



Disability
Sports
Australia

Strategic Plan

2025-2028



Acknowledgment of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Disability Sports Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We also recognise the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.

About Disability Sports Australia

Disability Sports Australia (DSA) is a national non-profit and registered charity dedicated to increasing grassroots sport participation for people with disability.

For over 60 years, we have been at the forefront of wheelchair sports in Australia, operating under various names such as the Australian Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Sports Federation, Wheelchair Sports Australia, and Australian Athletes with a Disability. Throughout these changes, we have continually expanded sport opportunities for people with disability across the country.

Today, we are disability-agnostic, focusing on building the capability of sports organisations to ensure inclusive and accessible opportunities for people with disability. We aim to raise awareness of the transformative power of sport and close the participation gap in grassroots sport.

We served as the national governing body for a variety of wheelchair sports — including wheelchair rugby and wheelchair basketball — and played a key role in developing Wheelchair AFL in collaboration with ParaQuad Tasmania and the Australian Defence Force. We were also recognised as the peak body in sport for people with physical disability.

DSA is committed to both mainstream and disability-specific sports, driving positive social change across the country. We are recognised by the Australian Sports Commission as a National Sporting Organisation for People with Disability and are a proud founding member of Paralympics Australia.

“ We are dedicated to raising awareness about the transformative power of sport to change lives and strengthen communities.





Our Approach

To realise our strategic ambitions for the future, we have redefined our vision, mission, and purpose to ensure our work delivers a tangible and meaningful impact on the Australian sport sector for people with disability.

Our focus is on growing active participation and meaningful inclusion by empowering organisations with the tools and knowledge needed to create accessible and welcoming environments.

We are committed to collaborating with national sector partners, including disability sport organisations, to drive alignment, accountability, and clarity across the entire sports ecosystem.

Through this united approach, we aim to achieve better outcomes for people with disability, with increased participation in grassroots sport as a priority.

Recognising the importance of access for everyone, we play a pivotal role in providing clear, user-friendly information to assist people with disability in understanding their options and navigating their journey in sport.

A key focus of this strategic plan is to actively engage with the community to ensure that our plans and programs align with the needs of people with disability.

We welcome people regardless of their disability and help build understanding and confidence so that everyone can participate and belong in sport.

By partnering with stakeholders across all levels of sport nationwide, we aim to make sport more accessible, equitable, and transformative—contributing to a more inclusive society for all.

Our Purpose

To build the capability of sport to enable the meaningful participation of people with disability.





Our Vision

Lives and communities changed through the power of sport.

Our Mission

To improve opportunities for people with disability to be involved in sport in the way they choose.

Our drivers for success

From 2025–2028 Disability Sports Australia will be focussing on the following four strategic pillars:



Awareness

Awareness achieved through identity, increased influence, and engagement.



Capability

Improved knowledge, effective education and positive behavioural influence.



Accessibility

Clear pathways, improved access and increased participation.



Excellence

Enhanced resources, diversified revenue, and strengthened partnerships.





Pillar 1: Awareness

Objective: Awareness enhanced through identity, influence and engagement.

Strategic Intent

- Expand our audience to raise awareness and increase impact.
- Seek opportunities to create and share insightful information, including media coverage.
- Create a brand identity to ensure our message is understandable and influential.
- Strategically participate in industry events and demonstrate thought leadership to elevate awareness and recognition of disability sport.
- Engage the community at all Disability Sports Australia events with key stakeholders to raise brand awareness and highlight the value of people with disability participating in sport.
- Identify, highlight, and address the barriers that people with disability face in participating actively within their communities.

Measures of Success

- Increase in following, comments, and shares on social media.
- Increased positive organisation media coverage and content engagement.
- A Disability Sports Australia website that is accessible and inclusive for all audiences.
- Annual growth in website visits.
- Enhanced brand awareness as reflected by the above metrics.
- Increased positive brand recognition, recall and visibility in the industry.
- Successful implementation of the Advocacy Framework.
- Positive changes in policy or funding along with improved brand sentiment, as a result of advocacy efforts.

Deliverables

- National marketing and brand strategy, incorporating multi-channel digital communication, public awareness campaigns, and content plans.
- Launch of the Changing Lives Through Sport National digital campaign.
- Development of a new accessible website.
- Produce and distribute high-quality content and media releases.
- Expansion of Government networks.
- Consistently activate the brand during all events delivered.
- Develop an Advocacy Framework.





Pillar 2: Accessibility

Objective: Clear pathways, improved access and increased participation.

Strategic Intent

- Oversee the delivery of multi-sport introduction events that promote lifetime engagement and raise awareness of accessible local sports options for people with disability.
- Provide a clear explanation of the available options for people with disability to be involved and participate in sport.
- Actively engage with the community to ensure that our plans and programs align with the needs of people with disability.
- Enhance and expand participation programs to align with current trends and explore new initiatives like Sporting Schools.

Measures of Success

- Annual calendar of multi-sport introduction events delivered.
- An increase or maintenance in program participant numbers year-on-year.
- An increase in the number of people with disability who report better understanding of their participation options as measured by annual survey.
- Effective communication with the community, resulting in strategies and programs that meet the needs of people with disability.
- An active Disability Advisory Committee.
- High percentage of completion of Disability Action Plan.
- Success of new initiatives as measured by participation rates, positive feedback and testimonials.

Deliverables

- Establish the Abilities Unleashed program as a clear entry point for people with a disability to participate in sport.
- Conduct an annual survey for the sector to understand current participation rates and identify barriers to grassroots participation for people with disability.
- Develop and implement strategies to provide clear and accessible information about sport for people with disability.
- Establish a Disability Advisory Committee that represents diverse lived experience including intersections beyond disability.
- Create and execute a comprehensive Disability Action Plan.
- Develop and execute Play-Well Participation Plan.





Pillar 3: Capability

Objective: Improved knowledge, effective education and positive behavioural influence.

Strategic Intent

- Support sport organisations to develop and implement strategies to improve access and participation for people with disability.
- Deliver products and training to sports administrators and coaches equipping them with increased confidence to engage people with disability in sport more effectively.
- Complete a comprehensive review of our membership model and constitution to ensure alignment with organisational goals and stakeholder needs.
- Strengthen relationships with National Sports Organisations (NSO) and National Sport Organisations for People with Disability (NSOD) and the community by providing access to best practice resources and building strategic partnerships.
- Collaborate with state and territory members and key stakeholders to identify gaps in grassroots disability sport participation and develop strategies to ensure equitable access for all.

Measures of Success

- Increased confidence of coaches and sport administrators in delivering programs to people with disability.
- Annual growth in the number of people registering and completing courses on online training platforms.
- Relevant membership model established that supports member retention.
- Successful actioning of recommendations from undertaken constitution review.
- High stakeholder annual satisfaction rate as measured by annual sector partner survey.
- Increase in the number of partnerships of National Sporting Organisations (NSO) and National Sports Organisations for People with Disability (NSOD) and along with the renewal of existing partnerships.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive research agenda.

Deliverables

- Develop and implement education and training programs for coaches and organisations to enhance their accessibility for people with disability.
- Existing programs reviewed to ensure that they effectively build sector capability.
- Conduct a yearly survey to gather feedback and insights from sector partners.
- Undertake constitution review.
- Annual Partnership review.
- Conduct, support and implement research projects that identify barriers to participation in grassroots sports for people with disability.





Pillar 4: Excellence

Objective: Enhanced resources, diversified revenue and collaborative partnerships.

Strategic Intent

- Cultivate relationships with corporate organisations that provide mutual benefits and contribute to increased revenue.
- Ensure financial stability through strong risk management, diversified revenue streams, reduced reliance on Government funding, and securing funding and resources for major projects.
- Create a high-performing environment where all employees feel empowered and valued.
- Ensure the highest standards of integrity and child safeguarding across the organisation.
- Implement comprehensive impact measurement practices to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of organisation initiatives.

Measures of Success

- Increased revenue from commercial partners.
- Consistent positive financial performance.
- Annual growth in donations, donors and philanthropy.
- Diversified and increased government and non-government funding.
- Strong employee satisfaction as measured through annual staff satisfaction survey.
- Annual increased maturity score on governance organisational engagement plan.
- Achieve and maintain compliance with Sport Integrity Australia's integrity and National Child Safeguarding standards.
- Effective use of an impact measurement framework, shown by regular reports and positive stakeholder feedback.

Deliverables

- Establish and maintain partnerships that align with core organisation values and mission.
- Financial stability.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive philanthropic and fundraising strategy.
- Conduct regular surveys to assess and improve staff satisfaction.
- Positive culture aligned with our operations and work environment, setting an industry example.
- Complete governance organisational engagement plan annually.
- Regularly review, update, and implement integrity policies to align with best practices.
- Develop and implement a framework to measure the organisations impact.



Our Values and Behaviours

At Disability Sports Australia (DSA), our values and behaviours guide our actions and expectations as a Board, staff, and volunteers, ensuring we create a positive impact within our communities.

Equality and Inclusiveness

- We provide equal access to opportunities for all.
- We embrace diversity in our communities.
- We encourage everyone to be their true authentic selves.



Collaboration and Partnerships

- We prioritise listening to each other and our stakeholders.
- We value the efforts within our team.
- We openly share our capabilities and experiences.



Belonging

- We keep and teach an open mind.
- We accept and embrace each other's uniqueness and differences.
- We are thoughtful and caring in everything we do.





Integrity

- We follow through on commitments and own our actions completely.
- We value feedback and are fair, ethical, and transparent.



Innovation

- We transform ideas into new processes.
- We welcome curiosity.
- We value creation and are brave with our aspirations.



Our Commitment to Play Well

Disability Sports Australia is dedicated to aligning its initiatives in this strategic plan with the Australian Sports Commissions (ASC) Play Well Participation Strategy.

This strategy aims to create a more active nation through quality sports experiences, promoting lifelong participation, and enhancing the health and well-being of Australians.



By making sport accessible to everyone, we can help ensure it has a place for everyone.

We also recognise the importance of building the capability of others to be more inclusive of people with disability.

We are dedicated to playing our role in the sector to support the delivery of this strategy.



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