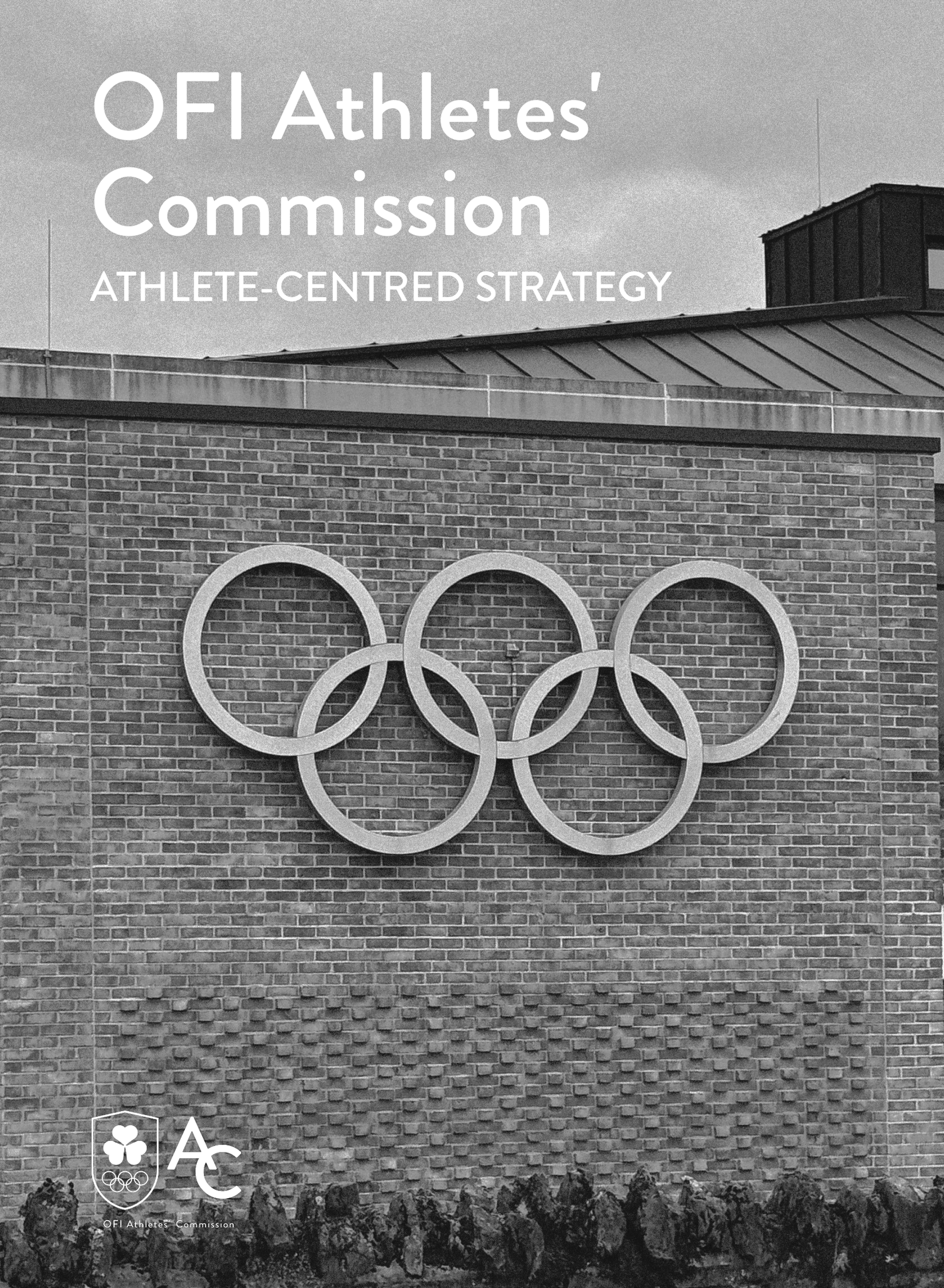
OFI Athletes' Commission

ATHLETE-CENTRED STRATEGY



OFI Athletes' Commission

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OFI Athletes' Commission

01

About OFI Athletes' Commission



OFI Athletes' Commission

PUTTING ATHLETE EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF IRISH SPORT

The Athletes' Commission (AC) is the independent voice of Ireland's Olympians — a collective of athletes elected by athletes to ensure that real experience shapes every decision within the Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI). It exists to make sure Irish athletes are not only represented but empowered; not only heard, but genuinely listened to. Guided by this purpose, the AC's mission and vision set out how we serve, support, and strengthen the athlete voice across Team Ireland.

Our Mission

To be a bold, visible, and athlete-led Commission that listens deeply, advocates effectively, and builds lasting systems of support and continuity across every stage of the Olympic journey.

Our Vision

That Irish Olympic athletes and aspiring Olympic athletes are the best represented athletes in the world — ensuring they have a wholly positive Olympic experience and the best opportunity to perform.



> "Being a member of Team Ireland goes way beyond the two weeks of an Olympic Games and it's crucial that those involved are continuously supported and celebrated."

AIFRIC KEOGH ATHLETES' COMMISSION CHAIR 2024-2028

OFI Athletes' Commission

ATHLETES' COMMISSION MEMBERS 2024-2028

OFI Athletes' Commission



A COMMISSION FOR AND BY ATHLETES

The Evolution of the Athletes' Commission

Over the past decade, the Athletes' Commission has grown from a representative body advocating for athletes to an active partner shaping the future of Irish sport. What began after Rio 2016 as a consultative forum has matured into a structured partnership between athletes and the Olympic Federation of Ireland. This timeline traces that journey from the Commission's early mandate to its four-pillar strategy, and today's athlete-centred era of collaboration, agency, and shared leadership. It's a story of moving from petition to participation, and from being spoken for to co-creating the systems that help every Irish athlete thrive.

EARLY EQUIVALENTS OF ATHLETES' COMMISSIONS BEGAN FROM 2004-2005 ONWARD...

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1ST AC COHORT BEGINS				2ND AC COHORT BEGINS				3RD AC COHORT
AC representatives play an essential and on-going role in project development, policy review, and research for various groups across Sport Ireland and OFI, as well as lobbying for high performance funding.								
Establishment of the current, formalised Athletes' Commission structure	Hosted the 'Mental Strength and the Road to Tokyo' event marking the halfway point to Tokyo qualification, bringing together athletes, a psychologist, motivational speaker Damien Browne, and other contributors.	Organised an anti-doping event with Sport Ireland, during which the AC invited Becky Scott from the WADA Athletes' Commission to speak, meet with the AC, and discuss anti-doping issues. Contributed to the launch of the Dare to Believe Schools Programme, a campaign brought to the OFI via the Athletes' Commission, with the AC centrally involved in the initial rollout. Hosted the EOC Athletes' Forum with athletes from across Europe.	Partnered with Indeed to launch and develop 'Career Coach', an online upskilling programme for athletes.	Launched 'Don't Scroll By', a campaign targeting online hate speech, created in response to the global call for athletes to discuss political protests on the field of play, reflecting issues Irish athletes were passionate about.	Delivered the 'Enjoying the Journey' event for athletes, including younger athletes, offering guidance on balance, focus, and mental health. This event coincided with the launch of the AC strategy.	Launched an AC mentoring programme, training 20 mentors. (with intention to continue this initiative and improve it over time) Released additional funding for athletes, supplemented by the Make a Difference fund, providing project support to athletes.	Initiated an AC-led evaluation of the tax framework to benefit athletes, in collaboration with Deloitte.	Launch of the new Athletes' Commission cohort and the development of its strategy. Delivered a webinar to explain the tax system to athletes. Launch of official Team Ireland Olympians Blazer initiative Initiated engagement with NGB athlete representative structures and published athlete survey. with additional on-going initiatives...
OLYMPIC GAMES		PyeongChang 2018	TOKYO 2020	*games held in 2021 due to COVID-19	BEIJING 2022		PARIS 2024	Preparation in progress

HIGHLIGHTS & SUCCESS STORIES

Preparation in progress

OFI Athletes' Commission

LOOKING BACK, TO GO BEYOND

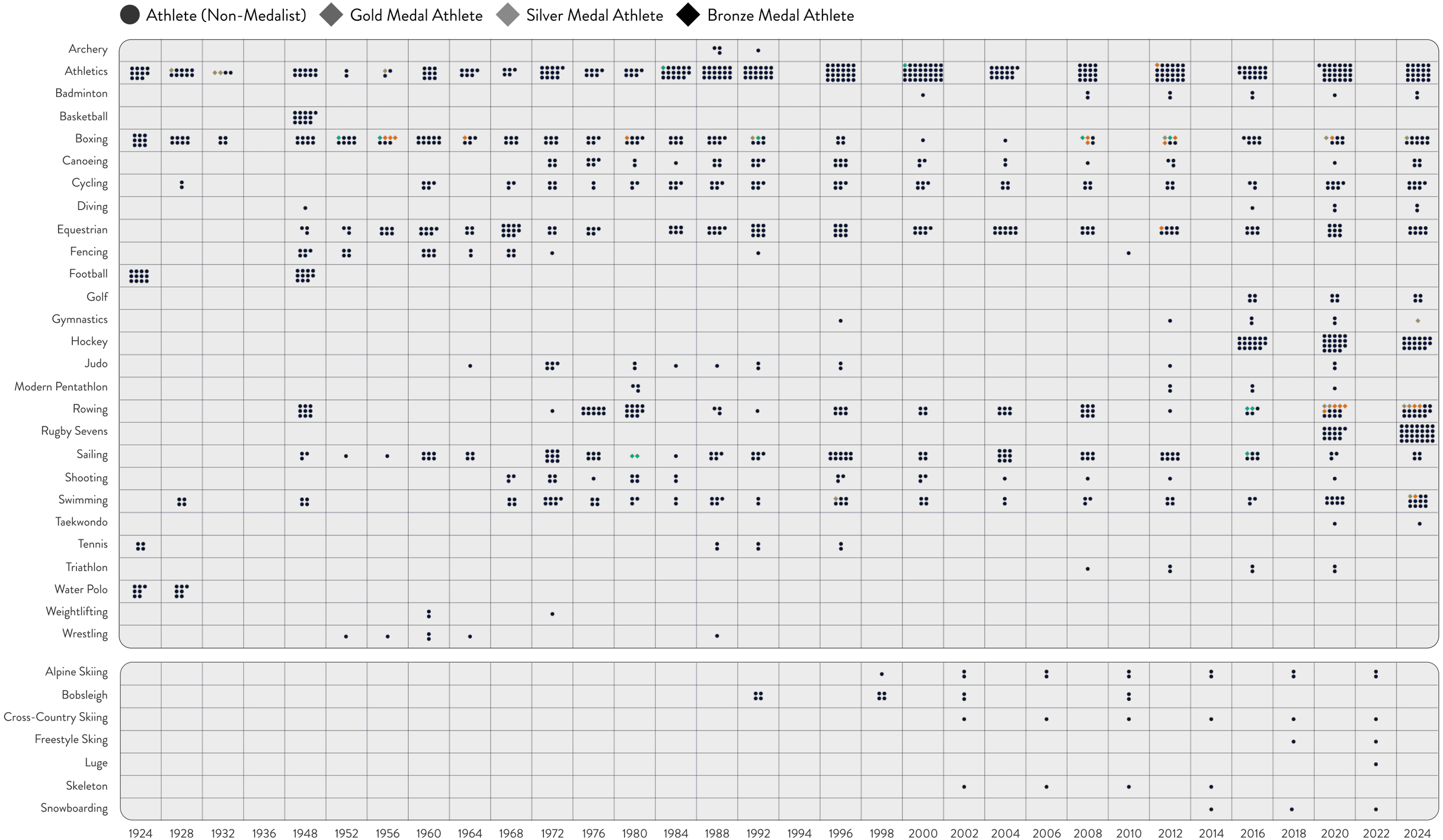
Every chapter in the story of the Athletes' Commission has shaped the one we write now. The AC's before us built the foundations that gave athletes a voice, opened doors, and earned trust across Team Ireland. Their work showed what's possible when athletes stand together for something bigger than themselves. As we look ahead, we carry those lessons with us. This new strategy grows from their experience, turning what they started into something more connected, more lasting, and more centred on the everyday lives of Irish athletes. To move forward well, we begin by honouring where we've come from.

	KEY LESSON	PREVIOUS AC MEMBER QUOTES
Connection Takes Effort	Staying connected across sports requires more than intention. It demands time, availability, and formats that work for busy athletes balancing training, travel, and life.	"Getting things done is hard when everyone is really busy... in-person connection always worked best for us."
Small Wins Create Big Change	Consistent, small steps compound over time, even when the final breakthrough isn't reached within a single cohort's cycle.	"Change takes time — a lot of time — even when you're pushing hard to get things over the line."
Listening Builds Trust	Real trust comes from following through with visible action. When athletes see their voice leading to tangible change, engagement strengthens across the whole system.	"The athlete's voice must be genuinely heard and acted upon. Meaningful support requires accountability."
Continuity Matters	Every cycle builds on the last. Professional systems, clear structures, and consistent engagement prevent the loss of momentum and learning between cohorts.	"As the AC cohorts changed, engagement with previous key partners reduced. Stronger continuity across cycles would have made a real difference."

OFI Athletes' Commission



A CENTURY OF OLYMPIANS: AN ATHLETE COMMUNITY THE AC REPRESENTS



OFI Athletes' Commission

02

Athlete-Centred Strategy



OFI Athletes' Commission

PUTTING ATHLETE EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF IRISH SPORT

The following pages outline the core principles of an athlete-centred approach and how they guide the Athletes' Commission's work. These principles turn intention into practice by strengthening connection, representation, and support across the Team Ireland ecosystem. Together, they help build a more aligned, responsive, and people-centred sporting system that supports performance, wellbeing, and long-term development.

OFI Athletes' Commission

The Athletes' Commission's strategy starts with a simple belief: **Irish sport is strongest when it truly listens to its athletes, when it learns from them, and when it acts with them.** Being athlete-centred means putting real experience at the heart of every decision. It's about more than medals or results; it's about building the kind of support and connection that help athletes grow as people, teammates, and leaders.

This strategy is our plan to make that real. It takes what the Athletes' Commission stands for — representing, empowering, and uniting Irish Olympic athletes and future Olympians — and turns it into clear steps we can follow together. It shapes how we raise issues, how we work with the OFI and the broader ecosystem, and how we organise our own work to maintain continuity and focus throughout each cycle.

When everything is built around athlete experience — from wellbeing to culture to decision-making — the Athletes' Commission becomes more than a voice. It becomes a shared space of leadership where Irish athletes, across all sports and stages, help shape a stronger and more connected future for Team Ireland.



> "We know the journey athletes are on and believe that putting them at the centre of every decision allows us to build better systems that support them to succeed in sport and beyond."

BILLY DARDIS ATHLETES' COMMISSION VICE CHAIR 2024-2028

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ATHLETE-CENTRED?

Over recent Olympic cycles, the Athletes' Commission has built a strong foundation of representation, ensuring that Ireland's Olympians have a recognised, respected voice within the Olympic Federation of Ireland. This foundation mattered: it established trust, visibility, and legitimacy. The next stage builds on that progress by elevating how the AC approaches its work by shifting from advocacy alone to deeper collaboration and participatory design.

This evolution is about improving our performance as a Commission, just as athletes continually refine theirs. It means strengthening how we listen, how we work with partners, and how we shape systems so they better reflect lived experience. The Athlete-Centred Strategy marks a step forward in how the AC approaches its mission. It moves from representation on behalf of athletes toward participation with athletes to ensure their perspectives inform how systems, supports, and decisions take shape.

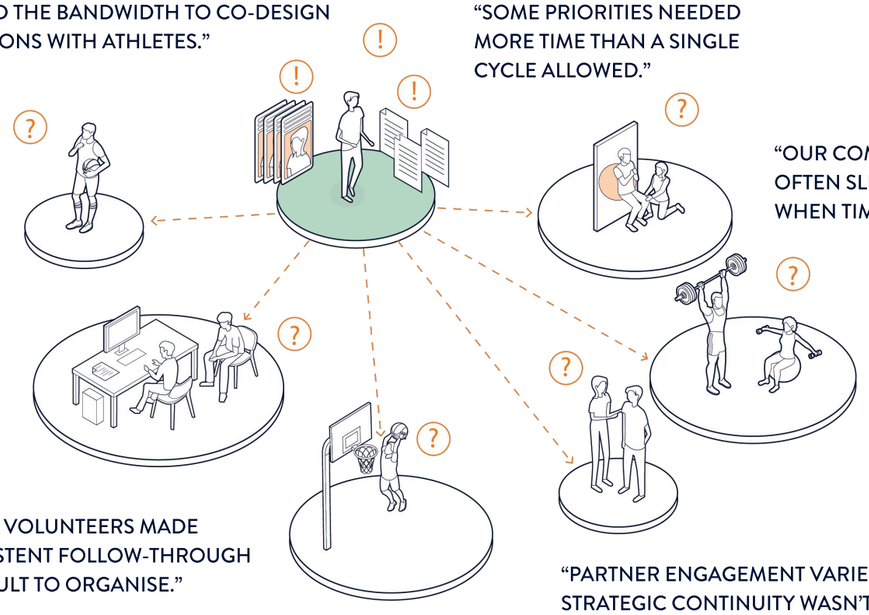
Beyond speaking for athletes

(Based on reflections from former athletes' commission members)

"WE RAISED IMPORTANT ISSUES, BUT LACKED THE BANDWIDTH TO CO-DESIGN SOLUTIONS WITH ATHLETES."

"SOME PRIORITIES NEEDED MORE TIME THAN A SINGLE CYCLE ALLOWED."

"OUR COMMUNICATION OFTEN SLIPPED INTO SILOS WHEN TIME WAS TIGHT."



"BEING VOLUNTEERS MADE CONSISTENT FOLLOW-THROUGH DIFFICULT TO ORGANISE."

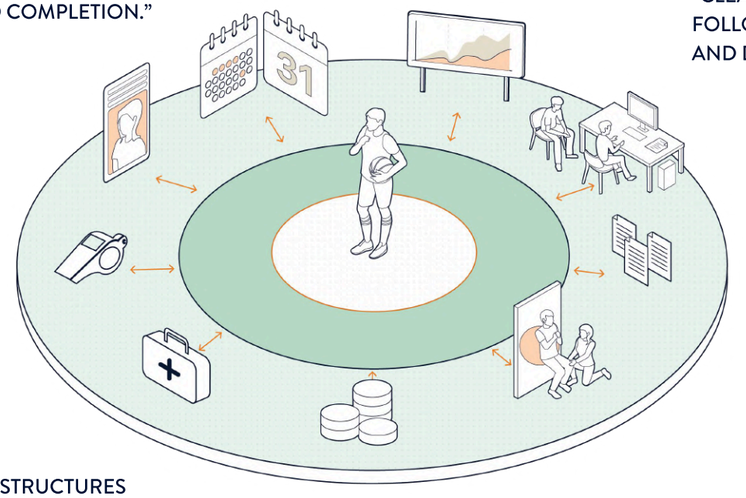
"PARTNER ENGAGEMENT VARIED AND STRATEGIC CONTINUITY WASN'T WELL SUPPORTED ACROSS COHORTS."

Toward designing with athletes

"STRONGER TOUCHPOINTS CAN KEEP COMMUNICATION CONNECTED, EVEN IN BUSY PERIODS."

"MULTI-CYCLE PLANNING CAN CARRY LONG-TERM PRIORITIES TO COMPLETION."

"CLEAR SYSTEMS CAN MAKE FOLLOW-THROUGH VISIBLE AND DEPENDABLE."



"CONSISTENT STRUCTURES CAN STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT ACROSS ALL PARTNERS."

"PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT CAN HELP US MOVE FROM ISSUE-RAISING TO SOLUTION-SHAPING."

OFI Athletes' Commission

THE ANATOMY OF AN ATHLETE-CENTRED STRATEGY

To be athlete-centred means starting with the people at the heart of Irish sport — the athletes — and shaping systems around their real experiences. It means building structures that adapt to athletes, rather than expecting athletes to adapt to structures. The work begins with listening and continues with alignment: bringing coaches, staff, partners, and the wider system into clearer coordination. Every decision the Athletes' Commission makes returns to a simple question: **does this improve the lived experience of Ireland's Olympians?**

Being athlete-centred isn't about doing more work; it's about doing the right work, better. It turns good intentions into changes athletes can genuinely feel; stronger support, clearer communication, and deeper connection across the journey. When voice, welfare, and culture move in step, the Athletes' Commission becomes a steady anchor within Team Ireland, helping every part of the system work together with greater clarity and deeper purpose.

This approach ensures that the athlete experience is not an afterthought, but the organising principle that guides how Irish sport evolves.

OFI Athletes' Commission

VISION & MISSION
What are we here to do and why does it matter?

MUST-WIN OUTCOMES
What are the big commitments that define our focus?

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
What will we do to bring these outcomes to life?

ENABLERS
What needs to be in place to make this possible?

FOUNDATIONS
What defines how we work, lead, and show up as a team?

VISION

That Irish Olympic athletes and aspiring Olympic athletes are the best represented athletes in the world — ensuring they have a wholly positive Olympic experience and the best opportunity to perform.

MISSION

To be a bold, visible, and athlete-led Commission that listens deeply, advocates effectively, and builds lasting systems of support and continuity across every stage of the Olympic journey.

VISIBILITY & CONNECTION
Strengthening how athletes stay seen, informed, and connected

LISTEN & UNDERSTAND
Turning athlete feedback into shared insight and action

REPRESENT & INFLUENCE
Ensuring athlete voice shapes decisions across every level

CONTINUITY, STRUCTURE & DIRECTION
Building systems that last and leadership that endures

ATHLETES' COMMISSION NETWORK
Connecting athletes through a visible, trusted, and active community

ATHLETES' VOICE PLATFORM
Capturing lived experience to guide better decisions and experience design

ATHLETES' GOV. & REP FRAMEWORK
Embedding athlete voice structurally across Irish Olympic sport

ATHLETES' COMMISSION OS
Creating the systems and tools that make progress repeatable

AC Digital Homepage | OFI Governance Particpation | Athlete-Centred Design Tools | Athlete Engagement Cycle/Process | Athletes' Voice Digital Database | Athletes Supports Ecosystem

Brand & Comms Channels | Facilitation Across Ecosystem | Leadership Development | Mentorship & Training | Cross-Sport Connection | Empowered Representation

Equity & Accessibility | Trust & Confidentiality | Solidarity & Respect | Diversity & Inclusion | Athlete Spirit & Mindset | Proactive Engagement

03

Must-Win Outcomes & Strategic Initiatives



STRATEGY BECOMES REAL THROUGH ACTION — AND ACTION CREATES IMPACT WHEN IT HELPS OUR ATHLETES PERFORM AT THEIR BEST

The following pages outline the core areas where the Athletes' Commission will focus its work. These priorities turn our commitments into concrete steps that strengthen connection, representation, insight, and continuity across the Team Ireland ecosystem. Together, they build a more aligned, athlete-centred system that supports performance, wellbeing, and long-term development.

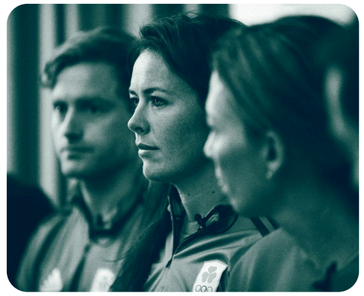
OFI Athletes' Commission



VISIBILITY & CONNECTION

Athletes' Commission Network

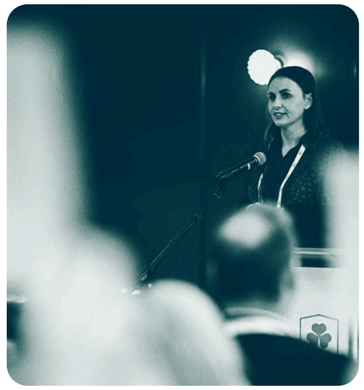
A strong Team Ireland community depends on clear communication, shared visibility, and meaningful connection across sports and disciplines. This initiative strengthens how athletes stay informed, how the Commission stays present and accessible, and how the wider ecosystem supports a more connected Olympic environment.



LISTEN & UNDERSTAND

Athletes' Voice Platform

Understanding the athlete experience is essential to improving it. This platform creates a consistent way to gather insights, feedback, and stories from athletes across all sports. It turns those insights into clear evidence that can guide better decisions and help the system adapt to what athletes actually need.



REPRESENT & INFLUENCE

Athletes' Governance & Representation Framework

Athlete voice is most powerful when it is built into the structures that shape the sport. This framework strengthens how athletes participate in governance at NGB and OFI levels. It creates clarity about roles, responsibilities, and pathways so representation is fair, consistent, and capable of influencing decisions that matter.



CONTINUITY, STRUCTURE & DIRECTION

Athletes' Commission Operating System (OS)

For the Commission to work effectively, it needs strong systems that last beyond any single cohort. The AC-OS provides the shared processes, tools, and rhythms that keep the work organised, transparent, and transferable year after year. It ensures knowledge is not lost and that progress continues with stability and direction.

MUST-WIN OUTCOMES

VISIBILITY & CONNECTION

Strengthening how athletes stay seen, informed, and connected

Representation begins with visibility. Athletes can only engage with what they can see and trust, and the Commission's strength depends on the clarity of its presence across the Team Ireland ecosystem. Building stronger lines of connection means keeping athletes informed, visible, and part of a wider community that celebrates their stories and achievements. When communication flows both ways — from the Commission to the athletes, and between athletes themselves — the entire community becomes more cohesive and resilient.

The Athletes' Commission Network turns this commitment into action. It creates consistent touchpoints, supports peer connection, and builds shared visibility across sports and disciplines. From regular updates to on-tour engagement and cross-sport interactions, the network helps every athlete feel part of something bigger; a trusted, interconnected community that amplifies their voice and strengthens Ireland's collective Olympic community identity.



"The creation of a strong and responsive network of Athletes' Commissions isn't just good news for the OFI Athletes' Commission – it is good for Olympic Sport full stop. Our sports are at their strongest when athletes are centrally involved in strategic direction. As administrators, it is our responsibility to create space for these structures and our duty to provide the tools for their empowerment."

PETER SHERRARD
CEO, OLYMPIC FEDERATION OF IRELAND

OFI Athletes' Commission

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ATHLETES' COMMISSION NETWORK

Connecting athletes through a visible, trusted, and active community

Key Action	Our Promise
MAP EACH SPORT'S CONNECTION PATHWAYS	We will understand how each sport connects, communicates, and operates so we can tailor how we engage.
CREATE A UNIFIED CROSS-SPORT COMMUNICATION CADENCE	We will maintain consistent, meaningful updates that make AC activity visible and predictable.
ADVOCATE FOR DIGITAL HUB AS A CENTRAL COORDINATION SPACE	We will advocate for athletes to have a single, accessible place to stay up to date, find support, and connect with the AC.
SUPPORT CROSS-SPORT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	We will create spaces for athletes to meet, support each other, and strengthen the Team Ireland identity.

Athlete Outcomes

Athletes experience clearer, more relevant communication that reflects the reality of their sport.

Athletes feel informed, connected, and more aware of what the AC is doing on their behalf.

Easier access to information, clearer pathways to support, and stronger everyday visibility of the AC.

A stronger sense of belonging, deeper relationships across sports, and a more unified athlete community.

Key Enablers

- Brand & Comms Channels
- AC Digital Homepage
- Cross-Sport Connection
- Athlete Engagement Cycle / Process

MUST-WIN OUTCOMES

LISTEN & UNDERSTAND

Turning athlete feedback into shared insight and action

Listening is where athlete-centred leadership begins. To truly represent Ireland's Olympians, the Athletes' Commission must understand what matters most to them — their challenges, needs, and hopes across every stage of the journey. Listening well means going beyond collecting opinions; it means creating the conditions for honest conversation and shared understanding. When athletes see that their voice leads to change, trust grows, and so does the strength of Team Ireland.

The Athletes' Voice Platform puts this commitment into practice. It offers clear tools and processes to capture lived experience, interpret insights, and turn them into better decisions and support. Through surveys, stories, feedback loops, and co-design sessions, this initiative builds a fuller picture of athlete life; ensuring that policies, programmes, and partnerships reflect the experiences of the people they are meant to serve.



OFI Athletes' Commission

"If we are serious about athlete-centred performance, then athlete feedback cannot be anecdotal or occasional. Structured, consistent feedback across every sport creates comparable insight and shared accountability, and highlights the factors that most directly affect performance and wellbeing. Athlete voice requires active participation – two-way communication that provides context and clarity, enabling leaders to refine support systems, align priorities, and create daily training and competition environments where athletes can perform at their best."

GAVIN NOBLE
TEAM IRELAND, CHEF DE MISSION

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ATHLETES' VOICE PLATFORM

Capturing lived experience to guide better decisions and experience design

Key Action	Our Promise
SURVEY ATHLETES ANNUALLY TO GENERATE COMPARABLE INSIGHTS	We will ensure every athlete has a simple, reliable way to be heard each year.
BUILD THE ATHLETE EXPERIENCE TOOLKIT FOR STRUCTURED FEEDBACK CAPTURE	We will use consistent, athlete-centred tools to understand lived experience more deeply.
CREATE THE ATHLETES' VOICE DIGITAL DATABASE	We will store and organise insights so they inform decisions long after they are shared.
ESTABLISH CLEAR FEEDBACK-TO-ACTION LOOPS	We will show transparently how athlete feedback leads to change across programmes and decisions.

Athlete Outcomes

Athletes see their experiences reflected accurately, across all sports and stages of the journey.

Athletes feel genuinely understood as their real journeys shape improvements, not assumptions.

Feedback is not lost between cohorts; athletes see continuity in how their input is used.

Greater trust and engagement through visible follow-through and clearer communication.

Key Enablers

- Athlete-Centred Design Tools
- Athletes' Voice Digital Database
- Facilitation Across Ecosystem
- Brand & Comms Channels

MUST-WIN OUTCOMES

REPRESENT & INFLUENCE

Ensuring athlete voice shapes decisions across every level

Representation is more than being present in the room; it is about shaping the decisions that affect athletes' lives and careers. The Athletes' Commission plays a key role in ensuring that athlete perspectives are built into how choices are made — not simply acknowledged afterwards. Fair, consistent, and transparent representation allows athletes to influence the systems that support their performance and wellbeing, while strengthening the integrity of Irish sport.

The Athletes' Governance & Representation Framework gives structure to this influence. It sets out clear roles, principles, and processes so athlete voice carries appropriate weight at every level — from National Governing Bodies to the Olympic Federation. By aligning pathways and accountability across the system, this framework turns representation into shared leadership, ensuring athlete insight helps guide the future direction of Irish sport.

"Our experience at the OFI has been that having the athletes voice represented in our decision making has had a hugely positive impact on our performance. As the Irish Sporting system continues to improve, we believe that embedding this representation in our members will only help accelerate future success and growth."

LOCHLANN WALSH
PRESIDENT, OLYMPIC FEDERATION OF IRELAND



"Having formal athlete representation structures within National Governing Bodies legitimises the athlete voice. When athlete representatives are appointed through clearly defined and transparent mechanisms, they are formally recognised as having a mandate to speak on behalf of athletes. Clear reporting structures and defined terms of reference ensure accountability, embed athlete perspectives at every level of decision-making, and prevent athlete voice from being viewed as optional or tokenistic."

RACHEL MULLIGAN
ATHLETE SUPPORT MANAGER,
FEDERATION OF IRISH SPORT

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ATHLETES' GOV. & REP FRAMEWORK

Embedding athlete voice structurally across Irish Olympic sport

Key Action	Our Promise
FACILITATE SPECIFIC ATHLETE SUPPORT AND REPRESENTATION INFRASTRUCTURE MAPPING	We will understand how each sport currently serves the athlete's voice so we can strengthen consistency and close gaps.
DEFINE STANDARD REPRESENTATION PRINCIPLES AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS	We will set out clear, transparent guidance on what good athlete representation looks like at every level.
ESTABLISH A FORMAL APPOINTMENT AND REPORTING PROCESS WITH NGBS	We will create a simple, standardised process so representation roles within NGBs are appointed, supported, and accountable.
BUILD AN ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ENGAGEMENT CYCLE	We will maintain structured, predictable touchpoints with NGBs and the OFI to ensure athlete voice is part of ongoing decision design.

Athlete Outcomes

Clearer pathways for influence across sports and fairer access to representation structures.

Athletes know who represents them, how, and with what authority.

More reliable representation and greater clarity on how athlete insights influence decisions.

More consistent influence on policies, programmes, and decisions that shape the athlete journey.

Key Enablers

- OFI Governance Participation
- Athletes' Voice Digital Database
- Athlete Engagement Cycle / Process
- Brand & Comms Channels

MUST-WIN OUTCOMES

CONTINUITY, STRUCTURE & DIRECTION

Building systems that last and leadership that endures

Progress depends on continuity. Each Athletes' Commission builds on the work of the last, and the stronger the underlying structure, the smoother that transition becomes. When systems outlast individual cohorts, learning is protected, strategy is carried forward, and momentum is never lost. A consistent way of working brings clarity for Commission members, confidence for athletes, and greater coherence across the Olympic journey.

The Athletes' Commission Operating System (AC-OS) provides this foundation. It is the shared backbone that keeps the Commission's work organised, transparent, and easy to hand over. With clear templates, trackers, and living documents, the AC-OS helps each new team start from a stronger position; reinforcing direction, continuity, and long-term impact for Team Ireland's athletes.



"A major focus in this phase is building standard templates, trackers, and workflows for the Commission's core activities. Every four years new members are elected, it is important that there is continuity so that each commission learns from what has been done previously and builds on the progress that has been made. Systems are continuously changing, and environments and practises adapt accordingly. By developing these standards and monitoring the progresses, we are ensuring that the focus of the Athletes' Commission continues to be relevant, thoughtful and impactful beyond a single Olympic cycle."

HEATHER BOYLE
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS, PR AND ATHLETES' COMMISSION, OLYMPIC FEDERATION OF IRELAND

OFI Athletes' Commission

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ATHLETES' COMMISSION OS

Creating the systems and tools that make progress repeatable

Key Action	Our Promise
PILOT THE ATHLETE-CENTRED OS IN FULL ACROSS ONE OPERATIONAL CYCLE	We will test the full AC-OS in practice to ensure our systems are usable, consistent, and ready for long-term adoption.
BUILD STANDARD TEMPLATES, TRACKERS, AND WORKFLOWS FOR CORE AC ACTIVITIES	We will create simple, repeatable tools that keep our work organised and transparent year after year.
ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR ALL AC PROJECTS AND DECISIONS	We will document learnings, decisions, and processes so no critical knowledge is lost with transitions.
SET THE ANNUAL AC OPERATING RHYTHM (MEETINGS, CYCLES, REVIEWS)	We will maintain a clear structure for planning, execution, and reflection across the year.

Athlete Outcomes

Smoother, more predictable interactions with the AC and clearer continuity between cohorts.

Better follow-through, less fragmentation, and more reliable delivery of commitments.

Greater consistency and continuity in how athlete issues are understood and acted on.

An AC that works with clarity, direction, and steady momentum.

Key Enablers

- Athletes' Commission OS
- AC Digital Homepage
- Athlete Engagement Cycle / Process
- Cross-Sport Connection

04

Enablers & Foundations



OFI Athletes' Commission

TOOLS TURN VISION INTO PRACTICE — AND PRACTICE INTO BETTER EXPERIENCES FOR TEAM IRELAND'S ATHLETES

The following pages introduce the core tools and foundations that help the Athletes' Commission bring its strategy to life. These enablers support clearer insight, stronger collaboration, and more consistent decision-making across the system. They ensure that good intentions translate into practical steps, and that every part of the ecosystem has the structures needed to work in a more athlete-centred way.

OFI Athletes' Commission

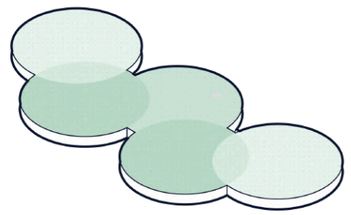
Athlete-Centred Tools turn strategy into everyday practice. They help the Commission and its partners understand how athletes interact with their environments people, systems, and supports. These tools make the invisible visible, enabling better decisions, clearer collaboration, and a more coherent athlete experience.

What Are Athlete-Centred Tools?

They are practical frameworks for mapping, designing, and improving the ecosystem around athletes. Each tool focuses on a different aspect of athlete life — from daily experiences, to connection points, to the services that sustain performance and wellbeing.

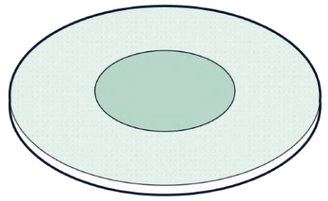
ATHLETE EXPERIENCE MAP

A journey map that traces the full athlete lifecycle, revealing key moments, barriers, and opportunities for stronger experience and AC-led support.



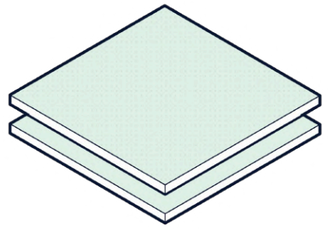
ATHLETE ECOSYSTEM MAP

A stakeholder map that shows the full network of relationships shaping the athlete journey, clarifying roles, responsibilities, and points of connection and collaboration.



ATHLETE INFRASTRUCTURES MAP

A layered model of the infrastructures and supports available to athletes, aligning resources across areas such as athlete welfare, education, performance, and career transition.



01. ATHLETE EXPERIENCE MAP

Understanding the athlete journey more clearly.

Tool Purpose

The Athlete Experience Map builds on the Commission's commitment to listening and understanding. It shows how the Olympic journey is experienced from the athlete's perspective. By tracing key moments across training, qualification, Games-time, and transition, the map reveals where support is strong, where gaps appear, and where the system can work together more coherently. This tool connects directly to the AC strategy's core idea: putting lived experience at the centre of design and decision-making. By making the journey visible, we can shape systems that feel simpler, clearer, and more human for athletes across every sport.

How It Works

1. Captures the full athlete journey through interviews, surveys, and ongoing feedback loops.

2. Identifies the key moments that matter most for performance, wellbeing, and long-term development.

3. Translates insight into targeted improvements across programmes, communication, and system design.

What this tool enables

FOR ATHLETES

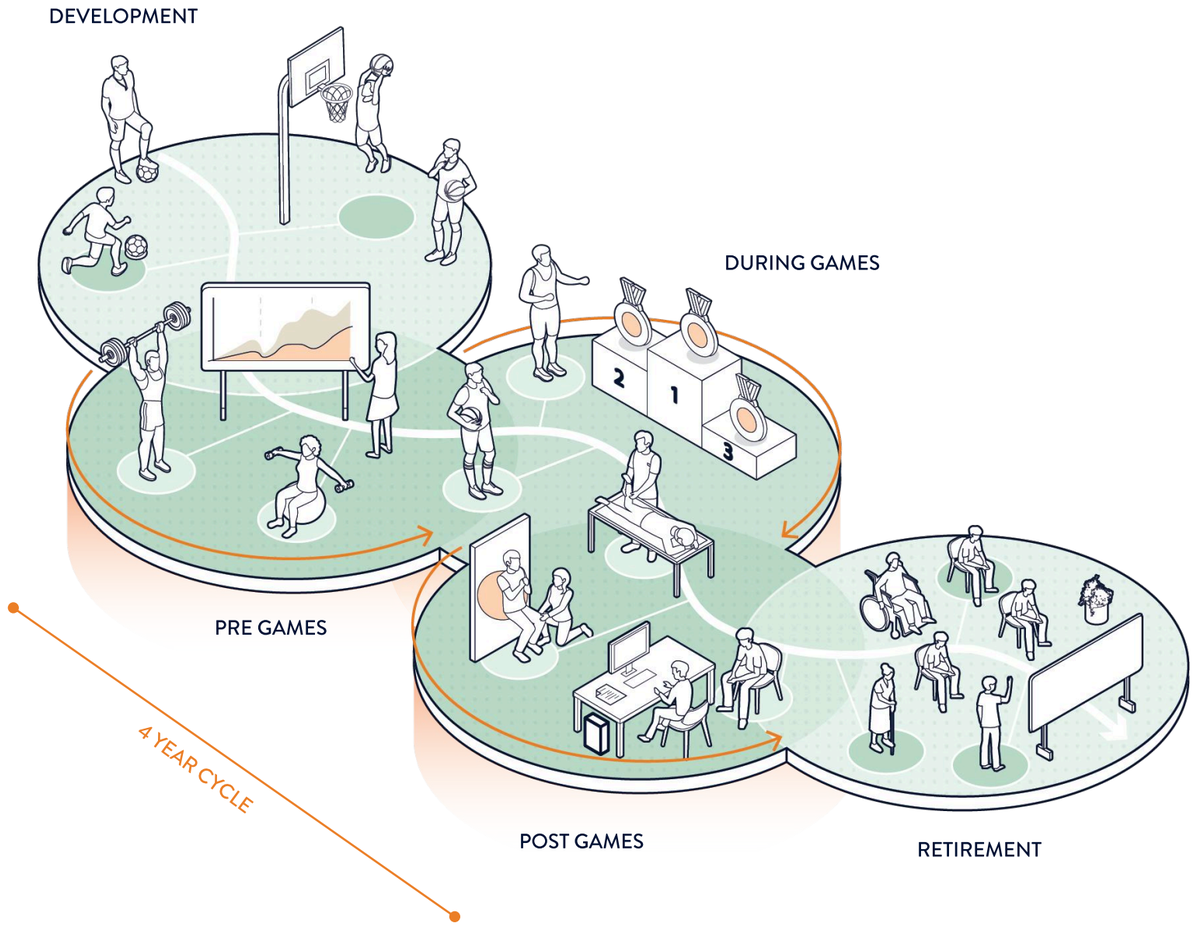
- A journey shaped by real experiences, not assumptions.
- Support that meets them at the moments that matter.
- Greater trust that their stories inform meaningful improvements.

FOR ATHLETES' COMMISSION

- A deeper understanding of athletes' lived journeys and key pressure points.
- Ability to pinpoint moments where targeted change improves experience.
- Stronger grounding for experience-led policies and programme design.

FOR OFI

- Clear insight into the athlete lifecycle to guide strategic priorities.
- A stronger basis for designing Games-time and year-round operations.
- Better foresight for long-term planning across performance and welfare.



02. ATHLETE ECOSYSTEM MAP

Seeing the system that surrounds the athlete.

Tool Purpose

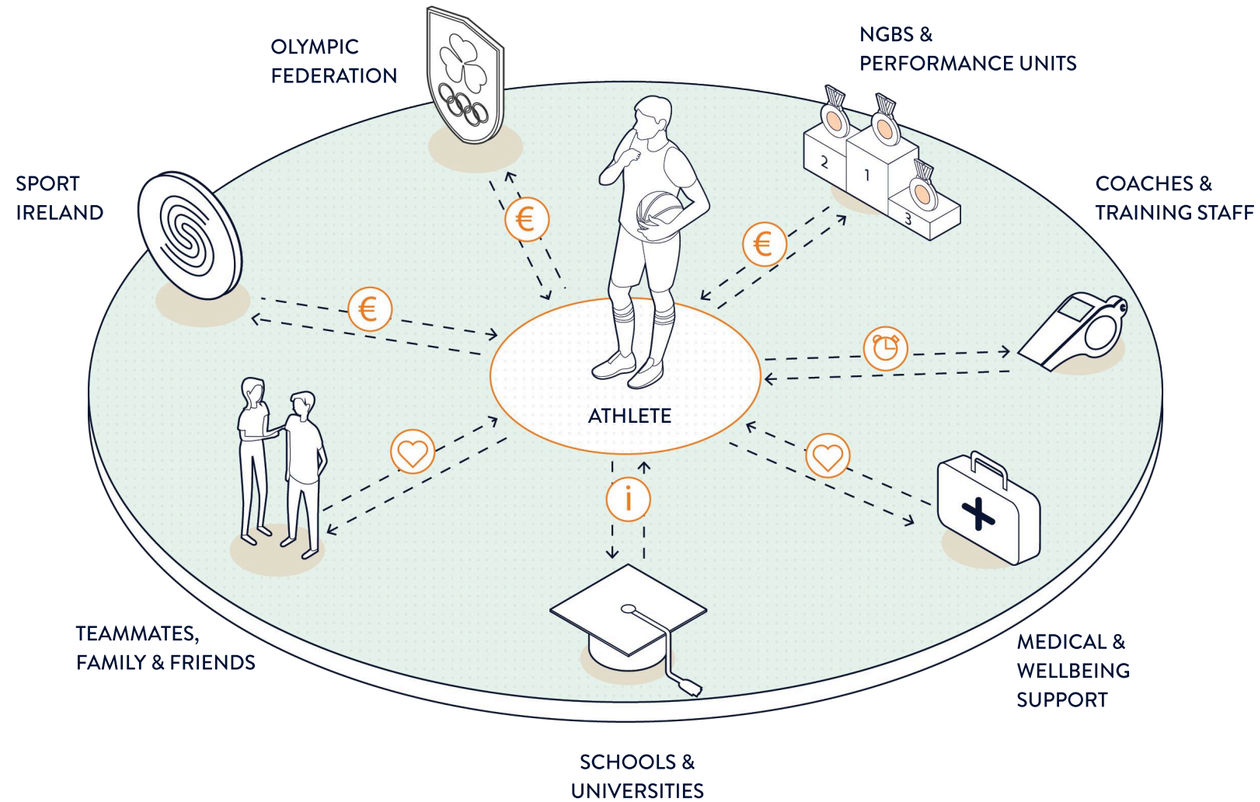
The Athlete Ecosystem Map builds on the strategy's focus on connection and coherence. It makes visible the full network of people, organisations, and systems that shape an athlete's Olympic journey; from clubs and coaches to National Governing Bodies, the OFI, and wider support partners. By mapping how these roles and responsibilities connect, the tool helps identify where collaboration is strong, where duplication or gaps appear, and where the system can work together more effectively. This tool reinforces a central theme of the strategy: athlete experience improves when the system is aligned, not fragmented. Seeing the whole landscape allows the Commission and its partners to coordinate efforts, reduce confusion, and strengthen teamwork across Irish sport.

How It Works

1. Identifies all stakeholders who influence the athlete journey.

2. Maps relationships, dependencies, and communication flows across the system.

3. Highlights areas of alignment, duplication, or opportunity to support more effective collaboration.



What this tool enables

FOR ATHLETES

- A system where roles are understood and communication is clearer.
- Less confusion about who to approach for what support.
- A more connected experience across their sport and Team Ireland.

FOR ATHLETES' COMMISSION

- Full visibility of the people and organisations influencing athletes.
- A clearer view of where coordination or role clarity is needed.
- Ability to broker smarter collaboration across the ecosystem.

FOR OFI

- Stronger alignment of responsibilities and decision pathways across NGBs.
- A clearer foundation for integrated performance and welfare planning.
- Greater ability to mobilise partners around shared priorities.

03. ATHLETE INFRASTRUCTURES MAP

Aligning the systems that support athletes' experience.

Tool Purpose

The Athlete Infrastructures Map builds on the strategy's commitment to clarity, alignment, and ease of access. It brings together the full range of supports available across the athlete journey; from welfare and education to performance, transition, and beyond. By mapping what exists, where gaps appear, and how services relate to one another, this tool helps ensure the support system works as a connected whole rather than isolated pieces. This tool strengthens a central aim of the strategy: making it easier for athletes to access the right support at the right time, with less confusion and more coherence across organisations.

How It Works

1. Maps all supports available across the athlete journey.
2. Organises them into clear, interconnected layers, such as welfare, education, performance, and transition.
3. Reveals gaps, overlaps, and opportunities where better alignment and communication can strengthen access and impact.

What this tool enables

FOR ATHLETES

- Clearer access to the supports available throughout their journey.
- A support environment that feels connected and easier to navigate.
- Greater confidence that resources are working together, not duplicating.

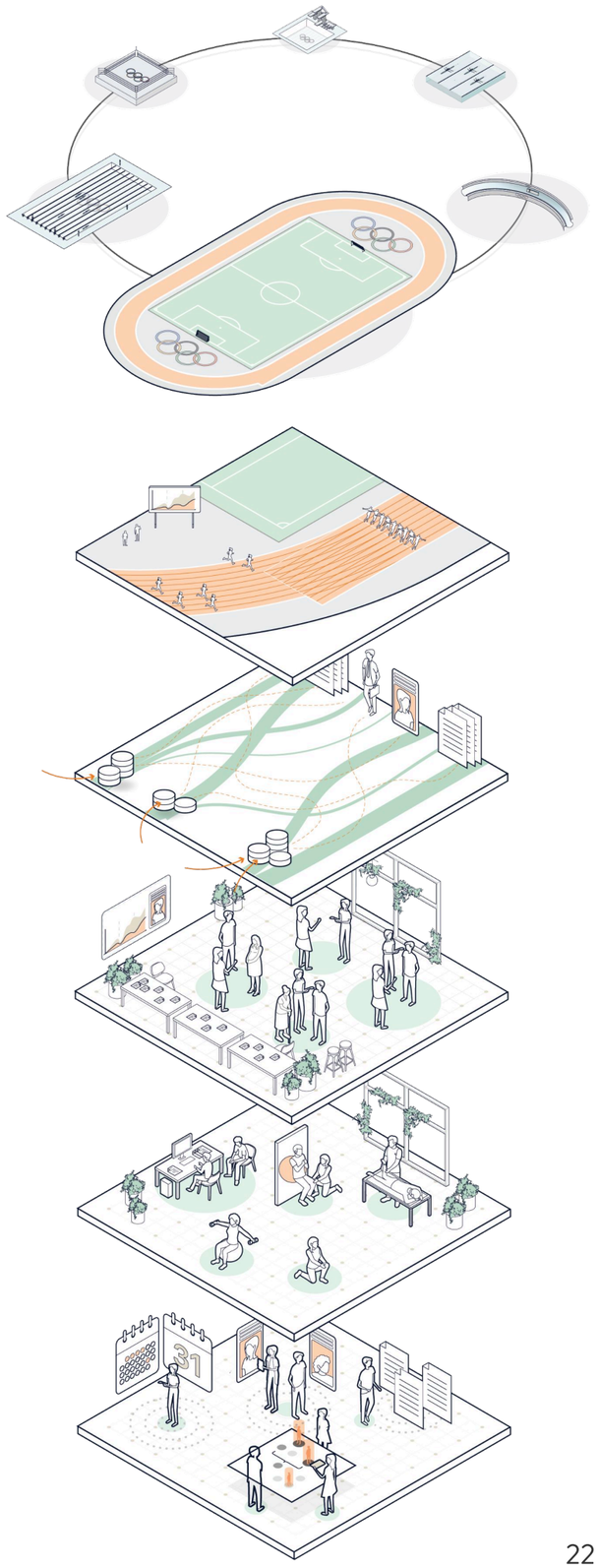
FOR ATHLETES' COMMISSION

- A structured overview of available supports across the system.
- Ability to identify gaps, overlaps, and priorities for development.
- A stronger evidence base for advocacy and partnership building.

FOR OFI

- Visibility of how welfare, education, performance, and transition supports fit together.
- Stronger foundations for coordinated investment and system design.
- A clearer platform for long-term athlete wellbeing and transition planning.

ATHLETE SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURES



SPORT-SPECIFIC

Coaching, technical support, and sport-led programmes that shape performance, preparation, and pathways unique to each discipline.

PERFORMANCE

Facilities, recovery spaces, equipment, and performance tools that enable consistent, high-quality training and preparation.

FINANCIAL

Funding, bursaries, grants, and financial supports that provide stability, reduce pressure, and enable athletes to focus on performance.

SOCIAL

Networks, mentoring, community spaces, and cultural supports that build belonging, identity, and peer connection across sports.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Medical, mental health, wellbeing, and crisis supports that protect athlete health, longevity, and readiness throughout the journey.

ADMIN

Logistics, documentation, advisory services, and operational supports that simplify administration and reduce everyday friction for athletes.

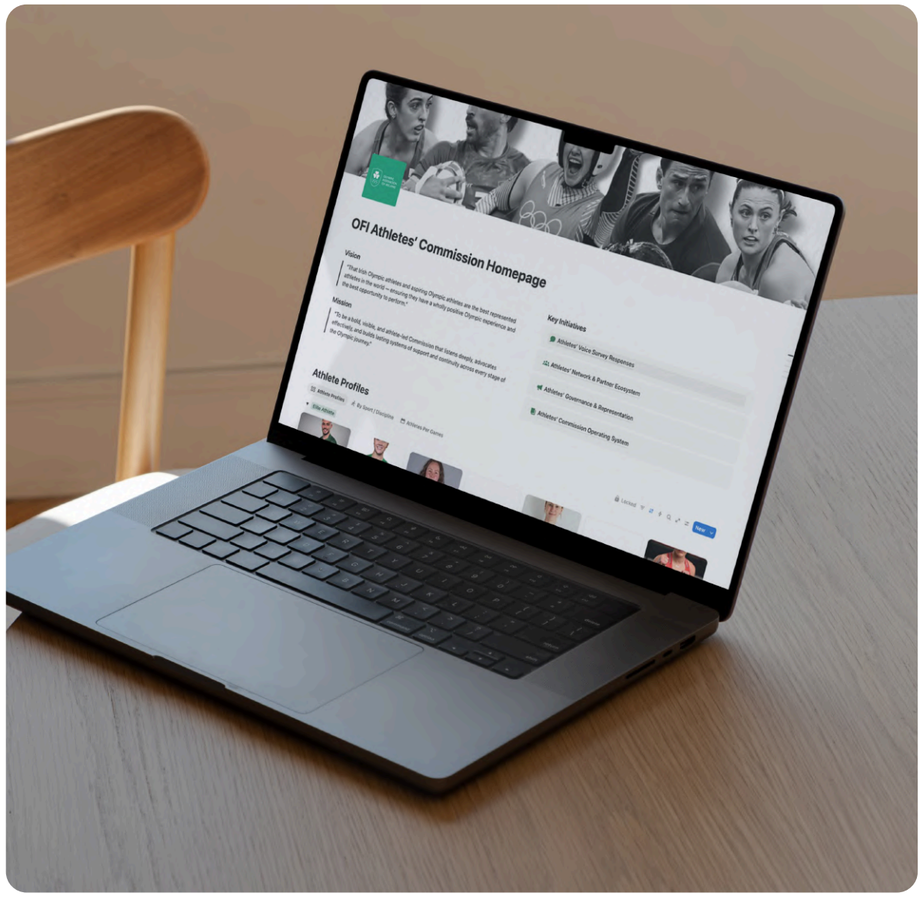
Appendix

OFI Athletes' Commission

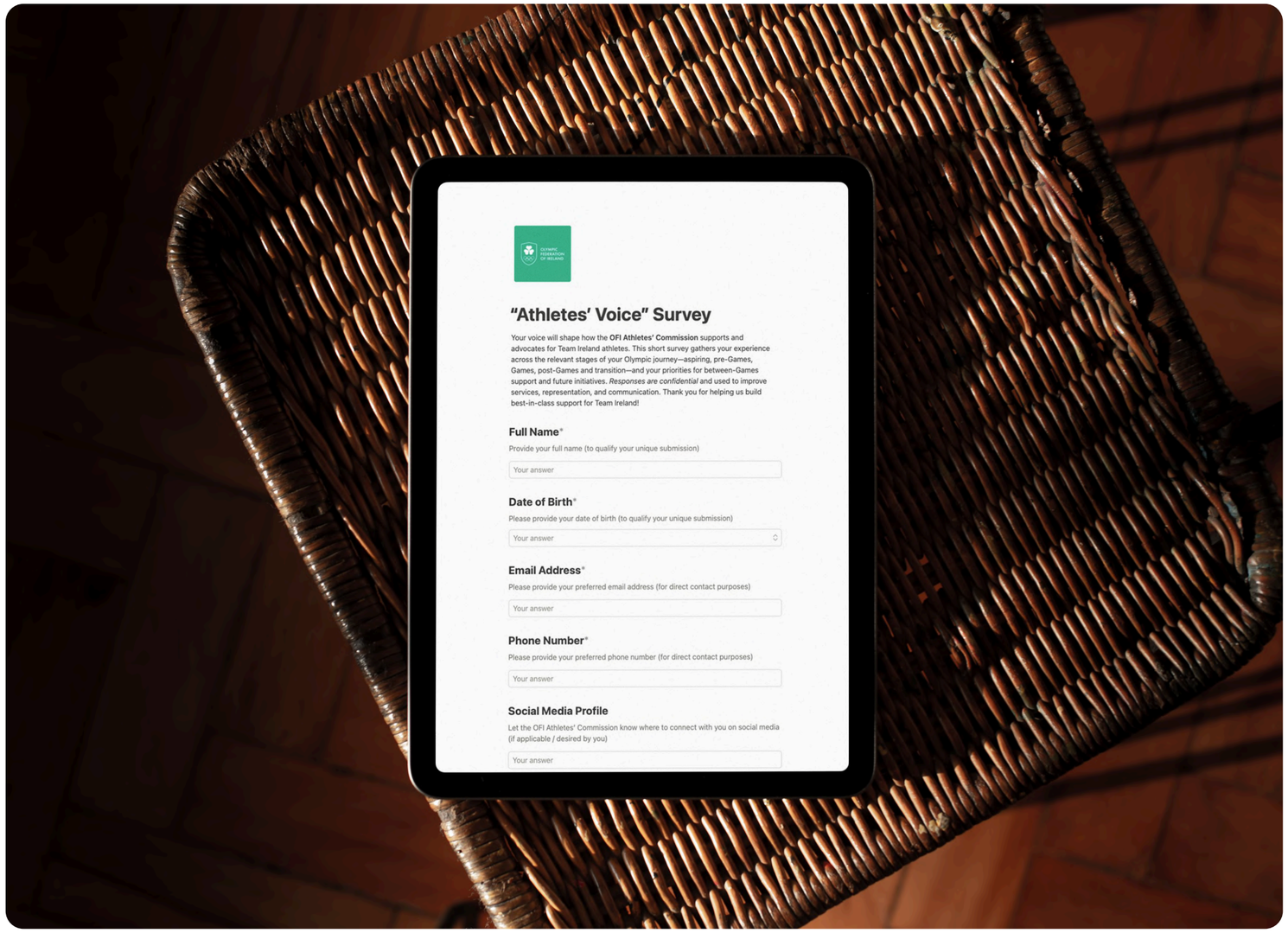
WE ARE ALREADY MAKING PROGRESS

ATHLETES' COMMISSION OS & ATHLETES' VOICE SURVEY

We have already begun turning this strategy into practice. The first prototype of the Athletes' Commission OS digital home is under development, with the aim of giving AC members a clearer, more accessible space to stay connected, informed, and manage key initiatives. Alongside this, the new Athletes' Voice Survey has been launched to the wider athlete community. It offers a simple, consistent way for athletes to share their experiences, challenges, and priorities. These early tools ensure that real athlete insight is captured now and carried forward, giving present and future AC cohorts a stronger foundation for listening, learning, and shaping the system together.



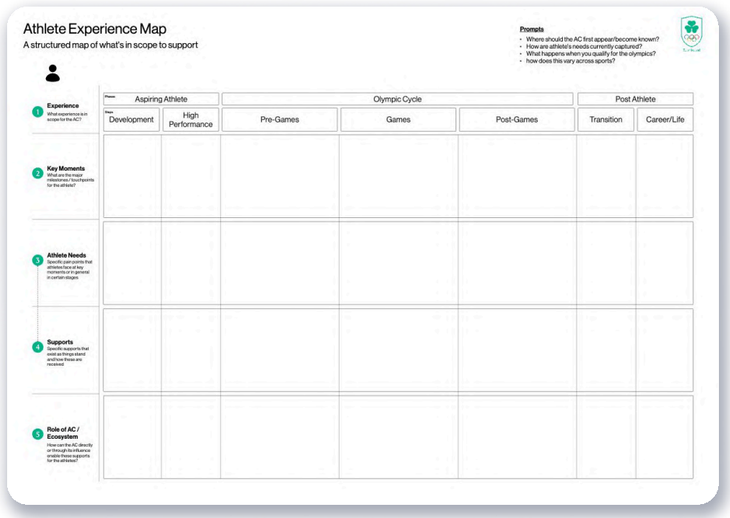
ATHLETES' COMMISSION OS HOMEPAGE

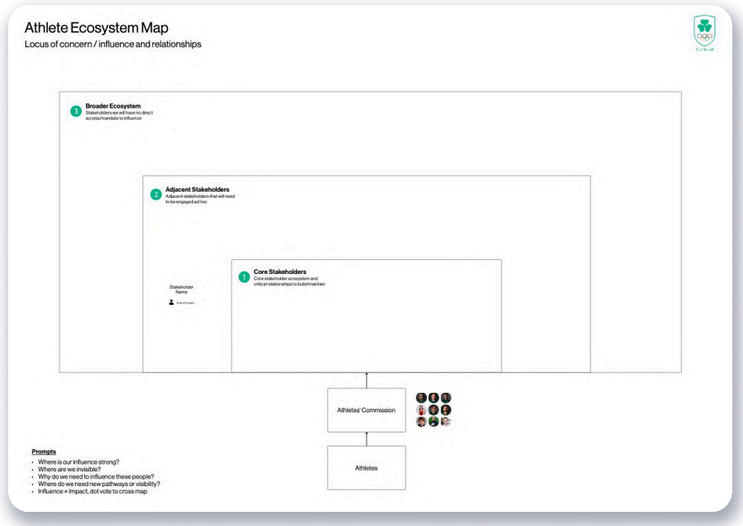


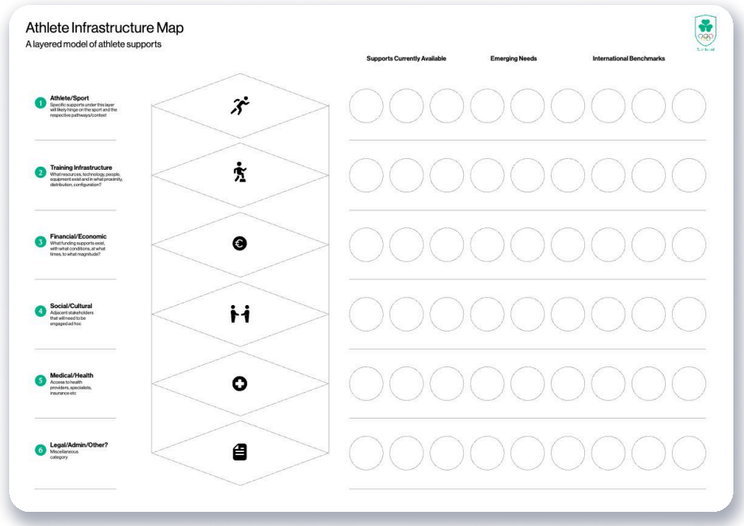
ATHLETES' VOICE DIGITAL SURVEY

OUR ATHLETE-CENTRED TOOLKIT

Our Athlete-Centred Toolkit is the foundation for turning this strategy into action. These tools give the Commission a clear, structured way to understand athlete experience, map the systems around it, and align the supports that matter most. Together, they form the practical starting point for delivering our must-win outcomes, enabling the Commission to make progress that is grounded in evidence, shaped by athlete insight, and consistent across future AC cohorts. Each tool will be available in our AC-OS to use, adapt, and add to as we learn together over time.







Athlete Experience Map

The Athlete Experience Map reveals the unique journey that each sport's athletes experience, and identifies areas of improvement for all.

Athlete Ecosystem Map

The Athlete Ecosystem Map shows how people and organisations connect to support the athlete experience across their unique journey.

Athlete Infrastructure Map

The Athlete Infrastructure Map clarifies the services and supports that sustain performance, wellbeing, and career-stage transition.

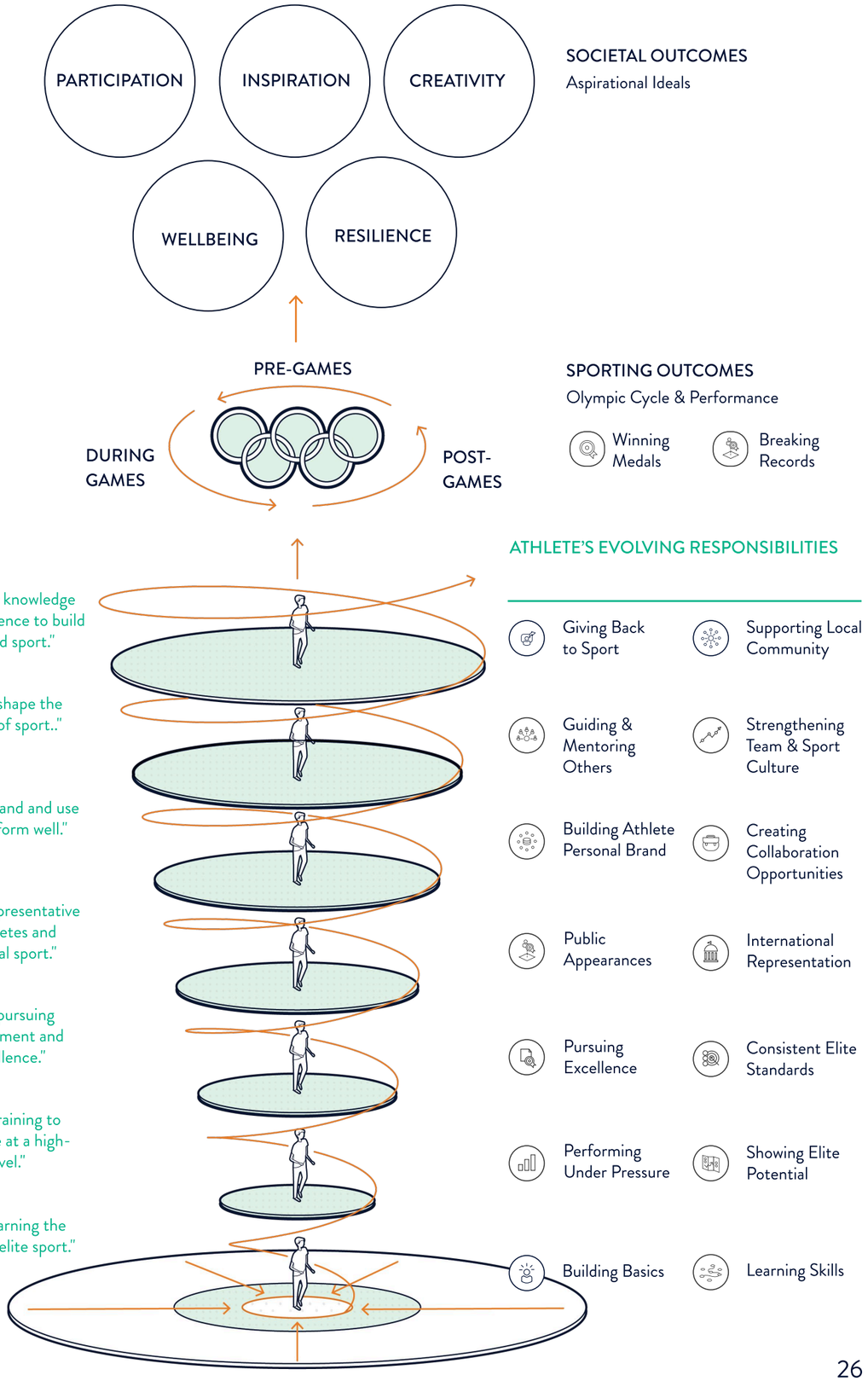
A VISION FOR INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE EMPOWERMENT BEYOND PERFORMANCE

Building an athlete-centred system means understanding the full landscape that shapes an athlete's journey as a whole person, not only a performer. No single organisation can meet that responsibility alone. It emerges from the interactions between athletes, the Athletes' Commission, National Governing Bodies, the OFI, Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, Sport Northern Ireland Institute, performance teams, and the wider social, cultural, and economic forces of Irish sport. When these layers work together, the pathway feels coherent. When they do not, the athlete feels the gaps.

The adjacent model offers a way to see those relationships in context. It shows how athlete experience is shaped from the ground up; through community, support structures, governance, Olympic cycles, and the personal development that occurs across all stages of an athlete's life. It also illustrates how Irish athletes contribute to the broader cultural and societal fabric of the country. The model clarifies where the Athletes' Commission sits within this wider athlete journey, and how its strategic initiatives help connect the needs and lived realities of athletes with the policy and structures of Irish sport.

Athlete empowerment is not only about the support required to perform at the Games. It is about how the system enables growth before, during, and after Olympic cycles; how it strengthens wellbeing, agency, and contribution; and how it offers pathways that allow athletes to thrive in life as well as in sport.

Note: This spiral is not a hierarchy or linear pathway. It illustrates the widening arenas of contribution that athletes may grow into during their journey, and the Athletes' Commission's aspiration to support and empower that development in ways that respect each athlete's unique context and their potential for wider impact.



OFI Athletes' Commission
Athlete-Centred Strategy

Created by the OFI Athletes' Commission
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OFI Athletes' Commission