

WĀHINE TOA OCEANIA 2026

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

About the programme

The Wāhine Toa Oceania Programme is a leadership development initiative supporting retired female athletes from across Oceania as they move into leadership, governance, coaching, advocacy, administration, and community roles.

The programme recognises that athletes develop valuable skills through sport, including resilience, teamwork, discipline, strategic thinking, communication, and the ability to perform under pressure.

Who should apply

Applicants must:

- be retired female athletes from the Oceania Olympic Committee region who have competed for their country in one of the Olympic, Commonwealth or Pacific Games.
- have experience in elite sport who are motivated to contribute to their sport, community and country.
- be willing to learn, reflect, and be challenged in a supportive and safe environment.
- be open to sharing your experiences and learning from women across different cultures, countries, and sporting backgrounds.
- have a genuine interest in leadership and creating positive change in the sporting environment.
- be able to commit to the programme requirements, including workshops, online engagement, mentoring, independent learning, and project work.
- have the support of their National Olympic Committee to apply for the programme.

Programme commitment

Wāhine Toa Oceania is a 12-month leadership journey, not a one-off workshop. Participation involves residential workshops, online sessions, mentoring relationships, and an applied leadership project. Participants are expected to engage actively, and they will be supported throughout the programme to manage the learning, build confidence, and apply new skills in ways that are meaningful to their own context.

Applicants should consider their personal, family, work, study, and other commitments before applying. If selected, participants are expected to **attend all scheduled workshops** and to communicate early if any issues arise, so the programme team can provide support and work through any challenges with them.

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Leadership project

Each participant will develop or contribute to a leadership project that aims to create positive impact within their sport, community, country, or regional network. Projects may focus on areas such as athlete development, safeguarding, governance, coaching, athlete voice, inclusion, or education. You will be provided with project topics to consider and support through this process.

Applicants do not need to have a project topic at the time of applying. They should, however, be open to exploring ideas, undertaking research, and dedicating time to a project throughout the 12-month programme, with guidance and facilitator support provided along the way.

Learning environment and conduct

The programme is built on collective learning. Participants are expected to contribute respectfully, listen generously, uphold confidentiality, and support the growth of others in the cohort.

- Respect different cultural perspectives, lived experiences, and leadership styles.
- Participate in discussions with honesty, care, and professionalism.
- Maintain confidentiality where personal stories, challenges, or sensitive information are shared.
- Help create a safe and inclusive environment for all participants, facilitators, mentors, and partners.

Travel and attendance

The programme will involve travel, as workshops will be held in three different countries. This will require time away from home and full attendance at each workshop. As workshops are residential, participants will be required for the full four days, as evening sessions may also apply. Including travel time, each workshop will require a commitment of around a week.

Applicants should discuss the commitment with family, employers, sporting organisations, or support networks before applying, where relevant.

Participants will be asked to provide personal information, passports, dietary requirements, accessibility needs, and other logistical details by the requested deadlines to support programme planning.

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Costs

Programme-related travel costs, workshop resources, accommodation, catering, and visa requirements will be covered, if there are any personal costs to be covered, these will be communicated in advance.

Selection considerations

Selection will consider leadership potential, commitment, ability to participate fully, collaboration, and your National Olympic Committee approval.

Before submitting your application

The programme is designed to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive environment at all times. By proceeding with your application, you acknowledge that you have reviewed the points below.

☐	I am able to commit to the 12-month programme, including attending the scheduled workshops and project work as outlined above?
☐	Am I willing to actively participate in workshops, online engagement, mentoring, and project work?
☐	I have a genuine desire to contribute to my sport, community, country, or region?
☐	I am willing to learn alongside women from different cultures, backgrounds, and sporting experiences?
☐	I am prepared to reflect on my own leadership, step outside my comfort zone, and support the growth of others?
☐	I am aware that my National Olympic Committee will be required to approve my application to the programme.

Applicant acknowledgement

By applying, you acknowledge that you have read these guidelines and understand the programme expectations. You also understand that the programme team, facilitators, mentors, and cohort will provide support and encouragement as you develop your leadership skills and confidence throughout the journey