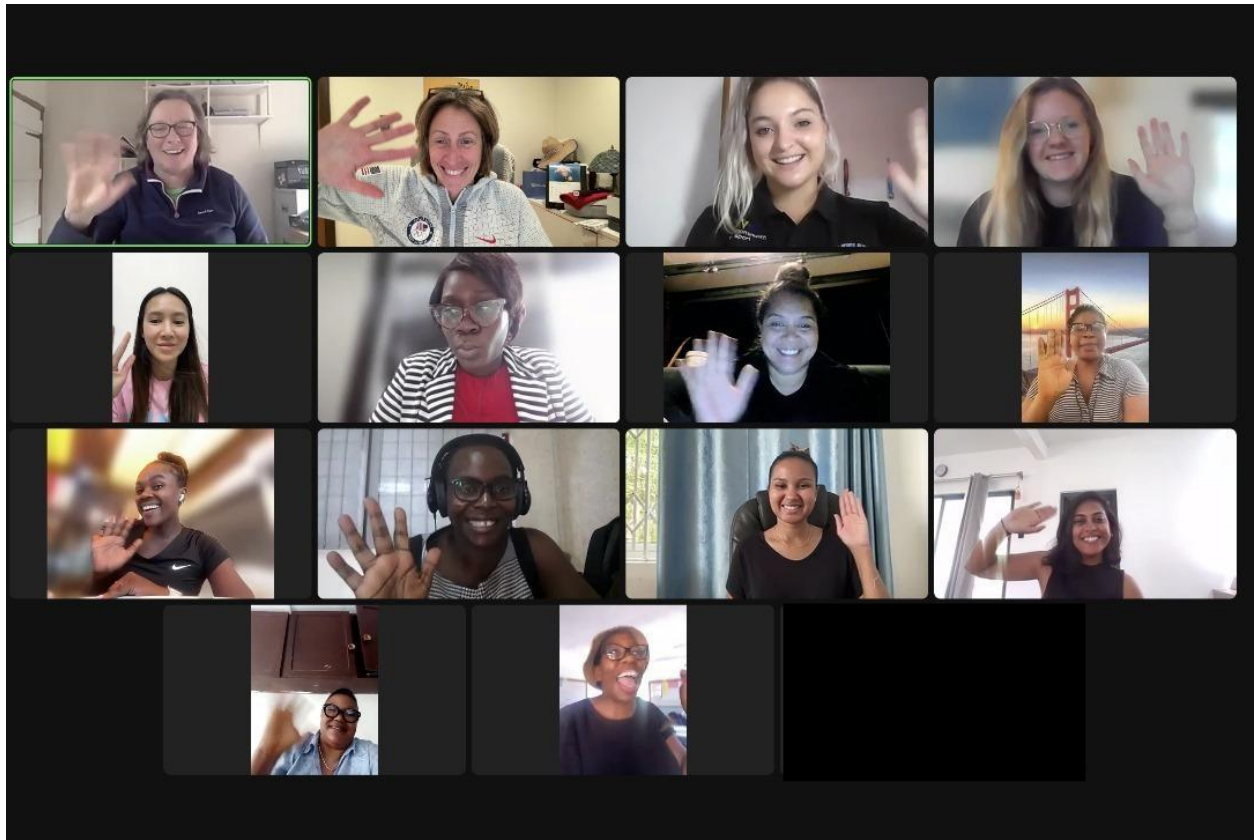




COMMONWEALTH SPORT WOMEN LEADERS PROGRAMME (CWLP) 2026-2027

Developing women leaders in sport across the Commonwealth.

A women's leadership programme that offers Commonwealth women in sport an opportunity to co-create and undertake a personal development plan that empowers them to grow as leaders in their sport and community.

15 Scholarships Available

September 2026

INTRODUCTION

The 2026-27 Commonwealth Sport Women Leaders Programme (CWLP) aims to support 15 women from the Commonwealth on their personal development journeys to being strong role models and agents of change to guide the next generation of women in sport.

Ultimately the hope is that this programme will increase the profile and presence of Commonwealth women as leaders and as board members in the CGAs and their respective regional or international federations.

This programme will enable participants to clarify their leadership ambitions and recognize their leadership strengths and will more importantly support them to understand their role in driving equality and leadership within the Commonwealth Sport Movement.

Support is offered in different ways, but the primary sources of support are scholarships and mentoring:

1. By awarding scholarships, we want to support emerging female leaders to access appropriate educational and experiential opportunities that will empower them as leaders for equal rights within their sport and communities. Successful participants will receive up to a maximum GBP 5000.00 scholarship to support them on their professional development pathway and community projects.
2. International mentors will be recruited and deployed to help women create professional development plans, undertake reflection, and grow as leaders.

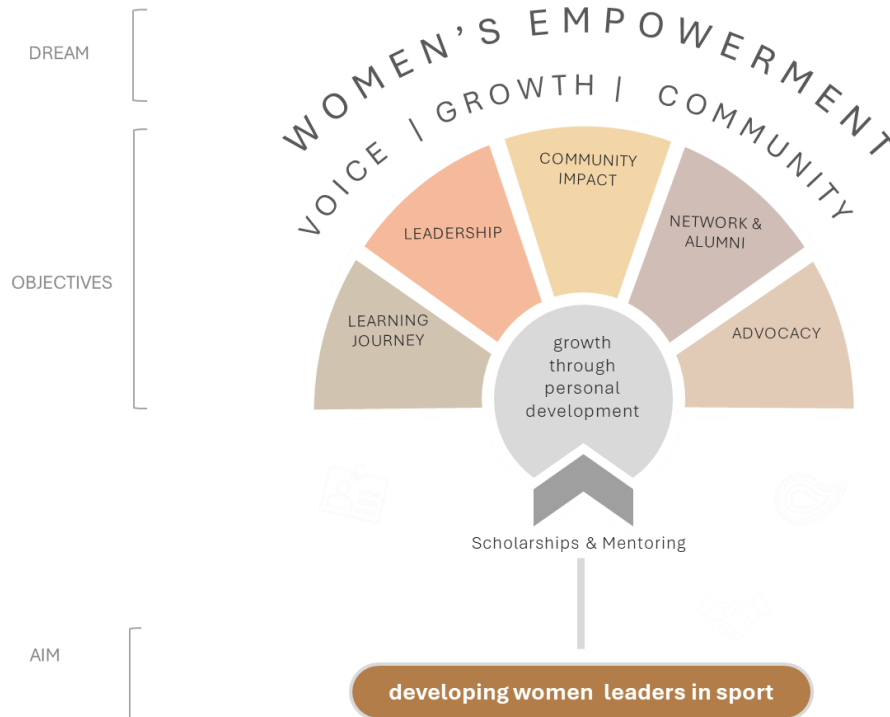
This programme is available to all female leaders in sport who are aspiring to hold a leadership position within a Commonwealth Games Association (CGA)/ other regional and international organisations and who demonstrate a need. All applications must be supported by their CGA.

Similar to the previous iterations, it is expected that there will be a high level of interest for the programme, so a selection process will be implemented to identify the 15 women to participate in this 1-year programme.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The Aim of the programme is to develop and empower women leaders in sport across the Commonwealth, with a focus this year being on women aspiring to CGA/other regional and international leadership roles.

The programme objectives are highlighted in the diagram below:

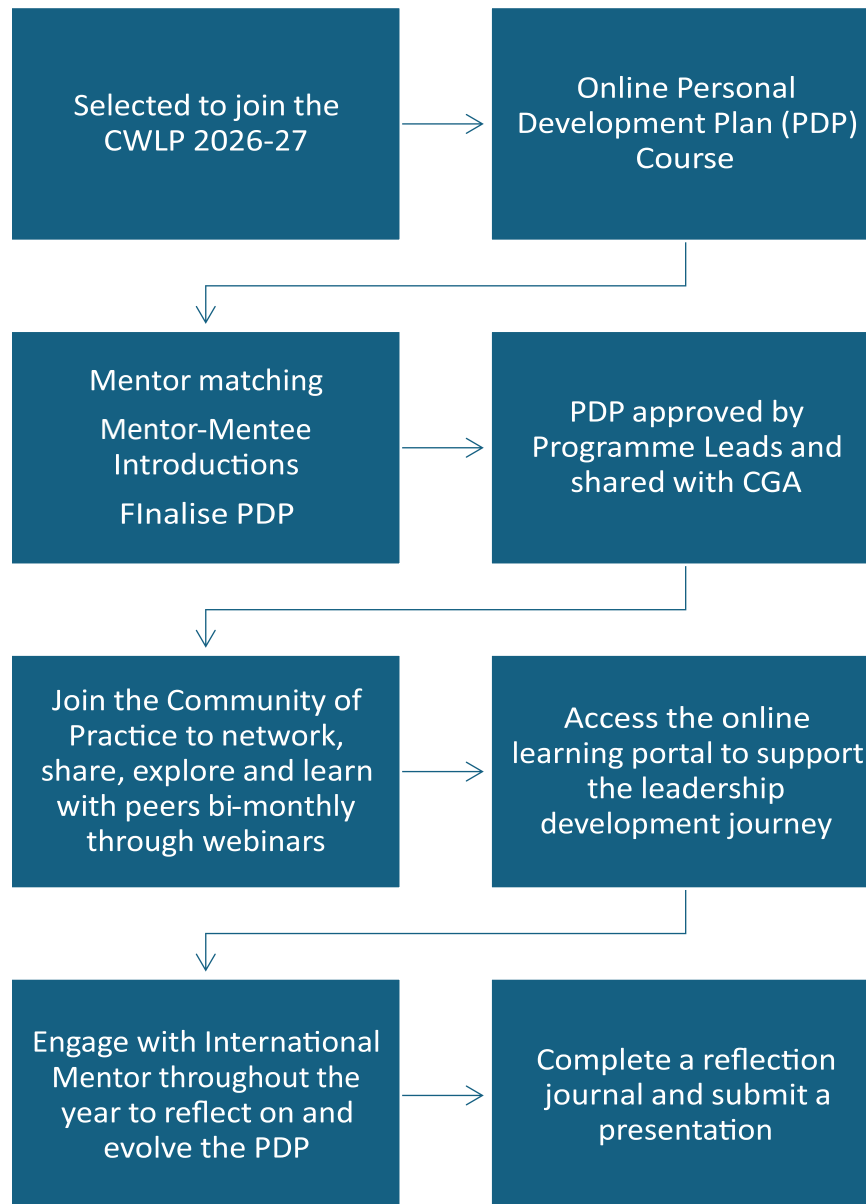


Throughout the programme, we will be guided by the following underpinning principles:

- Design and deliver a **scholarship programme** that provides professional development opportunities consistent with current best practices
- Utilize **internationally relatable leadership reference points** to focus and guide the professional development of women leaders
- Provide support through **international mentors** to help women create professional development plans, undertake reflection and grow as leaders. The international Mentors will also be supported through Commonwealth Sport's Common Ground Mentor Training
- Facilitate a **culturally flexible** women's leadership programme that blends applied practice with a community of practice
- Empower the women to navigate their **own best route** through the offerings provided by the programme including access to online learning platform which will be home to courses, resources, and other information
- Enable the women to have a positive **impact on their local community** through sport
- Connect women in sport to a **supportive network** of programme alumni and wider leaders in sport
- Raise awareness and promote women's leadership issues through **effective storytelling** and research.

2026-27 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

An overview of the anticipated leadership development journey for successful applicants is laid out in the graphic below:



PROGRAMME COMPONENTS



1. Mentorship & Mentor Training

Commonwealth Sport will work with its various partners to recruit and develop an International Mentor workforce who will provide tailored professional mentoring to all participants.

The central focus of the International Mentoring relationship will be the creation of a Personal Development Plan (PDP) for the participant and the ongoing reflection of progress and achievements made relative to the PDP. The content and focus of the PDP will be designed to help participants navigate the leadership landscape so that they can develop as leaders and positively impact their local community.

Mentors and participants will meet virtually at a minimum every other month. The mentors will share their professional knowledge and experiences, and utilise key skills and personal attributes, to support and guide the participant's personal development journey.

The partnership will be a confidential one-to-one relationship that will support professional development by sharing good practices, expertise, and experiences from an international context.

Mentors and participants will be expected to record and share a mentoring log.

2. Leadership Reference Points

We are creating a flexible framework of leadership reference points that are applicable in varying cultures and that can be developed and flexed over time. They will help the women leaders and mentors focus their attention on key areas to that individual while they are on the programme and beyond. Their individual journeys through and with these reference points will be varied and different.

3. Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Each participant will be required to create, review, and evolve a PDP during the 12 months of the programme. International Mentors will help facilitate the creation of the PDP which will serve as a reference point to guide learning and development, chart progress and celebrate achievements.

The PDP will also outline how the participant will utilize their scholarship (up to a maximum of £5000 GBP).

Informed by culturally relatable leadership reference points, this plan will help participants navigate the leadership landscape and:

- Establish where participants are now
- Explore where they want to go • Explain how they will get there
- Identify what support they need along the journey.

Towards the end of the 12 months, participants will review and evolve their PDP to create a second plan that will support their leadership development after the CWLP 2026-27.

Participants will need to demonstrate how their funding will be used to implement the PDP. It is recommended that at least 70% of this funding be used to access wider professional development with the remaining 30% going to support the delivery of community-based initiatives to support women in sport. Professional development refers to funding used to pay for qualifications, certification, graduate and postgraduate study, attending in-person or online workshops and attending conferences for example.

The funding may NOT be used to pay for local mentoring or the services of any other person within the CGA or used to augment other programmes already funded by other organizations (i.e., MEMOS). Funding must be used before the end of the 12-month programme.

4. Community Engagement Project

Participants will identify with their International Mentor a community engagement project that will allow them to take what they have learned and their skills to support their local communities. This can be a new project or contributing to an existing programme that is focused on equality. Previous examples of community engagement projects have included grassroots participation initiatives, coach development programs, social inclusion and health initiatives and women's empowerment programmes among others. In some instances, funding has been used to purchase equipment and resources. How the funding is invested will depend upon the nature of the community engagement and will be reflected in the PDP.

5. Community of Practice

Participants will join a Community of Practice (CoP) with their peers. Facilitated by the Programme Leads, the CoP will include bi-monthly webinars facilitated at a time mutually convenient to all. These will also be recorded and posted to a dedicated online learning platform.

The learning platform will also host several resources including, short courses, stories, podcasts, articles, and links to wider resources. This content will help participants navigate their own leadership landscape.

6. Reflective Journals & Final Report

Participants will be required to keep and share a reflective journal and will be asked to participate in a formal evaluation post-completion of the programme.

Participants will also be asked to complete and submit an end-of-programme report/presentation to their CGA and Commonwealth Sport.

The participant must:

- Be a Commonwealth **citizen currently residing and working in the country where their CGA** is based.
- Be currently working or supporting sport and have ambitions to hold a National Sport Federation/ Governing Body or CGA leadership or other regional/international sports organization roles.
- Able and willing to apply learnings from the journey to contribute to ongoing capacity building in strengthening of the CGA and women's leadership, including sharing knowledge.
- Able and willing to complete reports to track progress.
- Able and willing to attend online webinars.
- Have worked/volunteered in their current position for at least 12 months.
- Not planning on retiring for at least two years following completion of the scheme.
- Have access to the internet and have intermediate levels of computer literacy (as a minimum).
- Be proficient in written and spoken English.

Qualities

We are looking for women who are:

- Committed to their own personal growth and eager to apply leadership learning within their unique contexts.
- Open, honest self-reflectors who take active steps to evolve and improve.
- Proactive and purposeful communicators who take initiative and follow through.
- Driven to create positive impact in their communities through sport.
- Supportive of others' development—especially, though not exclusively, women.
- Aspiring to hold leadership roles on Committees or Boards and influence decisionmaking in sport.

Applications will be assessed and ranked against the following criteria:

- Evidence of support from the applicant's CGA to participate in the scheme.
- The relevance of the applicant's current role to the programme's content and outcomes.
- The applicant's willingness to act as a change agent, sharing new skills and knowledge with colleagues to build capacity.
- Demonstrated the need and impact of the funding on the participant and the sporting community.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Please provide the following documents to Ms. Janelle Denny\ by **5th October 2026**. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.

- Completed application form

- CGA endorsement letter (CGA must confirm nationality of and support for the applicant)
- Current curriculum vitae (not more than 3 pages)
- Transcript or copy of relevant qualifications

ACTION	DEADLINE
Deadline for Submission	25 th September 2026
CGA Informed of Decisions	30 th October 2026
One-on-ones with shortlisted candidates	1 st November 2026 onwards
Participant Agreements Signed	20 th November 2026
Mentor-Mentee Pairing Finalisation of PDP	1 st -18 th December 2026
Programme Starts	1 st January 2027
Funds Distributed to CGA	Once PDP is finalized and submitted to CGA
Programme Closes	December 2027

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

My budget is much larger than a grant, what should I do?

If your project requires significant funding, identify what costs these funds will be used for and how you will fund the remaining costs. If, for example, you have a £10k budget, we want to know what you can do with £5000, why it's important we support your idea and how you will fund the remaining costs.

How long do I have to completely use my scholarship?

Within a year of joining the programme. Your project(s) must be completed within the time parameters you indicated on your application. Should there be any changes to these dates you must inform Commonwealth Sport for approval.

Do I need to submit monthly reports to my CGA and Commonwealth Sport?

There is will no need to submit monthly reports to the CGA and Commonwealth Sport. Only the bi-monthly Reflective Journals and Final Report are applicable. It is, however important to keep your CGA updated on progress and on any updates to the PDP to facilitate grant management.

What happens if I don't submit my final report?

Until it is received, your CGA will not be eligible to receive another grant.

What happens if I don't undertake the project or I don't spend all the Grant? Any unspent funds must be returned to Commonwealth Sport.

Will I need to send copies of all the invoices to Commonwealth Sport to verify what the funding was spent on?

Commonwealth Sport might request copies of invoices or may even undertake an audit of the project to ensure we are complying with all requirements under English charity law.

The PDP needs to be finalized with the International Mentor then approved by the Programme

Leads. The PDP should be shared by the Participant with the CGA to enable grant management.