

## Headline 2.6 Career support for staff and volunteers

### 1. Definition

Career support for staff and volunteers encompasses various mechanisms and initiatives developed by an organisation to foster the professional and personal development of its workforce. This support is aimed at enhancing the skills and abilities of staff, volunteers, and officials, ultimately contributing to the efficiency and effectiveness of their work within the organisation. Training and development specifically aim to bridge the gap between actual and desired performance, whether at the individual, team, or organisational level. These mechanisms can include trainee positions, job rotation, leadership and management development programs, mentoring, and coaching. They cover various developmental topics such as career advice, work-life balance support, and factors contributing to overall development. Additionally, they offer guidance, training programs, mentorship opportunities, and resources to reinforce existing skills and help acquire new ones.

Additionally, regular assessments of skills and competencies should be conducted to identify areas for improvement and encourage continuous learning and development. It is crucial for organisations to prioritise career support as it not only benefits individual employees but also strengthens the overall capacity and performance of the organisation. Sport organisations with well-managed training and development programs can more easily retain employees and volunteers, ensure their human resources can execute the organisation's strategy, and cultivate future leaders. Investing in employees has been shown to boost loyalty and foster a sense of obligation to reciprocate to the organization.

Similar policies and initiatives should also be extended to member organisations and stakeholders involved in the organisation's competitions and events, ensuring a consistent approach to professional development across the broader sports community.

Career support for staff and volunteers is closely linked to “Strategic Human Resources Management” (1.3).

### 2. Ideal Scenario

The organisation has developed an internal staff development or retention policy that includes the talent and succession management strategy. It is based on a mutual agreement among the parties regarding opportunities that could provide added value for both the individual and the organisation. The organisation is aware that training and development create enhanced job satisfaction and morale, decreased turnover rates, heightened motivation, improved process efficiencies, increased capacity for adopting new technologies and methodologies, and better risk management through enhanced knowledge of compliance requirements.

Personal development of the staff is a stated objective of the organisation meaning that relevant training and education is encouraged and facilitated both through internal offers as well as external programmes.

The organisation actively evaluates the capacities, strengths, and weaknesses of its workforce and has a clear strategy for addressing potential gaps and planning succession. Through its induction program, new

employees are seamlessly introduced to the organisation's culture and expectations, aiding their integration. The Board regularly reviews and supervises individualised development plans, tailored to performance evaluations, to address skill requirements and enhance competencies. A robust performance and training system is in place to assess competencies, identify skill gaps, and provide targeted training, ensuring all members have the necessary skills and knowledge. By investing in these comprehensive training and development programs, the organisation empowers its staff and volunteers to excel, contribute effectively to its goals, and drive overall success.

### 3. Risks

- Decrease of staff's commitment due to the absence of career development and/or perspective.
- Inefficiency and underperformance of staff, volunteers and the whole organization.
- Loss of skills and talents due to lack of opportunities.
- Lack of expertise and skills in crucial areas for the development of the organization.
- High staff turnover.
- Loss of productivity.
- Lack of job attractiveness for potential employees.
- Difficulty to find new candidates to fulfil vacancies (employees and volunteers).
- Difficulty in retaining institutional knowledge and expertise.

### 4. Instruments and key elements

<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Key elements</i>
<b>Staff development policy/retention policy:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perspective and regular assessment (e.g. performance, career, bonus and remuneration).</li> <li>• Annual training plan budgeted and agreed with members of staff.</li> <li>• Provide and encourage opportunities for further education and studying to learn new skills.</li> <li>• Encourage the concept of learning mobility of staff (employees and volunteers) at the national, European and international level and provide opportunities.</li> <li>• Encouragement of recruitment of trainees/interns as future source of trained staff.</li> <li>• Promotion of volunteering for internal human resources/ opening/promotion of volunteering positions as future potential sources of trained human resources.</li> <li>• Provide mentorship and leadership programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a robust talent management process that encompasses assessment, development, and deployment, with a focus on identifying and cultivating organizational talent.</li> <li>• Implement a formal system for goal-setting and performance monitoring, including clear procedures for establishing consequences and action plans for staff improvement.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a foundation for long-term career development discussions, supporting employees in planning their professional growth within the organization.</li> <li>• Develop a framework for identifying and preparing individuals for expanded responsibilities and leadership roles.</li> <li>• Enhance succession planning and talent management practices, ensuring a strategic approach to filling key positions and managing talent across the organization.</li> </ul>
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## 5. Good practice examples

### Example “Staff development policy and Athletes Career Programme”

**Organisation:** International Hockey Federation (FIH)

**Description:** The FIH has developed an FIH Hockey Academy which is an education, training and resource centre for all actors involved in Hockey. The aim is to create an educated and professional global hockey workforce by proposing a range of programmes, resources and tools designed to help support organisations and individuals at all levels. The academy has been developed in cooperation with external stakeholders with the relevant expertise, Coach Logic and NottsSports.

The Academy focused on 4 main areas:

- Play: programmes, resources and tools for all hockey players from grassroots to professional.
- Coach: programmes, resources and tools aimed at raising the standards of coaching at all levels of hockey.
- Officiate: programmes, resources and tools to support umpires and technical officials in developing their skills and knowledge throughout their officiating career.
- Manage: programmes, resources and tools for sport managers and administrators working at all levels of hockey; international, continental, national, club or community. This includes event and facilities management, club development or participation programmes.

**Further information:** [Home \(fih.hockey\)](http://fih.hockey)

### Example “Staff Development”

**Organisation:** Belgian Olympic Academy

**Description:** The Belgian Olympic Academy is a prestigious training program launched in collaboration with Université Catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain), the University of Ghent, and the Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee (BOIC), designed to enhance management professionalism within sports organizations. Starting in January 2025, this year-long course features five modules of two to three days each, held at various ADEPS and Sport Vlaanderen centers, with sessions beginning at the BOIC and concluding at the Sportimonium. Notably, a three-day seminar in Lausanne will include visits to the International Olympic Committee, the Olympic Museum, international federations, and the World Anti-Doping Agency. Participants will also experience a unique seminar in Papendal, gaining insights into the Netherlands Olympic Committee\* Netherlands Sports Federation. The program combines theoretical and

practical approaches, with residential modules facilitating networking and social activities, and culminates in a consultancy project and the award of 30 university credits (ECTS) and a university certificate.

**Further information:** [Belgian Olympic Academy | Team Belgium](#)

#### Example “Staff Development”

**Organisation:** International Olympic Committee

**Description:** Acknowledging the role of the athlete’s entourage in supporting health, wellbeing and performance of the athletes, the Medical and Scientific Commission of the IOC, the IOC and Sportoracle are offering Diploma courses for these topics. All programmes are delivered online with experts from around the world. A benefit for NOCs is that certificate holders of the mental health in elite sport programme may receive an additional accreditation for the Olympic Games.

**Further information:** [Home - sportoracle](#)

#### Example “Staff Development”

**Organisation:** German Olympic Sport Confederation (DOSB)

**Description:** There are numerous educational events and qualifications outside the DOSB licensing framework. The Deutsche Sportjugend (dsj) and the three DOSB academies facilitate further education and training opportunities. The DOSB has also been instrumental in developing two vocational training programs. Educational initiatives in organized sports extend into schools through various collaborations between sports clubs and educational institutions, as well as support for teachers, reflecting the broad spectrum of educational measures promoted by the DOSB.

**Further information:** [Der Deutsche Olympische Sportbund \(dosb.de\)](#)

#### Example “Staff Development”

**Organisation:** French National Olympic Committee and Sports Committee

**Description:** Launched in 2013 by the French Committee for International Sports and taken over in May 2015 by the International Relations Division of the CNOSF (French National Olympic and Sports Committee), the Parcours Ambition Internationale (PAI) annually prepares around twenty individuals in French sports for international engagement. The program consists of four two-day seminars, held both in France and abroad, designed to deepen participants' understanding of the international sports environment. Topics covered include intercultural communication, economic and strategic intelligence, sports geopolitics, lobbying and negotiation, immersion in international sports organisations, European sports policies, and applying for leadership positions. Each year, the program features contributions from recognised specialists, experts, and leaders from the international sports world, as well as professionals from the economic and political spheres who share their insights and experiences. In addition to the seminars, participants benefit from personalised English language training, essential for international settings. The PAI is aimed at elected officials and executives from French sports federations, as well as high-level athletes and former athletes, all of whom share a common goal of enhancing their international engagement or that of their organisations.

**Further information:** [Le Parcours Ambition Internationale | CNOSF \(franceolympique.com\)](#)

## 6. Steps to the next level

To level 2 ★★ “Emerging”	To level 3 ★★★ “Developing”	To level 4 ★★★★ “Established”	To level 5 ★★★★★ “Embedded”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule a dedicated session during a Board meeting to discuss the importance of career support for staff and volunteers.</li> <li>• Assess the potential benefits of investing in education and training, and how these initiatives can enhance the organisation's effectiveness, capacity, and overall performance.</li> <li>• Establish a mentorship program that pairs less experienced staff and volunteers with experienced mentors, providing them with guidance, advice, and support to facilitate professional growth and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the strengths, areas for development, and potential contributions of staff and volunteers to ensure alignment with the organisation's goals.</li> <li>• Define the skills and competencies needed for staff and volunteers based on the organisation's strategic objectives.</li> <li>• Create structured programs to develop essential leadership skills, including strategic thinking, decision-making, and team management.</li> <li>• Provide management training sessions tailored to different leadership levels within the organization.</li> <li>• Develop a platform to facilitate mentorship connections, enabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligning with the Human Resources Policy and talent management strategy, provide support to staff members pursuing training or educational programs.</li> <li>• Create trainee positions with defined learning objectives, offering practical experience in various organisational roles.</li> <li>• Promote participation in training and further education, such as Erasmus+ Sport KA1 job shadowing, to address skill gaps within the organisation.</li> <li>• Investigate available training from external providers, including sport federations, NGOs, and universities.</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive process for talent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement continuous feedback mechanisms, mentoring, and coaching programs, and use data analytics for talent planning and recruitment. Foster a culture of continuous learning and development within the organisation.</li> <li>• Recognise employees and volunteers as valuable assets by providing opportunities for further education and learning mobility.</li> <li>• Collaborate with staff to determine an annual training budget and plan, using insights from the previous year's plan to guide the new one.</li> <li>• Offer staff access to professional coaching for personalised development plans and support in</li> </ul>

	<p>knowledge sharing and professional growth across the organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in regular satisfaction interviews and annual appraisals with staff to understand their personal development goals and create individualized development paths.</li> <li>Proactively seek out new avenues for developing staff and volunteers, focusing on diverse learning and growth opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>assessment, nurturing, and deployment, focusing on identifying and growing organisational talent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a personnel development strategy that integrates job enrichment, enlargement, rotation, and self-managing teams to enhance skills and sustain staff motivation, while also introducing flexible work practices, including flexible hours, remote work options, and job-sharing arrangements, to support diverse lifestyles and responsibilities.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for temporary assignments in different functions or projects to enhance adaptability and knowledge.</li> <li>Offer career counselling services, including one-on-one sessions with</li> </ul>	<p>overcoming specific challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equip senior staff with coaching skills to mentor others within the organization, reinforcing a culture of continuous learning.</li> <li>Launch wellness initiatives, including mental health support, fitness programs, and stress management resources to support overall well-being.</li> <li>Share best practices, resources, and guidelines with member organisations to expand career support programs across the broader network.</li> <li>Collaborate with member organisations on joint training and development programs to enhance skills and knowledge throughout the network.</li> </ul>
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