funding the following year and may be asked to return the current year's funding.

Athlete Declaration

I hereby declare that in return for any financial assistance provided by The Ontario Speed Skating Association's Athlete Support Program, I undertake to fulfil all commitments and responsibilities outlined in the Athlete Agreement.

Athlete signature

Date

Parent signature (if athlete is under 18)

Date

The Ontario Speed Skating Association

Date