



Olympic Federation of Ireland Paris 2024 Review

November 2024



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Introduction

Introduction

The Paris Games – Ireland's Most Successful

The 2024 Paris Summer Olympics marked the centenary of Ireland's first independent appearance at the Olympic Summer Games which was also held in Paris in 1924. The 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris was a record-breaking Games for Team Ireland. Team Ireland fielded the largest team in its history with 136 athletes represented Ireland across 16 sports. This was Ireland's most successful Summer Olympics ever with Team Ireland achieving 7 medals, breaking their previous record medal haul of 6 from London 2012. Team Ireland also achieved a record number of gold medals, 4, and it saw Ireland winning gold for the first time in gymnastics and men's swimming.

Aside, from the medal success, there were many other extremely competitive performances including multiple top 5 finishes, with top 4 finishes in the Women's 400m, Women's 4x400m relay and Men's 49er Sailing, with the top 4 finishers on average younger than those who medalled in the same event. The Paris Games saw Ireland produce medal opportunities across more sports than ever before and with the nation unite behind Team Ireland in a way that surpassed any previous Games. These performances bode well for the future of Irish Olympic sport as they highlight the calibre of athlete, coach and performance system in Ireland, and they also highlight the potential for future Olympic success across a variety of sports as we move into the LA cycle.

Central to the success of Team Ireland was the partnership approach adopted across the Irish Sports System. The various organisations including the Olympic Federation of Ireland, Sport Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, Sport Northern Ireland, and the National Governing Bodies worked closely together to develop and deliver an 'Athlete First' approach which created an environment which allowed athletes prepare, compete and exit the Games in a manner that maximised both their athletic performance and the overall Olympic experience.



Executive Summary

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The Paris 2024 Olympic Games marked an historic milestone for Team Ireland, delivering the nation's most successful Olympic performance to date, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of Team Ireland participation at the summer Olympics.

Team Ireland performed strongly in Paris which is evident by the increased range of medal opportunities across a wider variety of sports, highlighting and emphasising the quality of the high-performance sport system in Ireland.

The partnership approach across the various stakeholders (OFI, Sport Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, NGBs) was a major contributing factor in the success of the team.

The general feedback from all stakeholders is that this was the best prepared and planned Olympic Games ever and reflects the journey the OFI has been on since Rio 2016.

The 'athlete-first' strategy was delivered across all elements of the operations and was evident in initiatives such as the Family Days, the approach to ticketing, the arrangements at the Olympic Village and the Cultural Centre to name a few.

The OFI's comprehensive approach to team preparation, transparent and timely communication, and logistics support ensured no stone was left unturned, allowing athletes to focus solely on athletic performance.

The public support behind Team Ireland was evident throughout the Games, on the back of team success and an effective engagement plan.

The profile of Team Ireland and the growth of the OFI from a commercial perspective has increased and this will continue into the next cycle requiring increased focus and planning from an OFI perspective.

In order to maximise both performance and experience potential, there may be a requirement for additional resource, especially at peak times and in the final stages of preparation.

The hospitality, family house, and off-site facilities for athletes post competing whilst effective place a strain on resources for the OFI in Games and alternative options should be explored such as a single venue, less of an 'always on approach' and/or a greater reliance on third parties to support these facilities.

Looking ahead, the LA 2028 Games will present new challenges in all aspects of preparation, but the lessons learned and successes from this past cycle will serve as a strong foundation to build on the success achieved in Paris.

The Irish Sports System is in a strong place and the high-performance community are ambitious for what may be possible in terms of maintaining the progression of Team Ireland success.



Review Scope & Methodology

Review Scope & Methodology

Scope & Methodology

The focus of this review is to reflect on the role of the OFI in the planning, preparation, and execution of the Paris Games. The review will consider learnings from this cycle and consider how to reinforce lessons in terms of what worked well and how to build on this and improve OFI's operations moving into the next Olympic cycle and maximise Team Ireland's performance in Los Angeles 2028.

To complete this review process, Teneo undertook an extensive stakeholder engagement process.

Interviews:

Teneo reached out to 55 stakeholders which included Performance Directors, NGB CEOs, Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, OFI Board and OFI staff.

Teneo completed **over 29 hours** of one-to-one interviews with 39 OFI stakeholders.

Surveys:

The OFI and Teneo created **3 review surveys** following the Paris Games. This included an athlete survey, a survey for the OFI Board and a survey for Sport Ireland. The surveys received over **40 responses**.

Athlete Focus Group:

Teneo facilitated an athlete focus group working session where Teneo and **6 Paris Olympians** from different sports discussed the role of the OFI in their Olympic experience.



Complete	Scheduled/Response	No Response	Total
39	4	12	55



Paris 2024: Team Ireland Performance

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Team Ireland Performance

The 2024 Paris Summer Olympics were the most successful for Team Ireland on their 100th anniversary of competing at the Summer Games. A record breaking 4 gold medals and a total medal count of 7 and a record number of athletes with 136 representing Team Ireland. As well as records for medals won and team size, many athletes outperformed pre-Games expectations (despite not medalling).

Athletes (136):

Sport	Men	Women	Total
Athletics	8	12	20
Badminton	1	1	2
Boxing	4	6	10
Canoeing	2	2	4
Cycling	2	5	7
Diving	1	1	2
Equestrian	4	4	8
Field hockey	17	0	17
Golf	2	2	4
Gymnastics	1	0	1
Rowing	6	10	16
Rugby sevens	14	14	28
Sailing	3	1	4
Swimming	6	6	12
Taekwondo	1	0	1
Total	70	64	136

Medals (7):

Ireland finished 19th in the Olympic table with a total of 4 Gold and 3 Bronze Medals. The medals were spread across 4 sports (Boxing, Gymnastics, Rowing, and Swimming):

Athlete	Event	Medal
Daniel Wiffen	Men's 800m Freestyle	Gold
Fintan McCarthy & Paul O'Donovan	Men's Lightweight Double Sculls	Gold
Rhys McCleneghan	Men's Pommel Horse	Gold
Kellie Harrington	Women's Lightweight (60Kg)	Gold

Mona McSharry	Women's 100m Breaststroke	Bronze
Daniel Wiffen	Men's 1500m Freestyle	Bronze
Daire Lynch & Phillip Doyle	Men's Double Sculls	Bronze

Paris Medals Table (Top 20):

#	Nation	     			Total
		Gold	Silver	Bronze	
1	USA	40	44	42	126
2	China	40	27	24	91
3	Japan	20	12	13	45
4	Australia	18	19	16	53
5	France	16	26	22	64
6	Netherlands	15	7	12	34
7	Great Britain	14	22	29	65
8	South Korea	13	9	10	32
9	Italy	12	13	15	40
10	Germany	12	13	8	33
11	New Zealand	10	7	3	20
12	Canada	9	7	11	27
13	Uzbekistan	8	2	3	13
14	Hungary	6	7	6	19
15	Spain	5	4	9	18
16	Sweden	4	4	3	11
17	Kenya	4	2	5	11
18	Norway	4	1	3	8
19	Ireland	4	0	3	7
20	Brazil	3	7	10	20

Paris Medal Table (Comparator Nations)

#	Nation	Gold 	Silver 	Bronze 	Total   
1	USA	40	44	42	126
2	China	40	27	24	91
3	Japan	20	12	13	45
4	Australia	18	19	16	53
6	Netherlands	15	7	12	34
11	New Zealand	10	7	3	20
16	Sweden	4	4	3	11
18	Norway	4	1	3	8
19	Ireland	4	0	3	7
29	Denmark	2	2	5	9
36	Austria	2	0	3	5

Return on Investment: How We Compare

Team Ireland is now creating medal opportunities across multiple sports. The table below highlights the efficiency and success of the investment by the sports system in Team Ireland.

When compared with nations of similar population, demographics, and team size, Team Ireland despite increasing investment throughout the Paris cycle when compared to Tokyo cycle, spent on average less per Athlete than our comparator nations. The average cost per medal in Paris was \$11.8m with Team Ireland coming in below this with an average cost of \$10.1m.

This highlights the ability of the Irish sports system to invest strategically and maximise return on investment. The system has evolved considerably over the last number of cycles and there is now confidence that Ireland has a strong underlying system, processes and structures to ensure repeatable success. This provides confidence that additional investment in high-performance sport will produce returns in future success.

There is a direct correlation between increased investment and increased performance (in strong, stable performance systems) and with the Irish sport systems now showing its ability

to maximise investment there is a real opportunity with increased investment to continue Team Ireland's growth and success in LA 2028.

#	Nation	Cycle Spend	No. of Athletes	Cycle Cost per Athlete	% Increase from Tokyo	Cost per Medal
6	Netherlands	\$339m	258	\$1.42m	48%	\$7.8m
11	New Zealand	\$209m	195	\$1.16m	38%	N/A
16	Sweden	\$132m	117	\$1.22m	40%	\$11.8m*
19	Ireland	\$94m	134	\$761k	52%	\$10.1m
29	Denmark	\$88m	124	\$770k	38%	\$9.8m

**\$11.8m average cost per medal Paris 2024 (Source: SPLISS: Evaluation of the Elite Sport Expenditure and Success of 17 Nations).*



Summary of Findings & Key Takeaways

Summary of Findings & Key Takeaways

Overall Assessment

- The prevailing view is that this was the best prepared Team Ireland for any Olympiad.
- The OFI were highly praised by all in terms of planning, preparation, communication, and execution in its role as NOC.
- The level of preparation was also reflective of the partnership approach adopted across the Irish Sports system with Sport Ireland, the Sport Ireland Institute, the NGBs and Sport NI working in close collaboration with the OFI to ensure no stone was left unturned in the lead-in to the Games.
- It is recognised that a key success factor is effective working relationships between the Olympic Federation, Sport Ireland, and the Sport Ireland Institute, given the unique position of Ireland where the NOC and the statutory body for sport are two separate entities.
- Sport Northern Ireland is also a very important stakeholder in the Irish Olympic movement with a strong representation of Team Ireland coming from the North of Ireland. Sport Northern Ireland do feel actively included in preparations for Olympic Games but do express an interest in offering more support in preparing Team Ireland athletes, especially those from the north.
- The 'athlete-first' approach was evident throughout the cycle and has set a benchmark for how Ireland approaches planning for future Games.

Key Takeaway: Build on the partnership model currently in place and ensure the relationships with Sport Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, Sport NI & NGBs are continually strengthened.

Setting Our Sights High

- There is a strong sense amongst OFI stakeholders following Team Ireland's performance in Paris that we should be ambitious with our performance and experience goals for LA 2028. The Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy medal target of 8-10 medals for LA 2028 requires early injection of additional funding to sports. This has not materialised post-Paris and is a real concern going into 2025. With the changes to rowing and the uncertainty around the inclusion of boxing at LA 2028, the system requires significant additional investment early in the cycle to have a chance of attaining these targets.
- As the table below shows, we are also overly reliant compared to peer nations on a small number of medal producing sports. Increased investment is required to provide a greater spread of sports capable of podium finishes. As above, the lack of any significant increase in Government funding in year 1 of the cycle is a concern.

Nation (Pop: 5m-20m)	No. of Sports Competing	No. of Sports Medalled	HP Investment per Capita (€)
Sweden	18	8	13
Netherlands	26	11	19
New Zealand	22	9	40
Denmark	20	8	15
Ireland	15	4	13
Belgium	21	4	15

- Although Team Ireland achieved a record medal haul in Paris, the high-performance community believe that the potential to achieve more medals exists and that with continued investment, some of the near misses in Paris can be converted in the next cycle.
- Team Ireland is now creating multiple medal opportunities across a variety of sports. This is reflective of the structures and processes that have been established across the Irish Sports system. To progress, we need to see medals being produced by a greater number of sports. and lays the platform for continued success.
- Moving into the next cycle, the feeling amongst performance directors & NGB CEOs is that we should not apologise for setting ambitious performance targets and medal goals considering the state of the Irish sports system, the age-profile, and standard of athletes competing for Team Ireland.

Key Takeaway:

Working in partnership with the other key stakeholders in the Irish Sports system, the OFI should set clear ambition targets for the LA cycle which reflect the strength of the system and the potential for further improvement and progression to ensure the success of Paris can be built upon and improved.

The LA Challenge

- There is a universal recognition amongst the Olympic community in Ireland that the LA Games will present a different set of challenges compared to Paris.
- The need to get started on planning for LA (which is already underway) is critical and the resource demands in terms of costs, logistics, location and other factors will demand an even greater level of planning and preparation throughout the cycle.
- Paris was an extremely successful Games for Team Ireland, however, a lot of the benefits which an ostensibly home Games provided such as decreased travel time and cost, frequency of reconnaissance visits, friends and family visits etc. which all contributed to the successful performance of Team Ireland, are benefits which will not be possible in Los Angeles.
- Many sports emphasised the importance of their pre-Games training camp, its location and securing the base as early as possible. It is also acknowledged that the potential cost of the Games will be an order of magnitude greater and therefore will require significantly more funding to maintain the momentum and standards of delivery from the Paris Games.

Key Takeaway: Given the identified opportunities by an LA Games including, higher costs, logistics, and the absence of home-Games advantages, it is crucial to begin resource planning as early as possible. This includes securing funding, identifying training locations, and streamlining logistics (e.g., travel, accommodation, and pre-Games camps). A comprehensive financial plan that accounts for the increased costs and logistical challenges will be vital for sustaining Team Ireland's success from Paris to LA, ensuring that performance standards are improved moving forward into the new Olympic cycle.

Sport by Sport Planning

- The OFI received very positive feedback on all aspects of planning & preparation from competing sports. All programmes appreciated the support and autonomy from the OFI to customise pre-Game plans and explore arrangements to suit their sport specific needs where practicable.
- Some sports did identify the potential benefit of the OFI travelling with them in-competition away from the Games to develop their understanding of the needs of each sport further.
- The various sports had confidence that any requests were listened to, considered, and where possible acted upon. Equally, where things were not possible, that message was communicated clearly and the reasoning explained.
- The sense was that the OFI did not adopt a 'one size fits all' approach and rather enabled individual sports to develop their plans to best fit their specific needs as required.
- At times, late amendments to plans created additional costs, however in general the OFI were accommodating of such changes. It is noted that this practice may not be as feasible in the lead-in to the LA Games as the cost implications may be prohibitive – therefore the OFI may have less flexibility to amend plans in such circumstances.

Key Takeaway: The OFI has been lauded for offering autonomy and tailoring plans to suit each sport's needs. Some sports have identified the potential benefit of the OFI accompanying them during competitions away from the Games to build knowledge and experience of the unique requirements for each sport. The OFI should consider incorporating a strategy to travel with teams during key events throughout the LA cycle, providing greater insight into the specific needs and challenges faced by each sport. This would help the OFI refine its support structures, build stronger relationships with individual sports, and ensure a more tailored and responsive approach to athlete and team needs in the lead-up to the LA Games.

Succession Planning OFI

- The level of demand and workload of those involved in Team Ireland was recognised by all and without exception the OFI team was characterised as being hard-working and dedicated.
- There is an acknowledgement of the risk of the team being over-stretched – especially in the final build-up to and during the Game. There is also a potential risk identified in terms of over-reliance on key individuals.
- The capability and experience of the OFI team has grown considerably and this provides an opportunity for greater levels of delegation, spreading of the load, and controlled succession planning to mitigate the risk related to key person dependency.
- The need for increased resources (in terms of people and cost) has also been highlighted and given the practical logistical challenges associated with LA as a location in comparison to Paris.

Key Takeaway:

As the organisation continues to evolve and grow, roles & responsibilities will continue to change. A key to the successful growth of the organisation will be clear and responsible reporting structures and delivery channels as these roles continue to evolve. Furthermore, to mitigate the risk of over-reliance on key individuals and prevent team burnout, the OFI should prioritise a structured and deliberate approach to delegation and succession planning with appropriate clear reporting lines and structures. This includes identifying capable team members, providing training and opportunities for growth, and distributing responsibilities more evenly across the team throughout the LA cycle. By further developing a culture of shared responsibility and developing a pipeline of talent within the organisation, the risk of over-stretching and dependency on specific individuals can be effectively reduced.

Family Day Initiative

- There is strong support and recognition within the high-performance and Olympic community of the significance of the family days that were facilitated in the build up to the Games.
- The impact and goodwill generated through these events was significant for athletes, coaches, support staff and their families.
- The family days, although a huge operational and logistical undertaking so close to the Games, were a major success as they helped foster and build a real sense of Team Ireland and appreciation for those that contributed to the athletes' journeys.
- There is a consensus that these days should be continued in the next cycle and consideration should be given to expanding the scope of these by working in partnership with individual sports.

Key Takeaway: The family days were recognised for the positive impact for the teams; however, they were also noted as a significant logistical undertaking. To ensure their continued success, the OFI should invest in streamlining the planning and execution of these events. This could include increasing the resource required for enhancement creating a detailed logistical framework, setting earlier deadlines for coordination, and potentially leveraging partnerships with NGBS, sponsors or local communities to reduce operational burdens. In addition, there is an opportunity to engage the wider sport community within each sport around these days to make it a celebration of both the athletes/coaches and the grass roots of the sport. This will ensure that the family days remain impactful, cost-effective, and sustainable as part of future Games preparations.

Open Training Days

- A series of 6 open training sessions were held on the Sport Ireland Campus in the lead-up to the Games.
- The sessions provided an opportunity for people to see the athletes 'in action' and a platform for sponsors/partners to engage and activate around their sponsorships.
- The open training sessions attracted high attendances across the six sessions and generated a lot of excitement in the build-up to the games.
- These sessions were recognised by stakeholders as an excellent initiative that fosters connection with Team Ireland and increases engagement.
- There is scope to develop and expand this in the next cycle through increased partnership with the sports.

Key Takeaway: Building on the positive feedback and success of the OFI open training sessions in generating pre-Games excitement and engagement, the OFI should explore the expansion of these sessions in the lead-up to LA. This could include increasing the number of sessions, involving a wider range of sports, enhancing reach through school and/or community engagement, or hosting them around the country. Additionally, the open training sessions could be more interactive by incorporating athlete interviews, behind-the-scenes social media content, or fan engagement activities to increase public engagement with Team Ireland.

Transparent Communication

- Many interviewees including athletes commented on the timely and transparent communication from the OFI especially in the build up to Paris, with the online portal viewed as a key tool to help with this.
- The general view was that information was disseminated through the OFI on time and with sufficient detail. The relevant information was available when it was needed. However, some sports were not transmitting items of important information to athletes and a focus on the systems present in these sports needs improvement during the next cycle.
- The practice of having a nominated contact (often a family member) for each athlete that could act as a filter for non-essential information (e.g. details around ticketing) was regarded as a very positive development as it enabled them to focus on performance and avoid some of the distractions that are associated with the Olympic Games.

Key Takeaway: The practice of providing athletes with a dedicated point of contact for non-essential information worked well. This should be continued in the next cycle. The communication protocols, processes and system (portal) were effective, and this model should be replicated for future Games.

Ticketing

- A strategic decision was made to invest significantly in ticketing given that this was a 'centenary' Games and as close to a home Games as we are ever likely to have.
- The objective was to ensure all athletes had access to complementary tickets, and to ensure all close family supporters could access tickets for the relevant events involving their athlete.
- The plan also sought to ensure athletes did not have to worry about ticketing issues and concerns.
- The plan also sought to provide support to the NGBs in accessing tickets.
- The overall ticketing policy was regarded as a major success with all the objectives met and the feedback from athletes, families & friends, and NGBs being very positive with respect to ticketing.
- All relevant stakeholders were able to attend the events they wished, and no-one had any issues in accessing tickets.
- A huge amount of positive PR and goodwill was generated by making personal contact with parents, partners and friends of athletes and by helping service their needs in the lead in to and during the Games.
- The approach of nominating someone to act as the main contact point for athletes worked and took away any distraction for athletes in dealing with ticketing matters.

- The IOC's 'On Location' ticket system failed and required a manual system to be put in place instead – this added to the resource stretch for staff involved.
- The strategy did result in some surplus tickets which at times were difficult to resell. The ticketing operation also places a lot of burden on the staff overseeing the ticketing operation which needs to be resourced appropriately and/or NGBs need to take on more responsibility for this area.

Key Takeaway: The ticketing strategy delivered very strongly on the key objectives and whilst LA will be a different challenge, the key objectives should remain i.e. ensure availability of tickets for key family support members. In addition, some lessons from Paris can be learnt in terms of potential booking and demand patterns. This should consider certain events where certainty cannot be obtained until late because of athlete qualification and the option to seek last-minute open market purchases may be available. Also, the NGBs should take a more active role in supporting the OFI on the managing ticketing operations.

Commercial Programme

- As the OFI has developed and grown, so too has the commercial side of the operation. The Olympic brand is valuable and prestigious, attracting more commercial partners.
- This creates much needed funding to support the OFI programming and increases investment across Team Ireland for programming, operations, and initiatives like the NGB Discretionary funding and Athlete 'Make A Difference' funding.
- However, it also places additional demands on the OFI to resource and support sponsors and commercial partners.
- In addition, in some cases, it can create potential conflicts or tension with NGBs or other funding partners which need to be managed carefully.
- The Rule 40 portal and approach with Athletes' Personal Sponsors was welcomed, providing greater clarity for athletes' personal sponsors and NGBs.
- The need for continued clarity and education for NGBs around the commercial rights model is arrangements is critical as the footprint of the OFI grows.
- The athletes themselves are comfortable with getting involved in commercial activity on behalf of the OFI sponsors, and indeed recognise the role this plays in generating additional personal funding and opportunities for profile building.

Key Takeaway: As the commercial side of the OFI grows, the level of resources dedicated to this area will need to also grow. In addition, the need for high levels of clarity and transparency will be essential to avoid any potential conflicts with NGBs. The LA cycle is likely to present opportunity to grow this part of the organisation given the commercial profile of the Games in the US, the Irish American connection, and the increased profile of the OFI and Olympic Sport in Ireland following the success of Team Ireland in Paris. The OFI should review the structure of its commercial activities including the potential for the creation of a 'pooled' commercial

programme across multiple sports to maximise the commercial potential of the Olympic brand for the benefit of the sports and the athletes. Also, the expansion of the Olympic Foundation programme targeting potential funders in the Irish American community could be explored.

Media

- Media and communications from Paris Games worked very well. Feedback from the media was very strong with the benefits of the pre-Games engagement positively influencing in Games interviews and coverage.
- The strategic approach to media engagement, especially through the NGB comms network and building connection with athletes was successful, with the multi-pronged approach resulting in engaging coverage that was received warmly by the public.
- The approach of seconding communications staff from key sports to assist in the media team worked well and should be continued if the level of expertise within the NGB network is appropriate.
- A total of 25 media days were held in conjunction with National Federations.
- Media training support and workshops were held throughout the Paris cycle with 3 broadcast media workshops, 3 storytelling workshops and 2 social media training workshops being facilitated.
- In the build up to the Paris Games 122 out of 136 athletes were made available for media interviews.
- Throughout the games OFI social media accounts gained 131,343 followers.
- There were 20,674 media articles which referred to Team Ireland throughout the Games with a reach of 11.2 billion including 8.2 billion positive impressions and a media value of €137.4m
- Before, during and after the Games, Team Ireland's sponsors played a vital role in supporting athletes and promoting Olympic sport through strategic use of media, including TV, above-the-line campaigns, digital platforms, and social media. By reaching a broader audience, their efforts not only celebrated the team's achievements and inspired national pride but also highlighted the importance of Olympic sport, fostering greater engagement and enthusiasm.

Key Takeaway: The OFI was praised for its support for the media and should continue with a strategy to build the NGB comms network, work with and empower athletes to tell their own story and help broaden the appeal of Olympic Sport during the cycle. Building and maintaining strong relationships with sponsors is also crucial for the sustainability and success of Olympic programs. These partnerships provide vital resources that support athletes' preparation and performance, while also amplifying the visibility of Olympic sports. By continuing to deliver value to sponsors throughout the Olympic cycle, not just during the Games teams can ensure long-term engagement and mutual benefit. This can include year-round campaigns, athlete collaborations, and exclusive content that aligns with the sponsors' objectives. Such

consistent efforts not only secure financial and promotional support but also strengthen the connection between the sponsors, the team, and the wider community, fostering a legacy of shared success.

Accreditation

- Accreditation is always a challenge at the Games as numbers are tight and supply never exceeds demand. Overall, it was felt that the OFI adopted a very practical approach to the allocation and handling of accreditations which resulted in maximising the availability for key personnel.
- The flexibility and fluidity at which accreditations were divided up and managed was appreciated by all Team leads and programme managers. Most sports show signs of frustration at competing at the Olympic with less staff than they would at any other major championship. However, there is a recognition that this is beyond the OFI control and the NGBs do recognise the OFI do the best they can with the number of accreditations afforded to them.
- The policy of utilising the Cultural Centre and moving athletes and staff out of the village post competing provided additional bandwidth and options in terms of allocation of accreditations and this was noted by many.

Key Takeaway: The OFI was praised for managing accreditation flexibly, and this approach should be continued in future Games. It was accepted that potential medallists received priority in terms of access and support at the games. In addition, the ability to leverage a venue away from the village for those that have finished competing provides greater options for managing the scarce supply of accreditations.

Team Ireland

- The OFI placed a strong emphasis on creating a greater Team Ireland atmosphere and camaraderie amongst the athletes and coaches competing in Paris.
- There was a real sense amongst individual programmes of connection to Team Ireland which they all agreed enhanced the Olympic Experience.
- The connection was built throughout the lead-up to the Paris Games and in particular, with the family days. It was also reinforced throughout the competition with the top floor of the Olympic Village used as a hub for athletes and coaches to support competing Irish athletes and allowed them the opportunity to socialise and to create strong relationships with each other.
- Many athletes in the survey highlighted how beneficial this element of team was to them and expressed a desire to try and build a similar team ethos and connection throughout the cycle and building towards LA.

Key Takeaway: The OFI's success of creating a greater sense of belonging and camaraderie within Team Ireland at the Paris Games highlights the importance of maintaining this atmosphere beyond the Games. The OFI should consider focusing on building this "Team Ireland" culture consistently throughout the entire Olympic cycle leading up to LA. Initiatives

and programmes to explore could include regular team-building activities, joint training camps, and cross-programme collaborations that bring athletes and coaches from different sports together. By fostering stronger inter-team relationships and a unified sense of purpose, the OFI can ensure that athletes feel supported and connected throughout their journey, not just in the buildup or during the Games.

OFI Support

- Like the sport-by-sport planning, all sports felt fully supported in competition with requests listened to and where feasible acted on. The prevailing attitude of the OFI staff was characterised as being a solution focused/'can do' attitude.
- No major issues or problems were reported in the Games. This is down to the fact that when any issues were brought to the attention of the OFI, they were dealt with immediately.
- Many programmes highlighted individual instances where the Chef de Mission and the team were able to mitigate issues or problems they were facing ranging from travel logistics to medical arrangements.
- The attentiveness and reaction speed of the OFI and the staff contributed hugely to success of Team Ireland in Paris.

Key Takeaway: The OFI has demonstrated a strong ability to address issues promptly and effectively throughout the Paris Games. The philosophy of adopting a solutions orientation across the OFI team worked well and should be continued. The capacity of the OFI team to address challenges could be enhanced by increasing resources, allowing for a more balanced distribution of responsibilities. This approach complements the leadership model by empowering team members to take on specific roles and contribute effectively, ensuring issues are managed collaboratively and efficiently while maintaining clear accountability with established upward reporting lines.

OFI Facilities (outside of the Olympic Village)

- The OFI invested in additional facilities with the provision of the Cultural Centre (Centre Culturel Irlandais) which was a venue for hosting events with key partners and accommodating Team Ireland members after they left the Olympic Village.
- The Cultural Centre played a significant role in supporting Team Ireland during the Paris 2024 Olympics, providing a post-competition base and hosting various events.
- The Cultural Centre accommodated 56 athletes and various support personnel, successfully serving as a post-competition base and venue for OFI events, including visits from the Taoiseach and the Tánasite.
- It was very positively received by athletes, coaches and stakeholders and was seen as an aspect of Team Ireland's planning that went significantly above and beyond the planning and levels of care for athletes shown by peer countries.

- The concept of the Cultural Centre was widely acknowledged as being a very good addition to the Olympic experience. It provided an option for those wishing to stay on in Paris post competing to unwind and enjoy the Games atmosphere.
- The facilities there provided basic accommodation, however adequate for the needs of those staying and the facility ensured that there was no disruption or distraction within the Village for athletes preparing for competition. In addition, it also provided greater flexibility for managing accreditations dynamically as the Games progressed.
- O'Sullivan's by the Mill and O'Sullivan's Franklin were chosen as the designated Team Ireland/Supporter and Team Ireland Family House respectively throughout the Games.
- The strategy for the Team Ireland House was to provide a venue for entertainment, watch parties and included ticketing and merchandising sales operations.
- The venue worked well in terms of providing a fun experience for those supporting Ireland at the Games and the entertainment provided was enjoyable. From those who attended the feedback was very positive however some felt that the pub venue reinforced a stereotype of the 'partying Irish'.
- The daily activities at Team Ireland House placed a strain on OFI resources with staff members working long hours, late into the night, and potentially dealing with difficult challenges as a result. Whilst there were no major incidents reported it was an organisational risk which may have been mitigated with a different approach.
- The venue generated sales revenue of €144,727 and a profit of €26,500 for the OFI.
- The Team Ireland Family House and Culture Centre provided a good venue for hosting sponsors and partners and overall, the feedback on these venues was positive.

Key Takeaway: The concept of having OFI venues for family, friends, supporters, sponsors and partners is a good one. However, careful consideration should be given to the operational model supporting these venues and the image/perception created by the choice of venue. Any venues with late night activity place a strain on OFI staff and an outsourced model may be more appropriate to ensure such venues are managed by non OFI core staff.

It is also suggested that a single hotel venue may be more efficient, reduce costs and enhance overall experience for athletes, staff, and fans. A single, larger venue, with better VIP arrangements with greater space, may be more manageable and enable greater use of third parties and third-party staff for digital ticketing and hosting.

Exit Strategy Execution

- The overall sentiment among stakeholders was that the OFI's exit strategies were executed with no major issues flagged.
- Some programme directors highlighted some ambiguity regarding timelines post-competing when to exit the village, while other stakeholders expressed a desire for increased communications surrounding what to expect once finished competing and how to deal with these situations in advance.
- Notwithstanding these comments, the majority of athletes and coaches felt their exit and transition away from the village was smooth and well handled by the OFI, again citing the benefit of having the Cultural Centre to transition into post-competition.
- Everyone was clear that they had personal choice in determining whether they stay in Paris post competing or depart immediately. For those not competing in Paris (e.g. Sailing) it was greatly appreciated that post competition they had the opportunity to come to Paris and sample the Olympic Village atmosphere and the wider Games experience in Paris.

Key Takeaway: In response to the feedback that some stakeholders needed more communication around what to expect post-competition, the OFI should emphasise and re-enforce pre-departure briefings and create information packets including athlete and coach case studies. These case studies will benefit competing athletes and coaches by detailing the process for leaving the village, options available post-competition and what to expect will help mitigate any potential uncertainties, allowing for a smoother departure and continued positive experience.

Support for Coaches

- The coaching and support staff in the system are a critical element of the success of Team Ireland.
- Whilst a lot of the focus is on providing an 'athlete-first' environment, it is essential to ensure that coaches and support staff are included in this philosophy.
- Several coaches highlighted the need for increased support services for coaches and support staff.
- Many coaches currently in Ireland's high-performance system feel undervalued and underappreciated with some highlighting the need for increased emotional and psychological support throughout an Olympic cycle.

Key Takeaway: The OFI should review the support structures in place for coaches and support staff involved in Team Ireland and ensure that practical supports are provided including, for example, peer/coach support networks, shared learnings, mental and physical supports.

Dare to Believe

- The Dare to Believe Olympic schools programme sought to complement and build on the wider National Games experience as well as enhancing the athlete experience. It extensive and varied, generating high levels of exposure with approximately 50,000 children and 1,500 teachers.
- The scope of activities covered in the programme led to strong engagement with the schoolchildren.
- The artwork developed and the good luck messages had a positive impact on the athletes as did the Dare to Believe t-shirts distributed to the Team.
- This led to increased level of connection between Team Ireland and local communities involved within the programme.
- There is scope to expand and improve this initiative even further in the next cycle.

Key Takeaway: The Dare to Believe programme is a success and delivered on its planned outcomes. Continuing and expanding the initiative should be explored. Areas for consideration in terms of expansion may include the creation of a book of Athlete stories, explore gamifying the Olympic School challenge, integrating the programme with Team Training Days, expanding the artwork project to incorporate other platforms (e.g. video messaging etc.) and integration of AI and VR experiences.



Survey Analysis

Survey Analysis

Survey Analysis

Athlete Survey:

The Team Ireland Athlete survey was sent to all 136 Athletes who competed in Paris. The following analysis is based on the 32 responses received.

01. Readiness

The athletes' assessments of their readiness for the Paris Games were very strong. Physically and mentally, athletes felt well-prepared, with average ratings of 8.25 and 8.50, respectively, suggesting a solid support foundation offered and delivered by the sports, the Institute and the OFI. Tactical and strategic readiness received a slightly lower score of 7.81. When asked to elaborate, athletes expressed great satisfaction with the performance of the OFI in terms of Games Readiness but highlighted some issues around communication from team managers.

03. Performance

On the Games performance itself, athletes rated their success at 7.59 on average, with the biggest positive impacts coming from family support, their coaches, recovery facilities, and the Team Ireland atmosphere created by the OFI.

Conversely, overthinking the occasion and struggles with self-belief were cited as the most significant negative influences on performance by Athletes in the survey. Several athletes suggested that better mental preparation and increased support during the gap between qualification and competition could enhance future performance.

02. Games Experience

When it came to adapting to the overall "Games experience," athletes were generally positive, with an average rating of 8.30, while the effectiveness of pre-Games communications from the OFI averaged a score of 7.44. Many athletes engaged with the Team Ireland portal and found the online athlete briefings helpful, though some recommended clearer communication about post-competition logistics and expectations as an area for improvement moving into the LA cycle. Previous athlete testimonials were found to be the most impactful amongst those competing at their first games.

04. Team Ireland Culture

In terms of Team Ireland's culture, athletes felt integrated (7.41) and believed it was performance-focused (7.53), though they recommended more cross-sport integration during the preparation cycle as a potential opportunity to help create a greater sense of Team Ireland before travelling to the Games.

Regarding the post-competition environment, athletes were generally satisfied with their accommodation and the cultural house experience.

05. Daily Performance Environment

On the topic of daily performance environments away from the Olympic Games, many athletes felt disadvantaged when they compared themselves to their competitors, particularly due to limited access to full-time coaching in Ireland and financial support received. The overall sentiment reflected a desire for more resources to boost performance and enhance the Games performance and results.



Key Recommendations

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#	Key Finding Area	Recommended Action
1	Overall Assessment	1. Continue to build on the partnership model currently in place and ensure the relationships with Sport Ireland, Sport Ireland Institute, Sport NI & NGBs are strengthened.
2	Setting Our Sights High	1. Working in partnership with the other key stakeholders in the Irish Sports system, the OFI should set clear ambition targets, reflecting the totality of its role, for the LA cycle which reflect the strength of the system and the potential for further improvement and progression to ensure the success of Paris can be built upon and improved.
3	The LA Challenge	1. Begin resource planning as early as possible. This includes securing funding, identifying training locations, and streamlining logistics (e.g., travel, accommodation, and pre-Games camps). 2. A comprehensive financial plan that accounts for the increased costs and logistical challenges will be vital for sustaining Team Ireland's success from Paris to LA, ensuring that performance standards are improved moving forward into the new Olympic cycle.
4	Sport by Sport Planning	1. The OFI should continue to increase travel with teams during key events throughout the LA cycle, providing greater insight into the specific needs and challenges faced by each sport. This would help the OFI refine its support structures, build stronger relationships with individual sports, and ensure a more tailored and responsive approach to athlete and team needs in the lead-up to the LA Games.
5	Succession Planning OFI	1. OFI should prioritise a structured and deliberate approach to delegation and succession planning. This includes identifying capable team members, providing training and opportunities for growth, and distributing responsibilities more evenly across the team throughout the LA cycle. 2. By increasing the culture of shared responsibility and developing a pipeline of talent within the organisation, the risk of over-stretching and dependency on specific individuals can be effectively reduced.

6	Family Day Initiative	1. To ensure continued success without overwhelming resource strain, the OFI should invest in streamlining the planning and execution of these events. This could include creating a detailed logistical framework, setting earlier deadlines for coordination, and potentially leveraging partnerships with NGBS, sponsors or local communities to reduce operational burdens. 2. Engage the wider sport community within each sport around these days to make it a celebration of both the athletes/coaches as well as the grass roots of the sport. This will ensure that the family days remain impactful, cost-effective, and sustainable as part of future Games preparations.
7	Open Training Days	1. Building on the positive feedback and success of the OFI open training sessions in generating pre-Games excitement and engagement, the OFI should explore the expansion of these sessions in the lead-up to LA. 2. Increase the number of sessions, involving a wider range of sports, enhancing reach through school and/or community engagement, or hosting them around the country. 3. Additionally, the open training sessions could be more interactive by incorporating athlete interviews, behind-the-scenes social media content, or fan engagement activities to increase public engagement with Team Ireland.
8	Transparent Communication	1. The practice of providing athletes with a dedicated point of contact for non-essential information worked well. This should be continued in the next cycle. 2. The communication protocols, processes and system (portal) were effective, and this model should be replicated for future Games.
9	Ticketing	1. The key objectives should remain i.e. ensure availability of tickets for key family support members and nominate an alternate person to act as the key contact point for athletes to ensure they are not distracted by ticketing issues or concerns. In addition, some lessons from Paris can be learnt in terms of potential booking and demand patterns. This should consider certain events where certainty cannot be obtained until late because of athlete qualification and the option to seek last-minute open market purchases may be available. 2. Also, the NGBs should take a more active role in supporting the OFI on the managing ticketing operations.

10	Commercial Agreement	1. As the commercial side of the OFI grows, the level of resources dedicated to this area will need to also grow. 2. The need for high levels of clarity and transparency will be essential to avoid any potential conflicts with NGBs.. 3. The OFI should review the structure of its commercial activities including the potential for the creation of a 'pooled' commercial programme across multiple sports and also to maximise the commercial potential of the Olympic brand for the Irish sport system. 4. The expansion of the Olympic Foundation programme targeting potential funders in the Irish American community could be explored.
11	Media	1. The OFI should continue to build its NGB comms network strategy and work with Sports in terms of the promotion of Olympic sport. 2. The commercial and marketing strategy should continue to support an always on approach from the OFI sponsors in terms of their own engagement with the team and athletes.
12	Accreditation	1. Continue current accreditation strategy in future Games, maximising the use of accreditations when budget allows for it.
13	Team Ireland	1. The OFI should consider focusing on building further on the "Team Ireland" culture consistently throughout the entire Olympic cycle leading up to LA. 2. Initiatives and programmes to explore could include regular team-building activities, joint training camps, and cross-programme collaborations that bring athletes and coaches from different sports together.
14	OFI Support	1. The OFI has demonstrated a strong ability to address issues promptly and effectively throughout the Paris Games. The philosophy of adopting a solutions orientation across the OFI team worked well and should be continued. 2. As the organisation continues to evolve and grow, roles & responsibilities will continue to change. A key to the successful growth of the organisation will be clear and responsible reporting structures and delivery channels as these roles continue to evolve.

15	OFI Facilities (outside of the Olympic Village)	1. The concept of having OFI venues for family, friends, supporters, sponsors and partners is a good one. However, careful consideration should be given to the operational model supporting these venues and the image/perception created by the choice of venue. Any venues with late night activity place a strain on OFI staff and an outsourced model may be more appropriate to ensure such venues are managed by non OFI core staff. 2. It is also suggested that a single hotel venue may be more efficient, reduce costs and enhance overall experience for athletes, staff, and fans. A single, larger venue, with better VIP arrangements with greater space, may be more manageable and enable greater use of third parties and third-party staff for digital ticketing and hosting.
16	Exit Strategy Execution	1. OFI to emphasise and re-enforce pre-departure briefings and create information packets including athlete and coach case studies. These case studies will benefit competing athletes and coaches by detailing the process for leaving the village, options available post-competition and what to expect will help mitigate any potential uncertainties, allowing for a smoother departure and continued positive experience.
17	Support for Coaches	1. The OFI should review the support structures in place for coaches and support staff involved in Team Ireland and ensure that practical supports are provided including, for example, peer/coach support networks, shared learnings, mental and physical supports.
18	Dare to Believe	1. The Dare to Believe programme is a success and delivered on its planned outcomes. Continuing and expanding the initiative should be explored. Areas for consideration in terms of expansion may include the creation of a book of Athlete stories, explore gamifying the Olympic School challenge, integrating the programme with Team Training Days, expanding the artwork project to incorporate other platforms (e.g. video messaging etc.) and integration of AI and VR experiences.



Team Ireland Athletes & Results

Team Ireland Athletes & Results

Athletics		
Athlete	Event	Result
Rhasidat Adeleke	Women's 400m	4 th
Sophie Becker	Women's 400m	2 nd in Repechage
Andrew Coscoran	Men's 1500m	12 th in Repechage
Cathal Doyle	Men's 1500m	10 th in SF (PB)
Mark English	Men's 800m	6 th in SF
Brian Fay	Men's 5000m	13 th in SF
Eric Favors	Men's Shot-Put	18 th in Heat
Sarah Healy	Women's 1500m	4 th in Repechage
Sarah Lavin	Women's 100m hurdles	6 th in SF
Sharlene Mawdsley	Women's 400m	3 rd in Repechage (PB)
Jodie McCann	Women's 5000m	20 th in Heat
Luke McCann	Men's 1500m	7 th in Repechage
Fionnuala McCormack	Women's Marathon	28 th (SB)
Kate O'Connor	Women's Heptathlon	14 th
Sophie O'Sullivan	Women's 1500m	4 th in Repechage
Nicola Tuthill	Women's Hammer Throw	16 th in Heat
Chris O'Donnell, Sophie Becker, Thomas Barr, Sharlene Mawdsley	Mixed 4x400m Relay	5 th in Heat
Sophie Becker, Rhasidat Adeleke, Phil Healy, Sharlene Mawdsley (Kelly McGrory, heat)	Women's 4x400m Relay	4 th (NR)

Badminton		
Athlete	Event	Result
Nhat Nguyen	Men's	2 nd in Pool (P:3, W:2, L:1)
Rachel Darragh	Women's	3 rd in Pool (P:2, W:0, L:2)

Boxing		
Athlete	Event	Result
Dean Clancy	Men's 63kg	Round of 32
Jude Gallagher	Men's 57kg	Round of 16
Kellie Harrington	Women's 60kg	Gold
Jennifer Lehane	Women's 54kg	Round of 16
Jack Marley	Men's 92kg	¼ Final
Daina Moorehouse	Women's 50kg	Round of 16
Aoife O'Rourke	Women's 75kg	Round of 16
Aidan Walsh	Men's 71kg	Round of 32

Grainne Walsh	Women's 66kg	Round of 32
Michaela Walsh	Women's 57kg	Round of 16

Canoeing		
Athlete	Event	Result
Madison Corcoran	K1 & KX1	K1: 24 th KX1: 32 nd
Michaela Corcoran	C1	21 st
Noel Hendrick	K1 & KX1	K1: 15 th KX1: 21 st
Liam Jegou	C1 & KX1	C1: 7 th KX1: 22 nd

Cycling		
Athlete	Event	Result
Megan Armitage	Women's Road	35 th
Ben Healy	Men's Road	10 th
Ryan Mullen	Men's Road	12 th Time Trial; 60 th Road Race
Lara Gillespie & Alice Sharpe	Women's Madison	11 th
Lara Gillespie	Women's Omnium	10 th
Lara Gillespie, Mia Griffin, Kelly Murphy, Alice Sharpe	Women's Team Pursuit	9 th (NR)

Diving		
Athlete	Event	Result
Ciara McGing	Women's 10m Platform	29 th in Qualifying
Jake Passmore	Men's 3m Springboard	21 st in Qualifying

Equestrian		
Athlete	Event	Result
Susie Berry	Eventing	31 st
Daniel Coyle	Showjumping	3 rd in Qualifying (Retired in Final)
Sarah Ennis	Eventing	Withdrew after 2 rounds
Abigail Lyle	Dressage	37 th
Austin O'Connor	Eventing	2 nd in Qualification, 17 th in final
Cian O'Connor	Showjumping	33 rd in Qualification
Shane Sweetman	Showjumping	22 nd
Eventing Team (Susie Berry, Aoife Clark, Sarah Ennis, Austin O'Connor)	Eventing	9 th
Showjumping Team (Daniel Coyle, Cian O'Connor, Shane Sweetnam).	Showjumping	7 th

Field Hockey		
Athlete	Event	Result
Men		
Peter Brown, Lee Cole, Timothy Cross, Jeremy Duncan, David Harte, Ben Johnson, Jonathan Lynch, Kyle Marshall, John McKee, Peter McKibbin, Sean Murray, Matthew Nelson, Shane O'Donoghue, Nicholas Page, Michael Robson, Benjamin Walker, Daragh Walsh		Vs Belgium 0-2 Vs Australia 1-2 Vs India 0-2 Vs Argentina 1-2 Vs New Zealand 2-1 5 th in Group B

Golf		
Athlete	Event	Result
Stephanie Meadow	Women's	39 th
Rory McIlroy	Men's	T 5 th
Shane Lowry	Men's	T 26 th
Leona Maguire	Women's	59 th

Gymnastics		
Athlete	Event	Result
Rhys McClenaghan	Men's Pommel Horse	Gold

Rowing		
Athlete	Event	Result
Alison Bergin & Zoe Hyde	Women's Double Sculls	10 th
Aoife Casey & Margaret Cremen	Women's Lightweight Double Sculls	5 th
Ross Corrigan & Nathan Timoney	Men's Coxless Pairs	6 th
Philip Doyle & Daire Lynch	Men's Double Sculls	Bronze
Emily Hegarty, Eimear Lambe, Natilie Long, Imogen Magner	Women's Coxless Four	7 th
Aifric Keogh, Fiona Murtagh	Women's Coxless Pair	8 th
Fintan McCarthy, Paul O'Donovan	Men's Double Sculls	Gold

Rugby 7s		
Athlete	Event	Result
Men		
Niall Comerford, Jordan Conroy, Sean Cribbin, Hugo Keenan, Jack Kelly, Terry Kennedy, Gavin Mullin, Chay Mullins, Hugo Lennox, Harry McNulty, Bryan Mollen, Mark Roche, Andrew Smith, Zac Ward		Vs South Africa 10-5 Vs Japan 40-5 Vs New Zealand 12-14 Vs Fiji 15-19 Vs USA 17-14 Vs New Zealand 7-17 6 th

Womens

Kathy Baker, Claire Boles, Megan Burns, Vicki Elmes Kinlan, Alanna Fitzpatrick, Stacey Flood, Eve Higgins, Erin King, Emily Lane, Amy Larn, Lucy Mulhall Rock, Ameer Leigh Murphy Crowe, Ashleigh Orchard, Beibhinn Parsons	Vs GBR 12-21 Vs South Africa 38-0 Vs Australia 14-19 Vs Australia 7-40 Vs France 7-19 Vs GBR 12-28 8 th
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Sailing

Athlete	Event	Result
Robert Dickson & Sean Waddilove	Men's Skiff	4 th
Finn Lynch	Men's Laser Radial	10 th
Eve McMahon	Women's Laser Radial	13 th

Swimming

Athlete	Event	Result
Tom Fannon	Men's 50m Freestyle	10 th (Semi-Final) (NR)
Danielle Hill	Women's 50m Freestyle, 100m Backstroke	21 st , 16 th (SF)
Mona McSharry	Women's 100m & 200m Breaststroke	Bronze & 11 th (SF) (NR)
Ellen Walshe	Women's 400m IM, 200m IM & 100m Butterfly	8 th , 13 th (SF), 22 nd
Daniel Wiffen	Men's 800m Free, 1500m Free, 10km Open Water	Gold (OR & ER), Bronze, 18 th
Victoria Catterson, Grace Davison, Danielle Hill, Erin Riordan	Women's 4x100m Freestyle Relay	16 th
Danielle Hill, Mona McSharry, Ellen Walshe, Grace Davison	Women's 4x100m Medley Relay	11 th
Conor Ferguson, Darragh Greene, Max McCusker, Shane Ryan	Men's 400m Medley Relay	11 th

Taekwondo

Athlete	Event	Result
Jack Woolley	Men's 58kg	7 th