



Special Olympics in Canada Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada



<http://www.specialolympics.ca>



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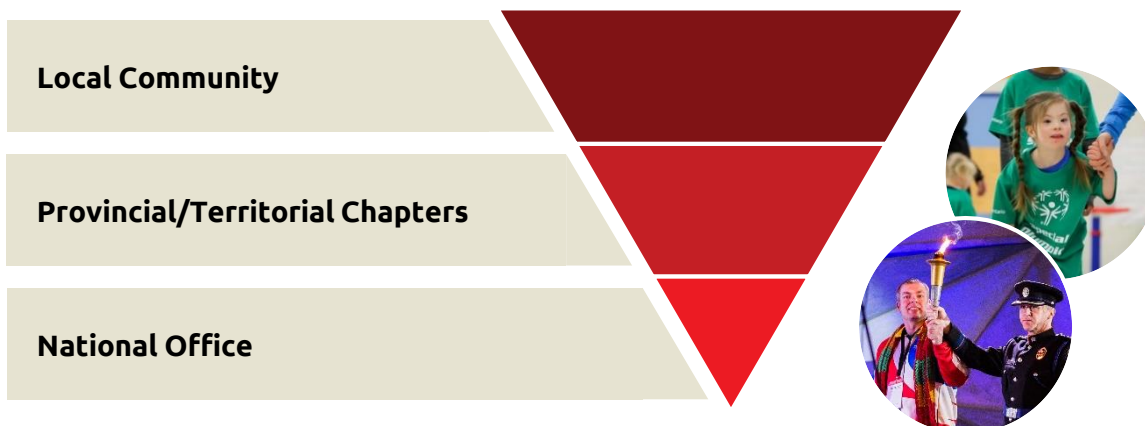


Introduction

Welcome to the new 2017-2020 Strategic Plan for Special Olympics in Canada! This plan sets the roadmap for the twelve provincial/territorial chapters and the national office for the next three years. The plan outlines the goals, strategies and targets we want to collectively and collaboratively achieve in order to advance Special Olympics across Canada. We aspire to continue to grow, introducing more Canadians with intellectual disabilities to the transformative power of sport, and we are committed to ensuring we deliver best-in-class programs for our athletes.

A flexible approach will be used to implement and measure the plan successfully, recognizing that while we align on targets, our approach to achieving success may vary across the twelve provincial/territorial chapters and the national office. There are a number of important roles that will bring success over the next three years:

- **At the local community level**, we ask everyone involved to develop and adapt day-to-day Special Olympics activities in ways that will contribute to our capacity to achieve the goals in this plan
- **At the Chapter level**, knowing that 'one size does not fit all', we ask the chapters to align on Pan-Canadian goals and targets, but implement and operationalize each of the strategies using creative approaches that work best in your province/territory
- **At the National Office level**, we will do everything we can to advance Special Olympics and to support the chapters as we align on key priorities that will drive awareness, grow and enhance the Special Olympics movement across Canada





Section 1

Our Movement Today

Our mission is as relevant today as it was almost 50 years ago when Special Olympics was founded. Sport is still the primary way Special Olympics Canada achieves change and we respect that the impact and benefits of sport are multi-dimensional. Special Olympics develops healthier athletes with life-long physical fitness habits which instill confidence, self-esteem and other life skills. These attributes extend far beyond the field of play and establish lasting positive impacts for our athletes, their families/caregivers and their communities. Special Olympics contributes to social change by transforming attitudes and fostering a more inclusive society that combats negative stereotypes and misperceptions. Special Olympics builds communities by bringing people together and promoting volunteerism and civic engagement.

Vision:

Our vision is that sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all across Canada.

Mission:

Special Olympics Canada is dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with intellectual disabilities through sport.

Values:

Inclusion:

We foster inclusive communities.

Diversity:

We honour what is unique in each individual.

Empowerment:

We create opportunities to pursue full potential.

Respect:

We operate in an environment of cooperation, collaboration and dignity.

Excellence:

We elevate standards and performance.

At its core, Special Olympics in Canada is a sports organization that uses the power of sport as a catalyst for social change. Through sport, we challenge society. By drawing attention to the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities, we break down misperceptions and tackle negative attitudes. By highlighting how the needs of people with intellectual disabilities are not being met, we expose inequity and exclusion. **The focus for Special Olympics Canada therefore needs to be bringing more athletes to the movement and providing high quality sports experiences that help create positive attitudes and bring about permanent change towards inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.**

While Special Olympics Canada has made tremendous impact, **we clearly have much more to do if the 717,000 (approx. 2% of population) Canadians with intellectual disabilities are to be fully included in communities.** Ours is an important mission, and we must continue to provide opportunities that enable everyone to embrace people with intellectual disabilities as full members of society. When we do that, we show the country and the world that when given the opportunity, individuals with intellectual disabilities can and will achieve great things!

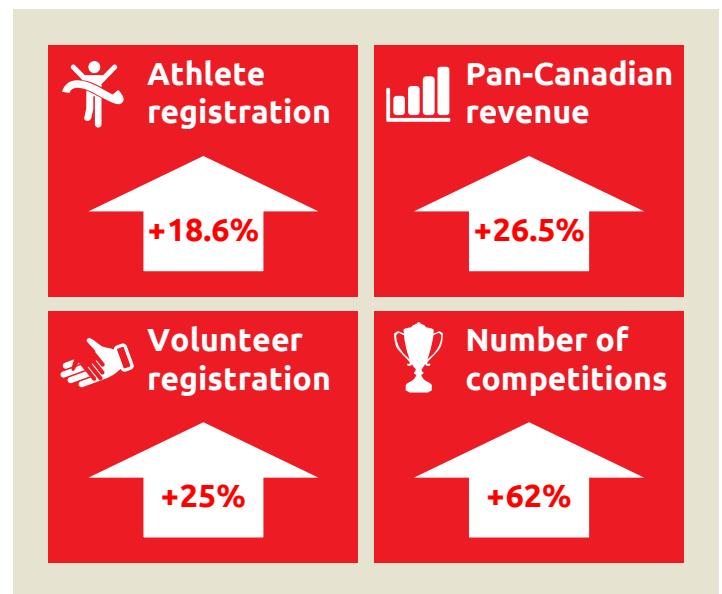


Successes from our 2012-2017 Strategic Plan

Across Canada, Special Olympics has an incredible number of hard-working volunteers and staff who are the engine of our movement. Together, we have achieved success in many aspects of our previous 5-year Strategic Plan:



- From 2012 to 2016, we grew from 35,880 to 42,565 athletes with a specific focus on increasing young athlete registration and expanding our sport programs into more communities.
- We increased the number of volunteers from 16,389 to 20,505.
- Across Canada, we increased the number of competition opportunities offered to our athletes and increased delivery of both the Healthy Athletes and Athlete Leadership programs.



- Through collaborative efforts, we were successful in receiving \$10.8 million of incremental funds, over four years, from the Federal Government.
- We increased our Pan-Canadian revenue from \$26.5 million in 2012 to \$33.6 million in 2016 and aligned on a process to consistently and more accurately report on Pan-Canadian revenue.
- Following a Special Olympics International brand re-set, we have aligned on a common brand, established key messages, agreed on our vision and mission, and developed a set of core values that will drive the movement in the coming years.



While the successes have been far reaching across many aspects of our organization, the most significant measures reveal that more athletes with an intellectual disability are actively participating in sport, health and leadership programs, in more communities across the country, with the support of more committed volunteers and qualified coaches. We aspire to keep this positive momentum going!



Section 2

Developing Our New Strategic Plan

Our vision, mission and values are the foundation for this new three-year Strategic Plan and a number of core principles guided our work to ensure an effective process, with ownership across the Special Olympics movement in Canada:

- **Global Strategic Plan alignment:** Align with the Global Strategic Plan, with a need to develop a ‘Canadianized’ version that reflects Canadian realities
- **Pan-Canadian Strategic Plan:** Plan for Special Olympics in Canada, not Special Olympics Canada (national office)
- **Broad stakeholder engagement:** Engagement by chapters, national office, volunteers, athletes, families/caregivers
- **Mission driven:** An athlete-centered plan that impacts the athlete experience
- **Plan alignment:** Align with SOI, SONA, national office, chapters, local communities and the Canadian Sport Policy
- **Clear implementation road-map:** Balance of “what” (goals), “how” (strategies and tactics) and “who” (roles and responsibilities at all levels)
- **Enable local flexibility/tailoring:** Strategies and tactics that allow for local implementation
- **Measurable, collective goals:** Chapter specific targets that align with Pan-Canadian goals and targets
- **Commitment:** All parties agree to operationalize the plan
- **Ongoing tracking, measurement & evaluation:** Alignment on measurements that demonstrate progress and Pan-Canadian impact and allow for the celebration of accomplishments and for analysis and course correction, when required.



This plan sets the roadmap for our collective goals across Canada. From here, each chapter and the national office will develop operational plans that align with this national direction. We commit to keeping the plan ‘alive’ by establishing a dashboard to measure, track and report progress and by continued dialogue and collaboration on priorities, tactics, and best practices. While we might tailor specific implementation methods, our collective commitment to this new Strategic Plan will further grow and enhance Special Olympics in Canada, driving awareness and delivering sport opportunities that enrich the lives of Canadians with intellectual disabilities and in so doing, fostering more inclusive Canadian communities.



Section 3

Our Goals and Strategies

In each of our twelve provincial/territorial chapters, more athletes are experiencing the transformative power and joy of sport, yet the potential and the need to provide opportunities for more people are so significant. As we embark on a new strategic cycle and align around new goals and strategies, key opportunities exist to build on the positive momentum achieved in recent years and to continue to drive awareness and to grow and enhance the delivery of our programs at all levels.



Goals

This plan consists of two major strategic goals. They are completely connected, and reaching both goals, not one or the other, is critical to achieving our vision.



Goal 1: Improve opportunities for athletes to perform at their best

Across Canada we will improve the quality of programs, and broaden access to them. This means strengthening our focus on quality sports programming and coaching, supported by our health work, so that athletes follow a Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, are fit and healthy, master skills, build confidence and self-esteem and perform at their best on and off the field of play.

Athletes will have increased, year-round opportunities to participate, and the improved quality of our programs will help us attract new athletes. We will seek targeted growth, especially in young athletes and diverse cultures.



Goal 2: Build positive attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities

Attitude change must be a deliberate outcome of Special Olympics. We create change from others engaging with and witnessing our athletes as they participate in sports. It is essential that Special Olympics in Canada continuously works to improve awareness for the Special Olympics movement and for what people with intellectual disabilities can achieve. We need people to see our athletes competing, and athletes leading the way as the face and voice of our movement; that is what opens hearts and minds and ultimately promotes inclusion in friendships, communities, health, education and employment.



To achieve our major goals, an important, two-part, support goal underpins this plan:

Support Goal: Build Capacity

Generate More Resources

Securing adequate resources is vital to the success of Special Olympics in Canada over the next three years. Our aim is to maximize opportunities with current and new partners through joint fundraising efforts and strategic alliances that result in increased resources and awareness. We will continue to engage all levels of government (municipal, provincial/territorial, national) and launch a multi-faceted individual giving program.

Strengthen Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness

We will commit to organizational excellence across a number of areas including human resource (staff and volunteer) development and training opportunities, technology advancements that extend across all strategies and allow for economies of scale and improved efficiencies, and implementation of Program Quality Standards. We will broaden athlete and youth leadership recognizing the important roles both can play as champions for the movement and in building a new generation of supporters.

In addition, we will integrate athletes, families/caregivers and young people across every aspect of this plan, especially in leadership roles, to ensure success.



Athletes

If we want our communities and country to be inclusive, Special Olympics athletes need to contribute in ways beyond the field of play. This means developing more athletes as leaders and ensuring they are actively engaged in meaningful roles at all levels.



Families

The families/caregivers of athletes are critical to this plan as they understand the benefits of Special Olympics. We need to look at new ways to engage more family members and caregivers.



Youth

Young people with and without intellectual disabilities are the future of Special Olympics. We need to tap into their energy and creativity and involve young people in a way that engages them now and long into the future.



Strategies



To **Improve Athlete Performance**, Special Olympics Canada will:

- A. Improve the quality of sports programming
- B. Strengthen implementation of our Long Term Athlete Development model, with a focus on athlete growth
- C. Grow our health programs
- D. Improve coach and volunteer capacity and quality
- E. Enhance the quality of our competition model



To **Build Positive Attitudes**, Special Olympics Canada will:

- F. Improve external awareness through PR, celebrities and government engagement
- G. Connect the movement so we harness our power and speak with a collective voice
- H. Maximize external impact of games and competitions to showcase athletes' abilities

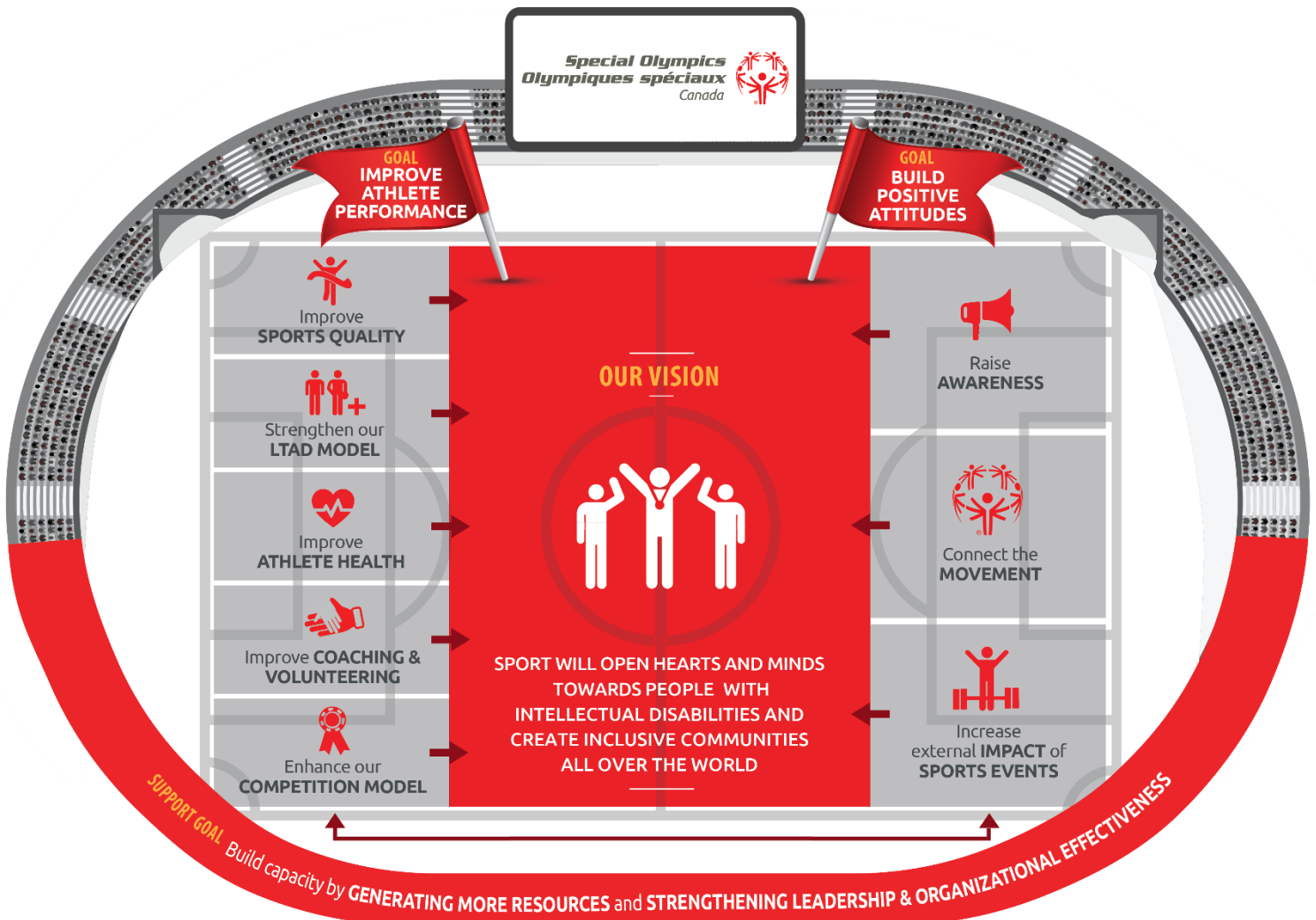


To **Build Capacity**, Special Olympics Canada will:

- I. Generate more resources
- J. Strengthen leadership and organizational effectiveness



2017-2020 Strategic Plan Overview





Section 4

Descriptions of each Strategy





A. Improve the quality of sports programming

The Challenge	<p>Special Olympics in Canada has grown dramatically over the past few years. While this has brought many new athletes and volunteers to our programs, it further highlights the importance and need to sustain quality and consistency in program delivery across the organization. Special Olympics in Canada will aim to balance our growth goals with a heightened focus on delivering a world class quality experience for all involved.</p>
What we will do and why	<p>We will place renewed emphasis on improving the quality and consistency of community sport programs and performance training programs so that we provide an optimal sport experience where athletes can learn, grow, be challenged and achieve personal best results.</p> <p>We will deliver a quality athlete experience that attracts new athletes to our programs, that improves fitness levels and sport skills, and retains those athletes currently involved.</p> <p>We will define the attributes of a quality sport program and create standards that set a pathway for delivering a quality sport experience. The standards will provide programs with a way to identify where athletes are today, while providing an aspirational progression for athletes to improve their sport skills and performance. Our aim is to be a leader in the quality of our sport programs, setting standards and assisting with program monitoring and evaluation to assist program leaders in delivering programs that ultimately improve the sport experience, fitness levels and competitive achievements of our athletes.</p> <p>Special Olympics in Canada recognizes that the diversity of our athletes and coaches strengthens the quality of our programs; diversity will continue to be a focus for us moving forward.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a set of quality standards for community program and performance training program delivery, including attention to diversity. ○ Create a communications plan to educate and inspire chapters and program leaders to strive for excellence and use the standards as a way to achieve this result. ○ Develop tools that assist in program monitoring and evaluation. ○ Leverage technology and collaborate within Special Olympics and with other sport partners to share best practices and seek expertise. ○ Recognize community and performance training program improvements and achievements.
Roles	<p>Local: Use standards to assist in improving quality program delivery and tracking</p> <p>Chapter: Develop standards; support monitoring and evaluation; recognize progress</p> <p>National Office: Develop standards; provide guidance; promote best practice sharing and consistent implementation of standards across the country</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of chapters using the standards to monitor and evaluate program quality • 75% of athletes averaging 2 quality sport and/or fitness opportunities per week (for athletes in the train to train stage and above) • 50% of chapters offering a provincial/territorial performance training program • 50% of athletes in performance training programs have a yearly sports improvement goal • National system in place to track athlete retention



B. Strengthen implementation of our Long Term Athlete Development model, with a focus on athlete growth

The Challenge	<p>Launched in 2007, the Special Olympics Canada Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model requires a review. In order to continue to grow and retain our athlete population while remaining a leader in athlete development, we need to ensure athletes and coaches have a pathway to meaningful participation and competition that is current, incorporates the many sports we offer and reflects the organization as it is today. We also need to educate coaches and community program leaders of the important role they play in implementing and stewarding athletes along the LTAD pathway.</p>
What we will do and why	<p>We will conduct an assessment of the LTAD model to ensure athletes have a current pathway to meaningful involvement and competition. We will take into account the many sports offered and the current age distribution of our athlete population to ensure we are providing the right events / sports at the right age and stage of development.</p> <p>Through Active Start and FUNdamentals, the first two stages of the LTAD model, we will continue to grow and enhance young athlete programs in community and school settings. We will develop Unified Sport in schools as another opportunity to increase young athlete participation and promote inclusion among youth with and without intellectual disabilities. We will establish programs aimed at retaining young adult aged athletes, who upon graduation need to transition from school programs to community programs. We will develop a Masters strategy that is age appropriate, promotes being active for life and retains our older athletes.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review and revise, where necessary, the LTAD model to ensure new program development aligns with the stages of LTAD, with consideration given to diversity. ○ Develop communications collateral and a plan to educate stakeholders (athletes, families/caregivers, coaches, etc.) about the importance and relevance of the LTAD model in supporting athlete development. ○ Create a plan and the necessary resources to support specific Masters age programming and athlete retention. ○ Compile a toolkit for Active Start and FUNdamentals for young athlete recruitment in both community and school program settings. ○ Grow traditional and Unified Sport programs in schools and share best practices across chapters. ○ Develop and build on programs that will transition young adult athletes from school to community programs. ○ Develop a method to track an athlete's progression, by stage, within the LTAD model.

Roles	<p>Local: Embrace implementation of LTAD; expand young athlete programs; support development of Masters programs</p> <p>Chapter: Revise LTAD model; educate stakeholders about LTAD; expand young athlete programs and Unified Sport programs; develop Masters programs</p> <p>National Office: Revise LTAD model; develop resources for LTAD education in chapters; support young athlete and Unified Sport growth; create Masters plan and resources</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual athlete growth of 5% (21 and under = 7%, 22 and over = 1.5%)• Completion of an updated LTAD model• 100% of chapters have ability to track where athletes are along the LTAD pathway• 20% growth of schools engaged with Special Olympics, providing traditional and/or Unified Sport programs• 25% of chapters offering a Masters specific program



C. Grow our health programs

The Challenge	Athletes need to be healthy to perform at their best. We need to provide opportunities that increase and improve athletes' access to Special Olympics health information and programs and to local healthcare provider follow-up care after Healthy Athletes exams.
What we will do and why	<p>In order to ensure our athletes can perform at their best, we need to provide resources and opportunities for them to access the best medical and health care available. We will increase access to Healthy Athletes exams offered across all chapters and explore ways to improve how we measure the general health and fitness of athletes so we can better build a case for support for health programs.</p> <p>We will develop new national and chapter partnerships with healthcare providers and licensing bodies to create greater awareness about Special Olympics. We need to better educate healthcare providers about working with athletes with intellectual disabilities and equip them to better educate athletes and families/caregivers about the benefits of an active healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>Through the use of a Healthy Living module within the Athlete Leadership Program, we will educate and empower athletes to embrace a healthy lifestyle and be health ambassadors amongst their peers.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage the healthcare community through professional schools (universities and colleges) and licensing bodies to educate them about Special Olympics, recruit and train Healthy Athletes clinicians, and provide tools for peer-to-peer recruitment. ○ Grow Healthy Athletes and Healthy Communities programs. ○ Develop a strategy to improve follow-up care after Healthy Athletes exams. ○ Engage our athletes in health training as part of the Athlete Leadership program. ○ Improve how we measure and collect health data related to our athletes so we can better communicate the health challenges of our athletes and build a case for support from the healthcare community and for funding.
Roles	<p>Local: Seek local health partners; host Healthy Athletes exams; educate athletes and families/caregivers; identify advocates</p> <p>Chapter: Seek provincial/territorial health partners and funding; host Healthy Athletes exams; measure and track health data; educate government</p> <p>National Office: Develop education materials for healthcare community and athletes; seek national health partners and funding; educate government</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of chapters providing Healthy Athletes exams and/or Healthy Communities each year • 12,000 completed Healthy Athletes exams (over the 3 year period) across Canada • 25% of chapters offering health training through Athlete Leadership program



D. Improve coach and volunteer capacity and quality

The Challenge	<p>Volunteers, inclusive of coaches and operational volunteers, are essential to the delivery of Special Olympics programs at all levels of the organization. At present, there is not a consistent national on-boarding, training and evaluation process for volunteers. For an optimal athlete experience and the efficient and effective delivery of our programs, we want to ensure that coaches and operational volunteers have a positive experience when they join Special Olympics and we want to equip them with the right tools and training so they can be successful in their roles.</p>
What we will do and why	<p>When any volunteer joins Special Olympics, we will offer a consistent and positive on-boarding experience that includes training. This will provide an introduction to Special Olympics and an opportunity to review and place the volunteer in the right role – coach or operational volunteer.</p> <p>We will develop a national coaching strategy that focuses on Special Olympics Canada and National Sport Organization - National Coaching Certificate Program (SOC/NSO – NCCP) course requirements, professional development opportunities, priorities for sport specific coach training, coaching standards and a cycle for on-going review of SOC/NSO – NCCP courses. Emphasis on coach training and standards will ensure that we are providing our athletes with quality sport training.</p> <p>We will recognize the contributions and dedication of our coaches and operational volunteers.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to recruit new volunteers (coaches and operational volunteers) to maintain an acceptable athlete:coach ratio (summer 4:1; winter 3:1) and support program operations. ○ Implement a volunteer on-boarding and training processes to support delivery of optimal athlete experiences and quality programs. ○ Develop a comprehensive coaching strategy that ensures quality coach education and standards, and contributes to recognition and retention of coaches. ○ Define and determine how to measure coach quality and develop a coach evaluation program. ○ Create a review cycle for SOC/NSO – NCCP courses. ○ Track coach and operational volunteer data so that we can monitor trends and gaps related to the number of new volunteers versus the completion of on-boarding training and NCCP courses.

Roles	<p>Local: Follow on-boarding process; implement minimum coaching standards; promote coach education</p> <p>Chapter: Ensure on-boarding process is followed at the local/club level and minimum coaching standards are adhered to; provide increased opportunities for coaching certification at the club level</p> <p>National Office: In cooperation with the chapters develop a national coaching strategy; develop resources to support recruitment, training and education; track data; work with the Coaching Association of Canada and other National Sport Organizations to develop the most current, effective and up to date resources</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual volunteer growth of 5% (5% coaches, 2% operational volunteers)• 100% of volunteers (coaches and operational volunteers) complete the on-boarding orientation• 500 coaches SOC/NSO - NCCP trained annually• 100% of chapters have a policy in place for coaching minimum standards at provincial/territorial games



E. Enhance the quality of our competition model

The Challenge	Improving the sport experience for our athletes includes ensuring a quality competitive experience. Competition that is appropriate for an athlete's age and stage is as important as delivering well organized and executed games. To ensure consistent competition models across the organization, we need to define what quality games look like and set guidelines and standards for games delivery.
What we will do and why	<p>We will conduct a competition review to examine if our competitions provide age and developmentally appropriate competition for the age and stage of our current athlete population.</p> <p>To ensure we are providing our athletes and coaches with a quality games experience, we will develop guidelines for various levels of competition (local, regional, provincial/territorial [P/T], national) and use our Games Standards to assess and improve the quality of games and competitions and ensure a consistent delivery approach across the country.</p> <p>To increase competition opportunities for those interested athletes, we will engage with National and P/T Sport Organizations for involvement in generic competitions.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct a comprehensive competition review. ○ Set guidelines for quality games and use our Games Standards to conduct external reviews of our games. ○ Review divisioning and ensure it is implemented consistently across all chapter games/competitions and at national games. ○ Explore the role of technology or virtual competitions to provide meaningful competition opportunities to athletes in remote areas. ○ Educate coaches and families/caregivers about competition policies and procedures. ○ Leverage relationships with National and P/T Sport Organizations for involvement in their competitive structure. ○ Ensure the current Games Management System (GMS) is utilized at games/competitions throughout the country.
Roles	<p>Local: Educate coaches and families/caregivers</p> <p>Chapter: Conduct competition review; establish guidelines and use Games Standards; leverage P/T Sport Organization competitions</p> <p>National Office: Conduct competition review; establish guidelines and use Games Standards; leverage National Sport Organization competitions; explore technology</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 825 competitions (region, P/T, national) offered per year • 50% of chapters using SOC Games Standards • 50 generic competitions with SO athletes competing at P/T and/or National level over the next 3 years • 50% of chapters using GMS at their P/T games and competitions



F. Improve external awareness through PR, celebrities and government engagement

The Challenge	<p>Until now, creating positive attitudes has been a by-product, rather than a deliberate outcome, of what we do. We need to address this, because it is the critical link between sports and social change. Many people with intellectual disabilities still routinely face stigma and exclusion, so we need all parts of the movement – from local to global – to be more creative and more daring in how we use key influencers and the power of sport to challenge, transform, and tell our story.</p>
What we will do and why	<p>Special Olympics Canada (SOC) is the organization that does critical work to enrich the lives of Canadians with intellectual disabilities through sport. Through the transformative power of sport, athletes' lives are changed, as are the lives of their families/caregivers and the people that live in their communities. Sport is the vehicle to achieve social change.</p> <p>We will work with media, social media, governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations to promote our mission and drive social change. We will leverage our ambassadors (including Champions Network, Partners, elected officials, families/caregivers, and community members directly impacted by their involvement in the movement) to tell our story. We will utilize our Social Return on Investment (SROI) research to demonstrate the impact of our programs in communities across Canada. Utilizing these assets will help us reach far wider audiences with relevant messages, story focused content, personal experiences and campaigns that are relevant and tailored for the national office and each chapter.</p> <p>We will integrate all of our marketing assets to take full advantage of the 50th Anniversary of the movement in 2018 to raise awareness for Special Olympics in Canada.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traditional & Social Media: We will give a voice to our movement. We will work with media partners, athletes, families/caregivers, celebrities and youth to improve how we make year-round use of social media and digital marketing to tell the powerful stories that exist. ○ Celebrity Support: We will continue to build a pool of highly talented celebrities to be ambassadors as part of the Champions Network. We will be more deliberate in creating opportunities for them to steward, educate and engage Canadians about SOC. We will ask them to use their social media networks to amplify our messages and we will have them interact personally with our athletes to demonstrate real connections and reduce stigma. ○ Government Relations: We will continue to engage government (at all levels) to support us in achieving our strategic goals. Our first step will be to engage these influencers through personal interactions with our athletes, including at the local program level. These unique occasions, supported by data to show our impact, will allow members of government to witness our athletes' courage and accomplishments and to better appreciate their contributions and needs. ○ Execute targeted PR Plan across the country: We will drive increased awareness, coverage and media presence across the country by prioritizing delivery of consistent PR campaigns. A national campaign, targeting sport organizations and the lifestyle/community media will provide collateral for use by chapters and the national office. We will leverage our events and national partnerships to drive awareness. We will develop communications collateral for partners that will impress upon them the impact of their support, and further empower them to tell the story of our athletes and movement.

Roles	<p>Local: Publicize activities, identify and use local celebrities and government for support</p> <p>Chapter: Expand media, celebrity, government support; collaborate on campaigns</p> <p>National Office: Develop marketing collateral / campaigns, attract new celebrities, influence governments</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify partner, and develop a strategy to conduct research and establish a baseline benchmark to measure public attitudes and awareness for our brand and programs (answering what do we do?) • Leverage insights from aforementioned research to identify and develop a tool to measure attitudes and awareness for our brand and programs on an ongoing basis, including public awareness following exposure to events (i.e. campaigns, games) • 5% positive change in awareness of Special Olympics programs and attitudes about individuals with intellectual disabilities (versus established baseline – see target above) • 5% annual increase in social media followers (Twitter and Facebook) • Annual increase in the total number of engagements by Champions Network members • Continued government relations strategy to maintain momentum through direct strategies at all levels of government (national, provincial/territorial, municipal)



G. Connect the movement so we harness our power and speak with a collective voice

The Challenge	<p>There are thousands of people – athletes, families/caregivers, volunteers, youth – involved in Special Olympics, but no easy way to connect and activate them as a whole. We need to find better ways to use technology to allow everyone to work, connect and communicate efficiently. We need to give our athletes and families/caregivers more of a voice. We also need to retain those within the movement and keep in contact with people who are engaged and support us regularly (e.g. people who post support online, attend events, sign a pledge).</p>
What we will do and why	<p>We will use established technology (e.g. websites, Membership and Registration Management System [MRMS]) and anticipated tools (e.g. Donor and Donation Management System [DDMS]) to enhance engagement with members and supporters (athletes, families/caregivers, volunteers, youth, donors, and fans) who are already engaged in the movement. We will strengthen Canadian storytelling assets and tools by developing the capacity to share collateral through a centralized hub (e.g. a digital portal) and to powerfully communicate the Special Olympics movement's nature and impact.</p> <p>Using technology, we will find better ways to share ideas and best practices, align on messages, and activate our members and supporters to share their stories and communicate with "one voice", transforming the understanding of Special Olympics in communities across the country. Ultimately, this will make it much easier for us to be seen and heard by society, and to break through the "awareness ceiling" to drive social change and be an even more influential movement for individuals with an intellectual disability.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use existing and developing technology to enable our members, at all levels, to speak with one voice and drive social transformation through telling their powerful stories. ○ Develop a centralized resource hub accessible to the national office and all chapters, to house key messaging, storytelling assets, and best practices that will help all stakeholders speak with one voice. Storytelling empowers our members to powerfully share our authentic experiences and impact, to celebrate achievements, and to engage new audiences from outside of the movement. ○ Speak with a unified voice and leverage profile of 50th Anniversary celebrations to deliver a national awareness campaign, reflective of our mission, vision, values, and key messages to profile our movement and answer the question 'What do we do?'. ○ Use the DDMS, Direct Marketing Program, and social media to track fans who sporadically engage with and support us, so we can deepen their connection with our movement. ○ Tell Powerful Stories - look to athletes, volunteers, families/caregivers to help us tell powerful stories that reflect their journeys and experiences in Special Olympics.

Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: Use systems and key messaging tools, help collect member/supporter data, attract new members, share our key messages and authentic stories • Chapter: Collaborate with the national office to implement new systems, collect data, share our key messages and stories • National Office: Develop/roll out new tools, provide technology to support sharing of our key messages and stories
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of chapters using national branding through all platforms and programs • All chapters and the national office aligned on key messaging, vision, mission and values, and using them as a foundation throughout marketing and communication programs • Creation of centralized communications resource hub on SOC website that is accessible to all stakeholders (including athletes and families/caregivers) • 8 of 12 (60%) chapters actively using the DDMS for communications outreach and donor relations • All chapters and the national office using the same website platform/shell by 2020



H. Maximize external impact of games and competitions to showcase athletes' abilities

The Challenge	Special Olympics games and competitions at all levels often struggle to achieve significant external impact and awareness. In Canada we experience inconsistent public awareness and understanding of the athletes' journeys to games through year-round local training and qualifier competitions.
What we will do and why	<p>Games and competitions draw the spotlight to our movement and we need to make sure to use them to convey impactful stories and have spectators leave with a better understanding of our movement. Games and competitions are a rich source of marketing content and opportunities, and need to be maximized.</p> <p>Since games and competitions are the true showcase of our athletes' abilities, we need to better promote games and competitions externally and use them to change people's attitudes through greater media coverage and increased spectator attendance. We will enhance opportunities for intake of the live experience as well as capture content for future awareness tools.</p>
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create opportunities for spectators beyond simply awareness. We will promote games and competitions, providing potential spectators with all the information they need to attend and engage (schedules, event information, etc.). ○ Increase media coverage (from local through to national events). ○ Highlight the stories within our games and competitions with a focus on the journey of athletes and coaches from the grassroots level. ○ Embrace the spotlight that games and competitions provide and refine messaging and tactics around games and competitions. ○ Integrate shared messaging tactics and templates at each competition level. ○ Strengthen use of online coverage to connect fans and supporters.
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: Adopt local marketing plans • Chapter: Attract spectators/media and provide public with 'toolkit' to enhance the games experience • National Office: Create and implement marketing initiatives and spectator hosting guidelines • All: Collect and share content, media relations, seize opportunities to post brand, participate in complementary marketing efforts
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategy and identify a tool to measure public awareness, including establishing a baseline and subsequent measurements following games or competitions • 5% increase in positive attitudes following national/provincial/territorial games • At least 4 live and/or online viewers for every athlete at national/provincial/territorial games • Centralized games and competition marketing resources available to all chapters and Games Organizing Committees (GOCs) for local, chapter, and national competitions



I. Build capacity through generating more resources

The Challenge	At all levels of the Special Olympics movement in Canada we do not have sufficient resources to make the maximum impact. To support our growth strategies we need to greatly expand our ability to increase resources.
What we will do and why	We will work collaboratively to reflect and celebrate past successes, identify challenges and share best practices. We will align on how to measure and track our progress to demonstrate impact and the case for support and to improve planning and reporting. We will strive to further diversify revenue sources for greater stability and sustainability. We will focus on sustaining existing and building new high-valued private and public partnerships while building a robust individual giving program. We will identify and implement new approaches to address resource needs at all levels.
How we will do it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborative fundraising: Enhance joint-fundraising efforts with a focus on the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR), the Special Olympics Canada Foundation, motionball and games. We will work with law enforcement leaders to create common structures across Canada for building LETR. We will work to align our objectives with motionball priorities and enhance communication in an effort to advance outcomes across the country. We will develop and utilize tools and training to improve fundraising capacity, innovation, accountability and measurement. We will partner with third parties (such as Special Olympics International [SOI], Special Olympics North America [SONA] and service clubs) to identify, cultivate and grow priority opportunities that benefit both Special Olympics in Canada and the movement as a whole. ○ Individual Giving: Develop a robust individual giving program focusing on digital, direct marketing, and planned giving while building a foundation for a future major gifts program. Emerging and enabling technology, such as a Donor & Donation Management System (DDMS) and online fundraising tools, will be used to maximize opportunities to grow revenue and to steward and retain donors. ○ Corporate Partnerships: Continue to steward and maximize opportunities with existing corporate partners while cultivating new prospects. We will focus on partners that share our values. We will continue to collaborate on identifying the programs and areas of greatest need and saleability. ○ Strategic Alliances: Identify new alliances that will help to drive the movement forward by reaching a broader and more diverse audience, finding new and innovative ways to increase awareness and resources. We will focus on entities that share a passion for Special Olympics (such as sport leagues and teams, celebrities, media partners, school boards, parks & rec departments) to amplify an impactful and consistent message and increase resources. ○ Government Relations: Continue our work to enhance our relations with all levels of government (federal, provincial/territorial, municipal). We will steward government by recognizing their contributions and demonstrating the impact of their support. We will continue our lobbying efforts, including Hill Day, and the on-going stewardship of government officials at all levels of government, to share our message and identify and cultivate more champions.



Roles	<p>Local: Assist with activation, recognition and delivery of benefits for partners at all levels as appropriate; local fundraising; respect partner rights as applicable; and reciprocate partner support where possible</p> <p>Chapter: Cultivate provincial/territorial and community partnership opportunities; increase sharing of knowledge and agreement on priorities; utilize and embrace resources, strategies and tools provided and supported by SOC; advance LETR engagement in chapters; activate, recognize and deliver benefits for partners, as appropriate; respect partner exclusivity and rights as applicable; reciprocate partner support where possible and as appropriate</p> <p>National Office: Cultivate national opportunities; identify commonalities and develop strategies and new tools to grow fundraising and measure impact</p>
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% annual increase in cash fundraising • 5% annual increase in budget-relieving or priority value-in-kind • The national office and each chapter will set their own key metrics within each revenue source/key activity in order to achieve the above 5% targets



J. Strengthen leadership and organizational effectiveness

The Challenge	<p>As global leaders in the Special Olympics movement we, Special Olympics Canada, all twelve chapters and the national office, need to continue to elevate our practices. Our organization has grown significantly and the environment in which we operate has also changed. To meet heightened demands, we must commit to strengthen leadership and organizational effectiveness to achieve excellence at all levels.</p>
What we will do and why	<p>To ensure the long-term operational success of our organization, we will strengthen leadership by improving policies and practices to recruit and retain the right people for the right positions and provide strong training and talent development.</p> <p>To strengthen organizational effectiveness, we will undertake initiatives on a number of fronts. We will strengthen our governance structure to allow us to unlock our potential as an organization and continue to transform athletes' lives. We will improve the diversity of our staff and volunteers and greatly increase opportunities for athlete and youth leaders. As part of our overall risk management strategy, we must remain committed to providing appropriate and safe environments for all our stakeholders. We will continue to optimize the use of technology. It is imperative that all of the work inherent in the above initiatives be guided by our shared vision, mission and values. All of the above will set a foundation from which we can successfully deliver our shared strategies.</p>
How we will do it	<p>Recruitment and talent development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve recruitment and succession practices to attract the right employees, board members and volunteers to get the right people in the right roles while achieving diversity and representation. This also includes but is not limited to athlete and youth leaders as well as operational volunteers. ○ Ensure human resource policies and procedures for staff and volunteers are in place to support successful retention and development. Leverage shared resources, materials and expertise. <p>Training and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide leadership development workshops, to include a wider range of in-person and online training. ○ Use training partners and the great leaders we currently have to mentor emerging leaders (e.g. Special Olympics North America [SONA] leadership academy, Special Olympics International [SOI] new CEO training). ○ Improve onboarding and training of new members of committees, (including but not limited to the following: Canadian Sport Council, Canadian Leadership Council, Presidents Council, Law Enforcement Torch Run, Athlete Council as well as various local and provincial/territorial committees and councils).



How we will do it (contd.)

Improve organizational standards and practices:

- Ensure risk management practices are in place, operationalized and continually improved at all levels. As part of this, have in place national and chapter policies that are aligned, consistent and monitored on a regular basis.
- Leverage opportunities where shared capabilities can achieve economies of scale and/or improved practice (e.g. technological solutions like database, national insurance program, federal funding, funding key program positions, sharing best practices, emerging committees, taking advantage of SOI resources).
- Develop and execute an organizational excellence strategy. To monitor progress, use Program Quality Standards and other available resources as appropriate.
- Ensure board governance policies and procedures are adopted and implemented at both the national and chapter level.

Improve organizational technology capacity:

- Prioritize information systems and technology in operational plans and budgets to ensure sufficient funds and staff resources are put in place for successful implementation of initiatives requiring technological solutions across all areas of the Strategic Plan.

Athlete Leadership:

- Broaden athlete leadership. Build and integrate an athlete leadership pathway to ensure athlete leaders are embraced and provided meaningful roles at all levels of the organization. Continue to promote choice across a range of opportunities for athlete leaders and foster quality mentorship.

Youth Leadership:

- Broaden youth leadership. Identify and define what roles there are for youth in the organization. Define what tactics we will use to be responsive and available/accessible to youth, taking into account the realities for youth today.

Roles

Local: Provide opportunities for athlete/youth leaders; ensure athlete/youth/volunteer leader input; use training/quality standards to improve; participate in data collection and tracking

Chapter: Provide opportunities for athlete/youth leaders; ensure athlete/youth/volunteer leader input; share resources/shared capabilities including best practices; use training/quality standards to improve; participate in data collection, tracking and reporting

National Office: Ensure athlete/youth/volunteer leader input; use quality standards to improve; increase leadership training opportunities; share resources/shared capabilities including best practice; provide tools to chapters; participate in data collection, tracking and reporting



Targets

Recruitment, talent development and training:

- 100% of chapters have core human resource infrastructure in place, including but not limited to employee retention, succession plans, and human resource policies

Improve organizational standards and practices:

- 100% of chapters and the national office align on Pan-Canadian policies
- 60% of chapters with a risk register in place that is actively managed
- Development of a Pan-Canadian organizational excellence strategy that includes standards, measurement and evaluation
- 60% of chapters using Program Quality Standards to measure organizational status on key operational areas

Improve organizational technology capacity:

- Completed upgrade of national technology infrastructure to provide chapters the option to participate including Donor and Donation Management System (DDMS), Membership and Registration Management System (MRMS), digital fundraising, e-learning, volunteer on-boarding and website
- 60% of chapters utilizing the national DDMS
- Improved MRMS launched and with improvements in the volume and accuracy of data collected and time saved on data entry by staff at all chapters
- National technology committee established to set meaningful targets and to share/collaborate on best practices, including accessible technology for athletes

Athlete Leadership:

- Development of a National Athlete Leadership pathway
- Creation of a Canadian Athlete Leadership Council (CALC)

Youth Leadership:

- Complete an audit of current participation, analyze and set a strategy for growth, including setting a target for percent increase in youth engagement as well as other metrics as needed