

McLAUGHLIN SPORTS CONSULTANCY - YOUR NEEDS: OUR FOCUS!

SPORT AND RECREATION GRANTS PROGRAM REVIEW

Outcomes Summary Paper



October 2022

Contents

Section 1: Background

Page 03

Section 2: Methodology Summary

Page 04

Section 3: Key Findings Snapshot

Page 05

Section 4: Recommendations Snapshot

Page 12



Section 1: Background

Introduction

This Paper highlights a summary of **key findings and recommendations** to come from [McLaughlin Sports Consultancy's](#) independent Review of the ACT Government's Sport and Recreation Grants Program (SRGP) in late 2021.

The recommended changes proposed to the SRGP, as summarised within this Paper, if adopted wholly or in part, will represent the first major change to ACT sport and recreation industry government funding for close to two decades.

Review Background

The SRGP is the primary means through which the ACT Government supports the Territory's community sport and recreation sector to *build capacity* and *enhance participation*. The SRGP has numerous categories and an annual budget of just over *\$2.5million*.

The SRGP has been subject to periodic review over the years since its inception (e.g. the 2007 external review undertaken by Ross Panning and the 2013 internal review of the Sport and Recreation Operational Funding Program), with changes to various grants categories, eligibility criteria and operational funding levels occurring as a result. However, with no independent review being initiated in almost 15 years, ACT Government – Sport and Recreation (ACTSR) identified a need for this to take place. In June 2021, [McLaughlin Sports Consultancy \(MSC\)](#) was engaged to undertake an independent review of the SRGP.

Review Scope

The Review should:

- Analyse the effectiveness of the SRGP in meeting its core aims to support participation and increase capacity;
- Explore the suitability of existing funding categories and eligibility criteria in meeting these core aims;
- Undertake a comparison across other jurisdictional sports grants programs and benchmark the SRGP;
- Review current returns on funding, particularly operational funding for State Sporting Organisations, and the clarity of outputs (and associated reporting) for Territory investment;
- Identify and assess alternate models for the SRGP; and
- As required, make recommendations for change to the SRGP.

Section 2: Methodology Summary

Stage 1	Project Owner Meeting	July 2021
Stage 2	Document and Data Review	July / August 2021
Stage 3	Preliminary Findings and Opportunities	September 2021
Stage 4	Project Owner Webinar	September 2021
Stage 5 & 6	General Stakeholder Survey; and Grant Program Specific Stakeholder Digital Surveys <i>A total of 139 surveys were completed by SRGP stakeholders.</i>	October 2021
Stages 7	Stakeholder Interviews <i>MSC engaged with a total of 58 organisations and 69 key stakeholders via interviews.</i>	Late October – November 2021
Stage 8	Stakeholder Focus Group Sessions <i>MSC engaged with 19 State Sporting Organisations via Focus group sessions.</i>	Late October – November 2021
Stage 9	Consultations Findings Summary	November 2021
Stage 10	Project Owner Webinar	November 2021
Stage 11	Recommendations Report	December 2021
Stage 12	Project Owner Meeting	December 2021



Section 3: Key Findings Snapshot

Document Review – Findings Snapshot

-	The development of more specific performance criteria to allow ACTSR to accurately categorise organisations prior to them applying for funding is needed. The possibility for this process to be automated, with applicants completing a digital “preliminary profile assessment tool”, is another option for consideration.
-	The assessment criteria used to assess grant applicants are broad in nature and the opportunity for performance criteria to be developed which are more specific, and increase the reliability of assessment decisions made by panel members, should be explored.
-	In many cases, the application forms / processes do not require or enable applicants to provide any specific information which could demonstrate a direct alignment between the organisation’s activities and the stated purpose of the funding program. Nor do the application forms encourage applicants to demonstrate creative or innovative ways in which their activities (and the funding provided to support these) will clearly achieve outcomes within the SRACT Strategic Plan, any other current ACT Government objectives, or the SSO’s strategic plan.
-	If it is agreed that smaller organisations should be looking to develop longer term participation opportunities, providing small SSOs with triennial funding presents as an opportunity for consideration.
-	More than 60 per cent of the SRGP budget is currently allocated in “operational funding” (i.e. SROP), predominantly to support large (and supposedly sustainable) SSO core business and operating costs. Such a significant allocation to “business as usual” activities may mean a reduction in the amount of funds available to support more innovative practices and alternative delivery models, designed to specifically target the many Canberrans who are not currently engaged in sport and active recreation.
-	How the impact of the funding is measured by ACTSR and/or SSOs is unclear.
-	When there are 55 unsuccessful applications for CAP funding in 2021, this may indicate a high need for sport capital assistance funding in the ACT; that the funding allocation of approximately \$600-800,000 p.a. for the CAP is not meeting the needs (and wants) of ACT sport and active recreation organisations in relation to capital assistance; and potentially, that due to the assessment criteria being few in number and broad in nature, applications are not providing the quality of evidence required by the assessment panel.
-	The opportunity for the SRGP to incorporate a significant budget allocation associated with sport and active recreation organisations undertaking major capital projects (e.g. facility development / improvement) should be considered. This could allow ACTSR to make evidence-based decisions relating to its provision of financial support to major sport and active recreation capital projects. Something else to consider in this space, is how funding can be provided to support “non-government” sport and recreation facility asset renewals.
-	The fact that the SSO membership and participation data presented as part of the grant application process has not been audited by ACTSR presents as a strong opportunity for future improvement.
-	Following this Review, ACTSR should look to have absolute clarity of purpose with regard to its overall Sport and Recreation Grants Framework; each individual grant program / category within it; and which organisations are eligible to receive funding. Once this is achieved, the application and assessment tools associated with each program, and how grant recipients and ACTSR report on the impact of the activities the funding assisted organisations undertake, should all be built to align with these purpose statements.

Stakeholder Surveys – Findings Snapshot

- Respondents place great importance on the role of the ACT Government in the sport and active recreation space. Which role ACT Government chooses to play in this space (via ACTSR and other agencies) will require clarification via an ACTSR Strategic Plan. Then, the decision will need to be made relating to the role the future SRGP will play in ACTSR achieving its purpose, verses other ACTSR / government funding and support initiatives.
- The overwhelming risk facing the ACT Sport and Active Recreation sector over the coming years, is seen to be facility-related. The next most identified risk related to the difficulty in attracting and maintaining highly skilled volunteers, and to a lesser degree, paid staff.
- 78% of SROP survey respondents have stated SROP funding was predominantly used to subsidise the operational costs of the organisation (as opposed to the implementation of identified strategic priorities). Given the majority of these organisations are SSOs receiving triennial funding (which one may have assumed would have sustainable business models), this paints a potentially fragile picture of these SSOs' business models.
- Having only 4% of respondents state that the SROP funding they received was used predominantly “to develop and deliver collaborative, game changing projects designed to get more people moving, in more ways”, may be one indication of why overall sport participation/membership in the ACT has not increased in recent years.
- The sport and active recreation sector is now facing new and complex challenges relating to maintaining its current membership and participation numbers, let alone increasing them. If the majority of SRGP funding provided to ACT SSOs (particularly larger, more established SSOs) is being used to subsidise operating costs, the likelihood of SRGP funding helping SSOs to activate innovative solutions to address their challenges, appears low.

Stakeholder Interviews – Findings Snapshot

Discussion Area – The broad / overall purpose of the SRGP is to support the delivery of quality sport and active recreation programs, services and facilities for the benefit of the Canberra Community; and in doing so to *build capacity and increase participation*.

Broadly speaking ACT sport and active recreation membership and participation in the past 10 years (pre-COVID) has remained static at around 110-120K (this includes SSO / Club membership, program participation, event participants, school managed competitions, and school delivered programs).

Based on the above, how successful has the SRGP been in achieving its purpose and what are your thoughts around this?

Response Themes

- Our overall membership and participation numbers have fallen in this period and although the funding we have received from the SRGP is certainly appreciated, the impact it has had on improving our capacity and capability; and on “sustainably” increasing membership and participation is questionable.
- Our overall membership and participation numbers have grown in this period and the funding we have received from the SRGP has certainly helped improve our capacity, capability and membership / participation growth.
- The funding is appreciated, but right now, based on our lack of access to facilities, we are at capacity, so we can't grow our numbers.



Discussion Area – What do you think the overarching purpose of the SRGP should be?

Response Themes

To support the ACT Sport sector to enhance the experience it provides to all participants (players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents of juniors, etc.) and to get more Canberrans engaging in sport (competitive and recreational/social).

To support the operational viability of “at risk” state sporting organisations and clubs, as opposed to supporting large, self-sustainable state sporting organisations.

To encourage large, self-sustainable state sporting organisations to be innovative in meeting the challenges the sector is facing.

To ensure the ACT sport facility footprint is fit for future purpose (i.e. by design and by footprint).

To help ACT Government to achieve its sport and recreation related priorities / objectives.

Discussion Area – Currently, the vast majority of SRGP funding is accessed by SSOs. Do you feel the SRGP should be designed to allow more clubs (i.e. the key delivery point for sport and organised active recreation) to access a greater % of funding?

Response Themes

Yes – The closer the majority of SRGP funding can get to the delivery point (i.e. clubs and associations), the better.

It depends on the type of funding. For example, in relation to CAP funding, funding for club and association infrastructure projects should be supported by the SSO to ensure the project’s alignment with the SSO’s facility strategies (if they have one).

As long as clubs receiving funding have the capacity and capability to effectively use the funding to enhance their organisational sustainability and activities.

Discussion Area – Currently, SRGP recipients must be not for profit entities. However, the ACT Sport and Active Recreation consists of non for profit and for profit entities, all of which have “getting and keeping more Territorians active”, as their core purpose.

Should ACTSR grants be open to any organisation who can help achieve the purpose of the SRGP?

Response Themes

No – ACT Government funding should not support the operations of commercial entities.

No – However, certain funding could support not-for-profit organisations to undertake “commercially focused” activities, designed to enhance their operational sustainability.

Yes – Perhaps if there were specific funding programs which focused on innovation / technology designed to enhance and/or grow the sport and active recreation sector; and for profit entities were best placed to achieve this, they should be eligible to apply and receive funding.

Sport event funding should be incorporated into an expanded and more highly resourced SRGP, as opposed to sitting outside of this funding pool.

Discussion theme – Currently more than 60 per cent of the \$2.5 million annual SRGP budget is allocated via SROP to support “operational activities” of large to medium sized SSOs – i.e. daily operating costs.

Such a significant allocation to “business as usual” activities of large to medium sized SSOs may mean a reduction in the amount of funds available to support more innovative practices, alternative delivery models and partnerships, designed to significantly enhance capacity, capability and participation. What are your thoughts around this?

Response Themes

The \$70,000 triennial SROP funding our SSO receives is a very small percentage of our annual turnover; and it simply falls into consolidated revenue – i.e. we use it in any manner we see fit. I don’t believe this funding has a significant impact on enhancing the capacity and capability of our SSO, or on increasing membership / participation. *“If we lost our triennial funding, it would not be a major concern”. “We are totally unclear what the SROP funding is supposed to achieve”.*

If the majority of large to medium SSOs in the ACT “need” a relatively small amount of operational funding support via SROP to be sustainable, the sector is in a precarious position.

The funding could be better used by sustainable SSOs to plan, implement, review and share the intellectual property from innovative projects, which have a 2-3 year lifespan and which are designed to be self-sustainable thereafter.

There is a lack of clarity surrounding the scaffolding used to categorise SROP triennial, or annual funding recipient organisations. How SSOs are categorised in relation to future funding programs needs to be clear, transparent and focused on maximising the return on ACTSR investment.

A greater percentage of the \$1.5 million SROP budget should go to supporting the capacity and capability enhancement of smaller, less capable SSOs, who can exhibit the potential for their sport to grow. This will improve sector wide strength and capability over time, which will in turn increase and sustain, membership and participation growth.

Discussion Theme – A preliminary finding of the Review is that various SRGP application processes do not encourage applicants to demonstrate creative or innovative ways in which their activities (and the funding provided to support these) will clearly achieve significant participation growth and/or or increases in organisational capacity / capability – e.g. the vast majority of SROP applicants vary very little from year to year.

Note: None of the 28 x 2021 SROP Triennial applications were unsuccessful and only 3 of the 23 x 2021 SROP Annual Assistance Program applicants were unsuccessful.

What are your thoughts around this?

Response Themes

If the ACT Government sees the SRGP as an investment strategy (i.e. it is truly investing in the sector to deliver outcomes which contribute to the achievement of government priorities), a key enabler of this should be SSOs and clubs implementing innovation strategies.

There is a significant sense of entitlement associated with SROP – particularly triennial funding. Perhaps if innovation was prioritised; the overall SRGP funding pool was increased; the criteria associated with applications being successful were more specific; and the reporting requirements were strengthened to demonstrate outcomes and therefore, the value of the investment, this sense of entitlement would be addressed.

Discussion Theme – Currently the CAP has an annual budget of around \$600K. In 2021, there were 21 successful and 55 unsuccessful applications for CAP funding. This may indicate a high need for sport capital assistance funding in the ACT, and that the funding allocation of approximately \$600 (\$800K in 2021) p.a. for the CAP is not meeting the needs (and wants) of ACT sport and active recreation organisations in relation to capital assistance.

What are your thoughts around this?

Response Themes

The biggest challenge facing the ACT sport and active recreation sector, is the size, quality and location of a fit for purpose facilities footprint, which enables the sector to enhance the experience and grow membership / participation.

\$600,000 is totally inadequate.

ACT Government investment in sport and recreation infrastructure should enable / encourage SSOs, Associations and Clubs to diversify their revenue streams in order to decrease their long-term reliance on government funding and to enhance their long-term financial sustainability. Currently, this is not the case.

Whilst funding for clubs and associations to increase their equipment storage space is great, it's not going to be a game changer when it comes to getting and keeping more people active in the ACT.

CAP (or similar) funding should be able to go towards funding facility feasibility studies / plans, etc. (e.g. concept design and cost estimates) and towards SSOs developing evidence-based long-term Facility Strategies.

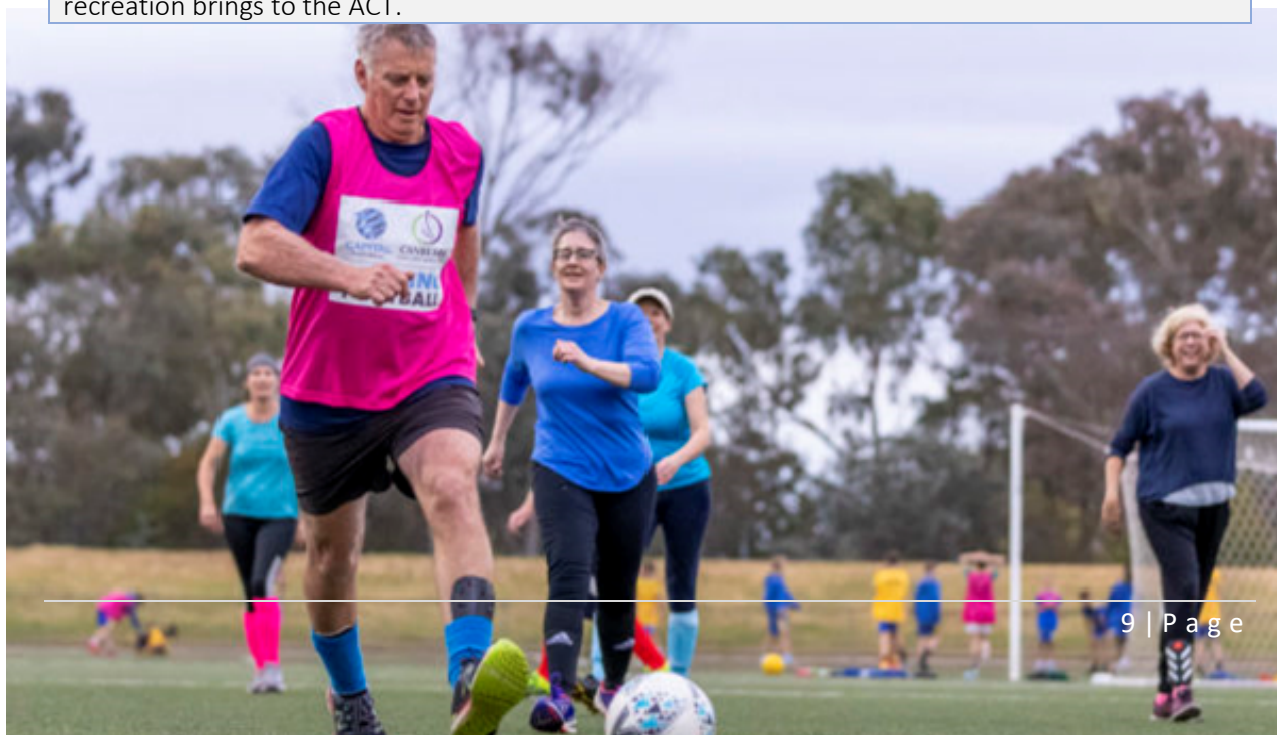
CAP's focus is ad-hoc, small, annual projects, which have minimal impact, but do assist clubs (e.g. tennis court lighting upgrades).

Discussion Theme – Between 2003 and 2021, the SRGP budget has only increased by \$128,866, i.e. a 5.2% increase over 18 years. Based on inflation between 2003 and 2021, the value of \$2,457,000 (i.e. the 2003 SRGP allocation) in 2021 is \$3,667,000, i.e. an increase of \$1,210,000.

What are your thoughts around this?

The costs of operating sporting organisations has increased much more than CPI over the past 18 years, yet the SRGP has not even come close to keeping up with CPI.

This situation gives the sector the clear impression that government does not place significant priority on the sector, nor the positive social, physical, mental and financial benefits sport and active recreation brings to the ACT.



CAP Focus Group Session Findings Snapshot

What do you need?	When / how will you know when you've got it?
→ A CAP (or equivalent) with a "fair dinkum" budget.	→ When the CAP budget is significantly larger and when politically driven sport facility election funding commitments are significantly decreased.
→ Strategic investment to address under supply and to upgrade and revitalise current community club infrastructure.	→ When we see a longer term, evidence-based ACT sport facility strategy in place, with shorter term priority projects identified and budget allocations attached to these; and when we see these projects being actioned.
→ A broadening of eligible projects to include club house upgrades; court resurfacing; significant asset repair and maintenance; commercially focused projects; feasibility study and planning projects; getting projects to shovel ready stage; etc.	→ When funding is allocated in areas of actual need, as opposed to pre-determined areas which, although are appreciated, may not be providing the best return on investment for the ACT Government. → When funding eligibility parameters are expanded.
→ Climate ready facilities – more indoor facilities.	→ When the ACT Government acts on the outcomes of the 2019 ACT Indoor Sports Facilities Review.
→ More disability accessible facilities.	→ When addressing the disability access needs of the ACT sport and recreation facility footprint is prioritised within an ACT sport facility strategy, and we see projects being actioned.
→ More female friendly facilities.	→ When addressing the female friendly needs of the ACT sport and recreation facility footprint is prioritised within an ACT sport facility strategy, and we see projects being actioned.
→ More facilities able to host national level and international level events.	→ When the ACT sport facility strategy includes a facility hierarchy (e.g. local, regional / state, national, international) and significant prioritisation is given to developing / upgrading national and internal level facilities.
→ More facilities designed to meet the current and future expectations of consumers (participants, coaches, officials, spectators, etc.).	→ When the majority of ACT's sporting infrastructure is considered contemporary, and fit for future purpose.

investing in infrastructure

CSRDP Focus Group Session Findings Snapshot

What do you need?	When / how will you know when you've got it?
→ More funding for infrastructure related projects.	→ A bigger pool of funds for the CAP is allocated - \$600k is simply not enough to have a significant impact on participation growth.
→ More indoor sport facilities and upgrades to many current indoor facilities.	→ When all indoor sports are being played in contemporary, fit-for-purpose facilities.
→ Clarity around what the SRGP is actually trying to achieve and how SRGP funding recipients are delivering this.	→ A clear strategic plan for the ACT Sport and Recreation sector and a SRGP which aligns with the SRGP – i.e. one supports the delivery of the other.
→ A shift from a transactional relationship between the sport sector and ACTSR, to a mutually beneficial partnership-focused relationship.	→ When grants are provided to sporting organisations to deliver specific outcomes and these outcomes are measured.
→ A focus on building mutually beneficial partnerships between SSOs.	→ When grants prioritise sports working together for mutual benefit.

WSRPLP Focus Group Session

Imagine it's 2032 ... ACT Sport and Recreation, State Sport and Active Recreation Organisations, clubs and other delivery partners have implemented the WSRPLP between 2023 and 2032 following the Review; and it has been a brilliant success! Brainstorm the key reasons for this success.

→ Funding was able to be used for the purchase of female specific equipment.
→ Funding was directly aligned to strategic priorities within an ACTSR Strategic Plan.
→ Funding was aligned to all elements of sports' female participation pathway frameworks.
→ Funding was designed to attract new females to participate in sport, not to support females who are currently participating.
→ Funding targeted specific female demographic audiences, which have low participation rates in the ACT.



Section 4: Recommendations Snapshot

RECOMMENDATION 1.1: ACTSR Strategic Plan	Page 13
RECOMMENDATION 1.2: ACTSR Sport Infrastructure Plan	Page 13
RECOMMENDATION 1.3: Organisational Planning	Page 14
RECOMMENDATION 2.1: ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme Purpose	Page 14
RECOMMENDATION 3.1: ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme Structure and Budget	Page 15
RECOMMENDATION 3.1a: Game Changer – Industry Partnership Program (IPP) Structure and Budget	Page 16
RECOMMENDATION 3.1b: State Organisation Support (SOS) Program Structure and Budget	Page 17
RECOMMENDATION 3.1c: Community Sport Facilities Program (CSFP) Structure and Budget	Page 18
RECOMMENDATION 3.1d: Club Enhancement Program (CEP) Structure and Budget	Page 20
RECOMMENDATION 4.1: SSO Categorisation Matrix	Page 21
RECOMMENDATION 4.2: Funding Program Guidelines	Page 23
RECOMMENDATION 5.1: Post Review Communications and Implementation Strategy	Page 25



Recommendation Focus Area 1 – Sport and Active Recreation Sector Planning Framework

RECOMMENDATION 1.1: ACTSR Strategic Plan

ACT Government to develop a medium term ACTSR Strategic Plan, which:

- Provides *clarity of purpose* to the ACTSR staff and the broader ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector in relation to the role of ACTSR within the local sport and active recreation landscape;
- Ensures ACTSR is *focusing on what is most important* to the current and future sustainability and success of the sector;
- Supports the future *growth and capability* of the ACT sport and active recreation community;
- Encourages *purposeful collaboration* amongst all elements of the ACT sport and active recreation community for the benefit of the sector and the broader ACT community; and
- Maximises the *relevance, visibility, and impact of ACTSR as a key partner within the* ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector and the broader community.

The opportunity for the primary purpose of the ACTSR Strategic Plan to be, *“to empower the ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector to get more people moving, in more ways, more often”* (or similar), could be considered.

The Strategic Plan could then highlight a small number of key priority areas, all of which would directly contribute to the achievement of the purpose of the Plan, e.g.

- *Getting more people active* – Getting more people who are currently disengaged from sport and active recreation “in the game”.
- *Keeping more people active* – Keeping more people who are currently engaged in sport and active recreation “in the game”.
- *Collaborating with purpose* – Government, industry and community collaborating to leverage investment, share knowledge and deliver innovative partnerships that get more people moving, more often and keep them “in the game” for longer.

RECOMMENDATION 1.2: ACTSR Sport Infrastructure Plan

ACTSR to work with the ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector to develop a Sport Infrastructure Plan, which informs future investment for sport infrastructure in the ACT. The Plan should provide strategic direction and guidance to ACT Government, State Sporting (and Active Recreation) Organisations and clubs, relating to the provision of community sport and active recreation facilities across the ACT.

The ACTSR Sport Infrastructure Plan should directly align with facility / infrastructure related elements of the ACTSR Strategic Plan. This will see the Sport Infrastructure Plan being a key enabler of the ACTSR Strategic Plan’s effective implementation.

Note: Outputs from ACTSR’s partnership with ActiveXchange to implement sector-wide data capture to support SSOs and clubs to build and connect a more informed sport sector, as well as ACT State Sporting Organisation (SSO) facility plans, should help guide the design of the ACTSR Sport Infrastructure Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 1.3: Organisational Planning

ACTSR to prioritise (i.e. via the Industry Investment Scheme) the ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector taking *a planned approach to their thriving future*, via the development and implementation of organisational strategic plans which:

- Align with the strategic plans of all elements of their sport (e.g. National Sporting organisation – SSO – Club); and
- Align with the ACTSR Strategic Plan (and Sport Infrastructure Plan) in areas of mutual benefit.



Recommendation Focus Area 2 – Purpose

RECOMMENDATION 2.1: ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme Purpose Statement

The overarching purpose of the fit for future purpose ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme should be for the ACT Government, *“to strategically support the ACT Sport and Active Recreation delivery system (SSOs and clubs) to:*

- *Get more people who are currently disengaged from organised sport and active recreation “in the game”; and*
- *Keep more people who are currently engaged in organised sport and active recreation “in the game”.*

As such, the future Industry Investment Scheme should prioritise supporting *not-for-profit deliverers of “organised” sport and active recreation* (i.e. organised competitive and/or social and recreational sport), and not the provision of unorganised sport and active recreation, which does not require significant administrative structures, systems and resources.

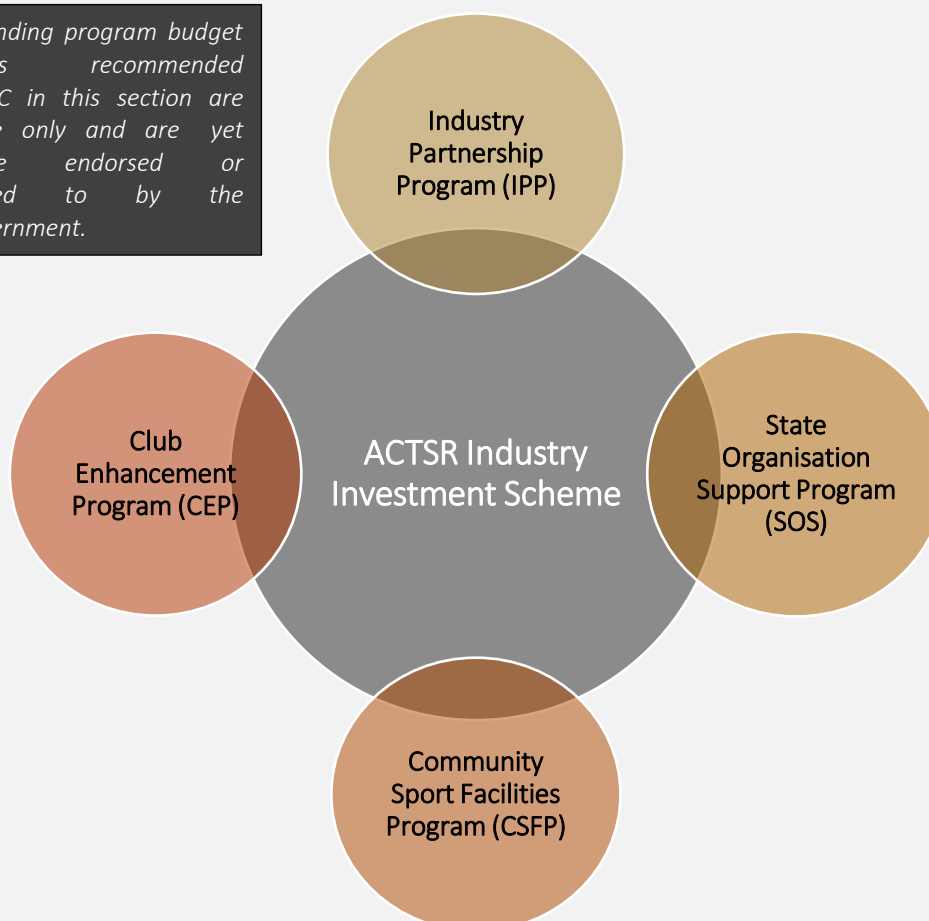
Note: Recommendation Area 3 – Structural Framework, outlines a suite of investment programs, which it is recommended should constitute the ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme, each of which includes a program-specific purpose statement.

Recommendation Focus Area 3 – Structure and Budget Framework

RECOMMENDATION 3.1: ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme – Structure and Budget

Industry Investment Scheme – Programs

Note: Funding program budget guidelines recommended by MSC in this section are indicative only and are yet to be endorsed or committed to by the ACT Government.



Program Outline Summary

Recommendations 3.1a, 3.1b, 3.1c and 3.1d, on the following pages, outline the recommended Purpose; Targeted Organisations; Term; indicative Budget Guidelines, Minimum / Maximum Allocations (indexed annually); and Rationale for each of the 4 x Programs proposed for the fit for future purpose ACTSR Industry Investment Scheme.

industry investment

RECOMMENDATION 3.1a: Industry Partnership Program (IPP) – Structure and Budget

Purpose

This Program would support *projects of significance* that assist in the achievement of strategic objectives within the ACTSR 2022-2032 Strategic Plan.

The Program would also be designed to have ACTSR invest in *innovative, collaborative and co-investment “projects”*, which help SSOs to form partnerships which benefit their organisations; and in doing so, deliver on elements of the ACTSR 2022-2032 Strategic Plan.

Due to the nature of this Program, it would *not* allow funding recipients to use funds for operational / “business as usual” activities, or other day to day business costs (e.g. rent, gas, electricity and insurance costs, etc.), but funding could be used to fund project specific specialist human and/or technical resources.

Targeted Organisations

The IPP would see ACTSR form strategic partnerships with recognised not for profit ACT State Sport and Active Recreation Organisations who demonstrate high levels of capacity and capability to deliver identified *project/s of significance* which are assessed as *scalable and sustainable*.

Based on the *Funding Program Specific Eligibility Guidelines, which include SSO Categorisation Metrics (refer Recommendation 4.1)*, SSOs supported by the IPP would be *Category 1 and 2 SSOs*.

Term

This program would be administered via 3 year funding agreements, with annual performance assessments, designed to ensure strategic project lifecycles are long enough to include a number of key stages, e.g. design; development; pilot delivery and review; promotion; and sustainable rollout.

Indicative Budget and Minimum / Maximum Allocations (indexed annually)

- Indicative total annual budget = \$1.5 million (e.g. across 15 x Category 1 and 2 SSOs)
- Indicative IPP **Category 1** annual budget allocation = \$1 million (e.g. across 10 x Category 1 SSOs)
 - minimum annual allocation = \$75,000 and maximum allocation = \$125,000
- Indicative IPP **Category 2** annual budget allocation = \$500,000 (e.g. across 5-10 x Category 2 SSOs)
 - minimum annual allocation = \$35,000,000 and maximum allocation = \$75,000



RECOMMENDATION 3.1b: State Organisation Support (SOS) Program – Structure and Budget

Purpose

The SOS Program would target State Sport and Active Recreation Organisations *whose sustainable operations are at risk, yet demonstrate the potential to enhance the diversity of organised sport and active recreation opportunities available to the Canberra and region community – i.e. Category 3 SSOs (refer Recommendation 4.1)*. Due to the nature of this Program, it would allow funding recipients to use funds for operational / “business as usual” activities, staff costs and other day to day running costs, as well as specific initiatives (e.g. strategic planning), or participation growth program delivery costs. The SOS Program supporting Category 3 SSOs is designed to *operationally support* “at risk” SSOs, whilst *improving their capacity and capability over time*.

Targeted Organisations

The SOS Program would target recognised, not for profit ACT State Sport and Active Recreation Organisations whose sustainable operations are at risk due to factors such as low turnover; small and decreasing membership; lack of reach; lack of mainstream visibility; and/or no or minimal staff. However, importantly, these funded Category 3 SSOs (refer Recommendation 4.1) will also demonstrate the potential to enhance the diversity of organised sport and active recreation opportunities available to the Canberra and region community.

Note: SSOs not successful in gaining SOS Program funding, could be eligible for Club Enhancement Program (CEP) funding (refer recommendation 3.1d).

Term

In an attempt to provide greater operational certainty for Category 3 SSOs (refer Recommendation 4.1), whilst also enhancing their organisational capability over time, the SOS Program would be administered via 3 year funding agreements, supported by annual performance assessments, as opposed to being administered via annual funding agreements.

Note: To ensure the SOS Program encourages SSO capability enhancement over time and in doing so helps Category 3 SSOs to establish and maintain sustainable business models (as well as providing necessary operational funding support), Category 3 SSOs may only be eligible to receive SOS funding for a maximum of 6 years (i.e. 2 x 3 year terms).

Indicative Budget and Minimum / Maximum Allocations (indexed annually)

- Indicative total annual SOS Program budget = \$500,000 (e.g. across 25-30 x Category 3 SSOs)
- Indicative minimum annual allocation = \$5,000 and maximum allocation = \$35,000



RECOMMENDATION 3.1c: Community Sport Facilities Program (CSFP) – Structure and Budget

Purpose

The CSFP would provide financial assistance to *contribute to the development of basic, modern and inclusive infrastructure for organised sport and active recreation* (which may also support participation in unorganised sport and active recreation). The CSFP aims to increase participation in organised sport and recreation, with an emphasis on physical activity, through rational development of good quality, well-designed and well-utilised facilities.

The CSFP could fund new or upgraded facilities which maintain or increase physical activity, or result in a more rational use of facilities. Priority would be given to projects that lead to facility sharing and rationalisation.

Examples of the types of projects which should be considered for funding includes:

- Facility project planning;
- Upgrade existing and constructing new facilities;
- Facilities and infrastructure upgrades that are female friendly;
- Projects which encourage flexible, multi-use, shared and integrated facilities and services;
- Projects which foster inclusive, diverse, accessible and responsible facility development through universal design, environmental sustainability, and strategically planned facilities;
- Projects which encourage collaboration with schools, service providers, facility managers and community organisations to deliver participation outcome;
- New playing surfaces, e.g. ovals, courts, synthetic surfaces, etc;
- The development of sport infrastructure to increase the accessibility and diversity of organised sport and active recreation activity opportunities and enhance the experience of users;
- Change rooms and ablutions;
- Sports storage;
- Enhancement of ACT Public School facilities that improve access and use by community sporting and recreation organisations;
- Clubrooms including social space, kitchen, administration areas and viewing areas. *Note: These areas have a minimal impact on physical activity and would be considered a lower priority;* and
- Resurfacing of existing sports surfaces. *Note: It is expected that facility managers will budget for these items as part of the ongoing operation of their facility, frequently over 7-10 years, and these projects may therefore be considered a lower priority for funding.*





RECOMMENDATION 3.1c:

Community Sport Facilities Program (CSFP) – Structure and Budget (continued)

Funds should not be available for:

- Projects that commence before approvals are announced;
- Development of privately owned facilities;
- Non-physical sport / active recreation facilities;
- Recurring general maintenance or repair costs of existing facilities (with the potential caveat being providing some support towards resurfacing or existing sports surfaces);
- Purchase of land, landscaping, carparks and access roads;
- Playgrounds;
- Bikeways or pathways;
- Non-fixed equipment;
- Facilities or fixtures for the express purpose of serving alcohol;
- Projects that do not meet Australian Standards and National Construction Code;
- Projects that have already received CSFP funding and are seeking an additional grant to meet cost increases;
- Facilities used primarily by commercial entities. *Note: Funding could support the development of facilities which, as a secondary benefit, allow sport and active recreation organisations to diversify their revenue streams and enhance their financial sustainability;*
- Facilities located on land owned or leased by a commercial entity;
- A facility where little or no public access is available; and
- Projects where the application fails to sufficiently address the relevant planning / development issues.

Targeted Organisations

All recognised ACT SSOs and not for profit sport and active recreation clubs to be eligible to apply for CSFP funding.

Term

This program would be administered via 2-3 year funding agreements, supported by annual performance assessments, as opposed to annual agreements.

Indicative Budget and Minimum / Maximum Allocations (indexed annually)

- Indicative total annual CSFP budget = \$2.5 million
- Indicative minimum allocation = \$5,000 and maximum allocation = \$500,000

RECOMMENDATION 3.1d: Club Enhancement Program (CEP) – Structure and Budget

Purpose

The CEP would be designed to ensure the *key element* of the ACT Sport and Active Recreation delivery system (i.e. *volunteer administered clubs – and in some case, district associations*) are supported to build their organisational capacity and capability, in order to support and address critical non-infrastructure challenges identified by clubs as prioritised below.

- Volunteer coach and committee development and support;
- Equipment costs – reducing the cost to families for membership;
- Marketing and communications designed to increase participation (e.g. social media and technology supported communications);
- Encouraging collaboration and planning with SSOs and peak bodies to foster better decision making; and
- Activities designed to minimise barriers to participation.

Funding could be used to:

- Provide / subsidise education, training and professional development opportunities for the sport and active recreation club workforce;
- Support clubs to adopt sound governance, planning and management structures and practices;
- Facilitate partnerships between SSOs and clubs and between different clubs;
- Partner with other clubs in areas of mutual benefit;
- Design and implement innovative marketing and communications activities; and
- Purchase non-consumable and/or bespoke consumable equipment.

Note: Importantly, CEP funding should not be used to support activities which should be considered the core business of the relevant SSO. However, in cases where the SSO is not capable of providing clubs necessary support in these areas, CEP funding could be used.

Targeted Organisations

The CEP would target not for profit ACT Sport and Active Recreation *clubs (and district associations)* who are affiliated with their State Sport / Active Recreation Organisation, or National Sporting Organisation.

Priority could be given to clubs who are able to demonstrate application of the *Sport Australia Club Game Plan digital platform*, which is designed to provide sporting clubs of all sizes with insights into their current capability, and connect them with specific tools and resources to build and support ongoing development.

Note: SSOs who are not successful in gaining SOS Program funding, could be eligible for Club Enhancement Program (CEP) funding.

Term

This program would be administered annually, via 1 year funding agreements.

Indicative Budget and Minimum / Maximum Allocations (indexed annually)

- Indicative total annual CEP budget = \$250,000
- Indicative minimum allocation = \$1,000 and maximum allocation = \$10,000

Recommendation Focus Area 4 – Administrative Systems Framework

RECOMMENDATION 4.1: SSO Funding Categorisation Matrix

ACTSR to develop and implement a State Sporting and Active Recreation Organisation (SSO) **funding categorisation matrix**, designed to objectively and transparently categorise SSOs applying for **Industry Partnership Program (IPP)** or **State Organisation Support (SOS) Program funding**; and allow SSOs to identify areas for organisational improvement over time; and which Industry Investment Scheme Funding Programs applies to them.

In designing the State Sporting and Active Recreation Organisation funding categorisation matrix it is recommended the following be considered.

3 Categories Structure

It is recommended that a **3 categories funding structure** for SSOs be implemented, which is driven by ACTSR's strategic focus on investing in SSOs to achieve sustainable and scalable participation outcomes. *It is recommended that* the matrix contain **4 Drivers (Financial Capacity, Community Reach, Governance and Planning)** seen as key to SSOs achieving sustainable and scalable participation outcomes; with each driver being underpinned by a number of **Focus Areas and measurable Performance Criteria**.

SSOs would be measured against the funding program's **Focus Areas** and **Performance Criteria** through a **Category Assessment Matrix Tool**. Scores would be allocated by ACTSR (in consultation with each SSO). The scores, as determined by ACTSR will be the key element in determining the category allocated to the SSO. Note: *Once an SSO is categorised, they would be able to apply for funding via the relevant funding program (IPP, or SOS).*

Where the SSO is unable to meet a performance criteria, due to circumstances beyond its control, the SSO could apply for an exemption. For example, an SSO may not manage facilities. The opportunity for specific performance criteria to be made **compulsory** for the recognition of an SSO in each category could also be embedded in the matrix tables. On annual review, if an SSO is unable to meet Performance Criteria that it has previously been assessed as being met, ACTSR would notify the SSO regarding the areas which require attention, and advise as to the possible impact on categorisation and/or funding level.

Funding Cycle

The funding cycle for the IPP and SOS is 3 years, with the annual funding amount to be used on annually agreed **Key Activity Areas** and associated **Performance Measures**. If any annual funding cannot be acquitted in accordance with agreed Key Activity Areas and Performance Measures, or there is other evidence that the SSO is not fully complying with obligations, the ACTSR may, at its discretion, by written notice to the SSO: Reduce a future payment or instalment of funding to take account of the unacquitted funding; require the SSO to repay the unacquitted funding within a specified period; or withhold future funding.



Indicative Funding Amounts

SSO Category	Funding Program	Funding Tier	
		Annual Minimum	Annual Maximum
1. Organisationally sustainable, high performing SSOs with the capacity and capability to strategically partner with ACTSR to deliver large, sustainable and scalable participation opportunities for the ACT community.	IPP	\$75,000	\$125,000
2. SSOs with genuine potential for growth, plans in place to achieve this and moderate capacity and capability to strategically partner with ACTSR to deliver sustainable and scalable participation opportunities for the ACT community.	IPP	\$35,000	\$75,000
3. Small SSOs whose sustainable operations are at risk due to factors such as low turnover, small, or decreasing membership; lack of reach, lack of mainstream visibility; and no / minimal staff.	SOS	\$5,000	\$35,000

ACTSR SSO Funding Managers

An ACTSR SSO Funding Manager is allocated to each recognised SSO that is funded under the IPP or SOS. In consultation with the Funding Manager, SSOs will identify relevant Key Activity Areas and Performance Measures the funding would be attached to. The Funding Manager would be available to provide guidance on the compilation of categorisation and funding application processes and the development of Project Deliverables and Performance Measures, as required.

Note: In addition to guidelines outlined in this recommendation, an SSO receiving IPP or SOS funding, who is operating under a unitary, or unified model would need to meet any additional conditions to demonstrate service delivery and financial accountability in the ACT. This would include, but not be limited to:

- An organisational location and contact person in the ACT, reportable to the unitary organisation;
- Maintaining (and providing to ACTSR) a separate record of all financial transactions incurred in carrying out the services related to ACTSR funding in the ACT; and
- Evidence that all funding has been spent on delivery of services in the ACT.

RECOMMENDATION 4.2: Funding Program Specific Guidelines

Funding program specific Guidelines required to effectively administer the recommended ASCTSR Industry Investment Scheme will need to be developed. These Guidelines should include (but may not be limited to) the following:

SSO Funding Categorisation Assessment Tools

SSO funding categorisation assessment tools would be based on the *SSO Funding Categorisation Matrix* (refer Recommendation 4.1) and would allow SSOs and ACTSR to work together to accurately and transparently assess eligible SSOs (and State Active Recreation Organisations) as being either Category 1, 2 or 3 SSOs.

Industry Partnership Program (IPP) and State Organisation Support Program (SOS) Application Tools

Following the categorisation of SSOs as either Category 1, 2 or 3 SSOs, SSOs will need to complete bespoke funding application tools associated with the IPP or SOS. These user-friendly tools would be designed to allow SSOs to efficiently and effectively provide current, sufficient, valid, reliable and authentic evidence associated with IPP or SOS Program performance criteria. These application tools would ideally be accessible via the ACTSR Smarty Grants online platform.

IPP and SOS Assessment Tools

IPP and SOS assessment tools will need to be developed, to allow ACTSR to accurately and efficiently assess all applications and make objective and transparent funding allocation decisions. These assessment tools should be based on the performance criteria within the SSO Funding Categorisation Matrix.

ACTSR would use the tools to “score” IPP and SOS applications, based on the amount and quality of evidence provided against each performance criteria. This will allow a specific funding allocation to be made to each successful SSO applicant, within the funding range associated with their determined category bracket (i.e. Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3). The tools will also allow ACTSR to very simply and quickly justify their assessment decision, as required, and provide feedback to applicant SSOs.



RECOMMENDATION 4.2:
Funding Program Specific Guidelines (continued)

Community Sport Facilities Program (CSFP) and Club Enhancement Program (CEP) Application and Assessment Tools

User-friendly application and assessment tools associated with the CSFP and CEP funding programs will also need to be developed. The same principles of ensuring specific and measurable performance criteria are in place, which allow applicants to efficiently and effectively provide current, sufficient, valid, reliable and authentic evidence, should be adhered to when developing these tools.

It should be noted that SSO Funding Categorisation does not relate to CSFP and CEP funding.

Annual Performance Assessment Tools

In order to ensure ACTSR and funding program recipients are working together to *measure the impact of Industry Investment Scheme funding*, funding program specific Annual Performance Assessment Tools will also be required.

It is recommended that the IIP, SOS and CSFP all operate over 3 year funding periods. As such, to ensure ACTSR's (and the ACT Sport and Active Recreation Sector's) return on investment is optimised, structured annual performance reviews will need to take place. These reviews should be designed to allow ACTSR and funded organisations to efficiently report on the progress of activities relating to the funding received and to work together to initiate intervention strategies if required.



Recommendation Focus Area 5 – Implementation

RECOMMENDATION 5.1 – Post Review Communications and Implementation Strategy

ACTSR to develop and implement a Post Review Communications and Implementation Strategy, designed to effectively and efficiently promote the endorsed recommendations to come from this Review, along with ACTSR's road map in relation to the implementation of endorsed recommendations, to all relevant audiences.