

The FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Development Framework - System level Guidelines and Considerations: **The Elite and Mastery Levels**

A systems and best practice approach for empowering and supporting NSW citizens through life-long active living, recreation and sport.



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Acknowledgment of Country

The NSW Office of Sport acknowledges that we are living and working on Aboriginal land and recognises the strength, resilience and capacity of Aboriginal people on this land.

We would like to acknowledge all of the Traditional Custodians of the land and pay respect to Aboriginal Elders past and present.



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Future Champions Strategy

The NSW Office of Sport's **Future Champions** strategy was launched in December 2019. Its primary focus is to ensure that the participants and emerging athletes of NSW, have the right fit of sporting engagement, knowledge and support to fulfill their sporting ambitions and success on and off the sporting field. To achieve this and utilising a consolidated best practice approach, the strategy provides clear recommendations for the NSW sports sector to review and refine their operational strategies and related education, networking and support systems.

Directly informed and aligned with the **FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework**, the strategy comprises 16 recommended actions across 6 key strategic drivers - Pathway Leadership, Coaching, Empowered Participants and Athletes, Pathway Intelligence, Competition and Development and Performance Environments.

The **Future Champions** strategy has a deliberate focus on building the foundations of the NSW pathways system through effective and agile leadership, strategy, knowledge sharing, networking and building the evidence-base. Informed by the best practice principles of the **FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework**, guidance provided to NSW Sporting Organisations and their network partners will not only cover their Talent strategies, but also importantly their underpinning Foundational strategies and fit of programs and delivery.

Attending to a key action of the Future Champions strategy, this interactive resource was developed specifically to support our stakeholders and sector within NSW, in their understanding and application of the FTEM NSW Framework.

For more information on the NSW Office of Sport's Future Champions strategy please visit <https://sport.nsw.gov.au>





Some information about this resource

What is the purpose of this resource?

The following resource provides detailed information and best-practice guidance on the **Elite and Mastery levels of the FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Development Framework (E1 to M)**. Substantial expertise and practical learnings sourced from within the NSW sector, contributed to the development of this resource and its practical recommendations.

Who is it for?

All stakeholders and organisations and their personnel who oversee or assist High Performance sport within NSW.

This includes but is not limited to -

- High Performance Athletes
- Parents, Guardians, Carers and Significant others
- Coaches, Managers and Clubs
- Teachers and Schools
- Lecturers, scholars and Universities
- Practitioners
- State and National Sporting Organisations
- International Sporting Organisations
- State and National Government Agencies

How do I use this resource?

This resource can be viewed either in its entirety or you can access specific information for each Elite or Mastery level by clicking on the interactive tabs on the right hand side of page 10 onwards.

How will it assist me in my role?

The advice and recommendations presented within this resource and accompanying versions are centred around the participant or athlete at that level, have been directly informed by contemporary global evidence and best practice and importantly are a fit to the sporting sector within NSW.

Importantly, the recommendations tabled are not intended to be exhaustive but provide a 'checklist' of considerations for progressing current strategy and practice. It is envisaged that this information will be of value to facilitate -

- the review and refinement of current strategy and practice within a sport's High Performance levels
- clarity in mapping, aligning and communicating a sport's High performance strategies and operations
- the ongoing engagement, education and support of athletes and support providers including parents/significant others, coaches, schools, clubs etc.

Where do I find more information?

For detail specific to the background and features of the FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Development Framework please visit our website <https://sport.nsw.gov.au>.

To view detailed 'whole of sport' information incorporating also the FTEM NSW Talent and Elite and Mastery levels please access **FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework: System Level Guidelines: All levels** or access the separate **Foundational and Talent** versions.

FTEM NSW resources specific to Coaches and Instructors has also been developed to complement this resource. Please visit <https://sport.nsw.gov.au> to access the set of **FTEM NSW Best Practice Tips for Coaches and Instructors** resources.

For more information and advice for parents, schools, clubs and sporting organisations please visit our website <https://sport.nsw.gov.au>.



Unpacking the **Elite and Mastery levels of FTEM NSW**



Elite 1

Elite
Representation

Elite 2

Elite
Success

Mastery

Sustained
Elite
Success

Why are the **Elite and Mastery levels** so important?

Despite substantial and continued financial investment into the 'pinnacle' of the athlete pathway - the elite/mastery levels of elite sport - several constraints remain that limit sustainable high-performance success. These include -

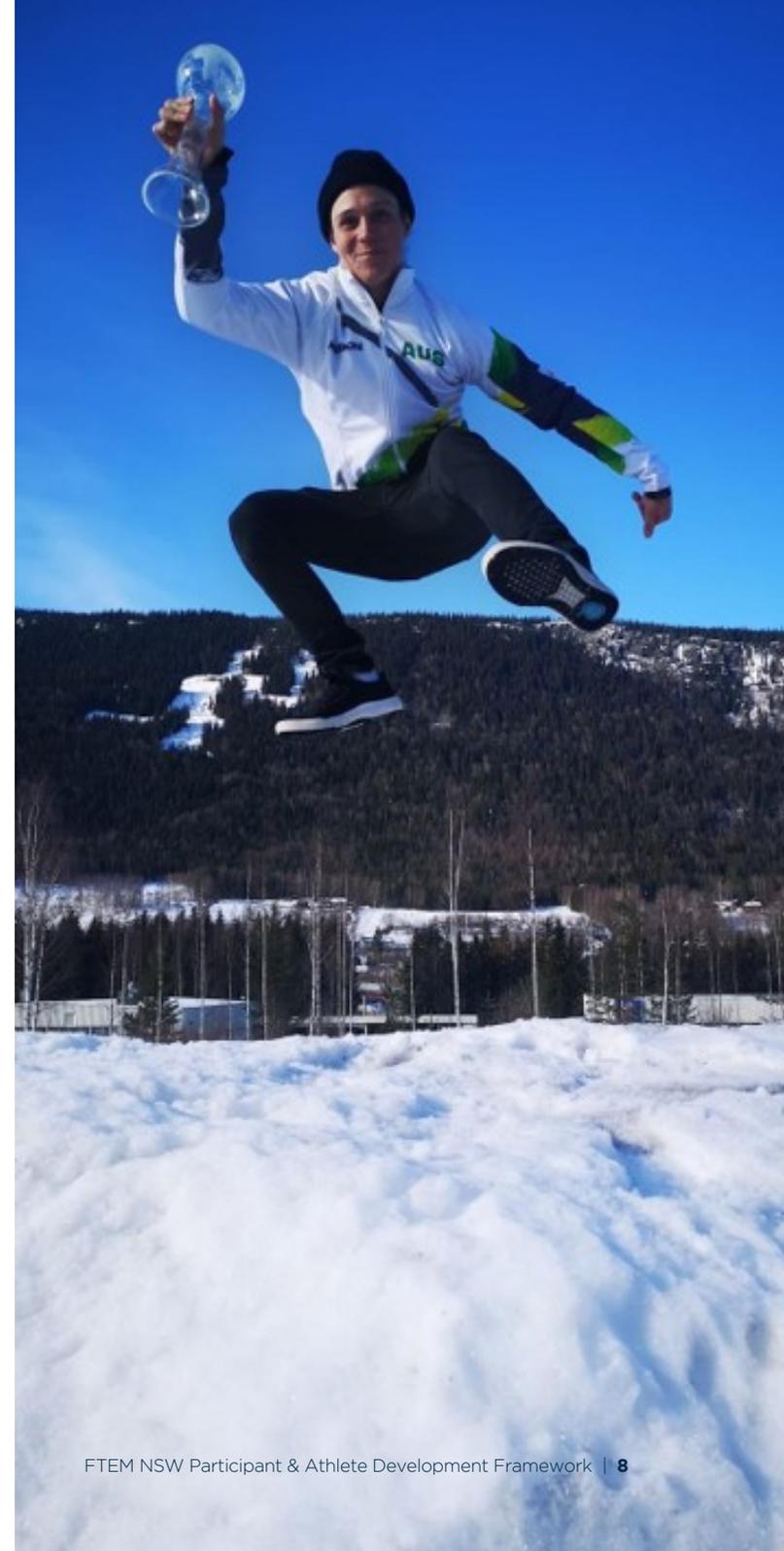
- limited conversion rates of national level representatives within Olympic and Paralympic sports to podium
- inability of elite athletes to sustain their performance on the world stage over consecutive high-performance cycles
- lack of retention of elite athlete and coaching talent
- elite level athlete's commonly reporting that they were under prepared and overwhelmed for their first experiences at benchmark level competitions and events
- limits to the coordination and continuity of the individualised case management of elite athletes
- a high incidence of reported stressors and reported inability of athletes to negotiate and manage them effectively
- high performance demands impacting greatly on athlete's ability to maintain a healthy sport-life balance and positive well-being
- a lack of preparation for life after sport

- and importantly, a lack of true engagement and practical integration of the elite athlete's voice - their developmental journey and experiences, perspectives and advocated strategies.

The best-practice recommendations showcased within the Elite and Mastery levels of FTEM NSW provide a logical and progressive framework for all stakeholders to better support the elite athletes of NSW and contribute to sustainable high-performance outcomes for NSW and Australia.

Drawing on 'world's best practice' and further informed by 'triangulated' evidence emanating from a system, sport and athlete perspective (Weissensteiner et al., 2015), a complement of integrated athlete, environmental and system level factors are considered integral to converting senior elite representatives into perennial podium winners on the world stage.

Importantly, the collective voice of current and past elite and mastery athletes, is utilised to inform the underpinning foundational and talent level strategies of sports and their respective fit of programs, support, education and research.



Key features of the **Elite** and **Mastery** levels

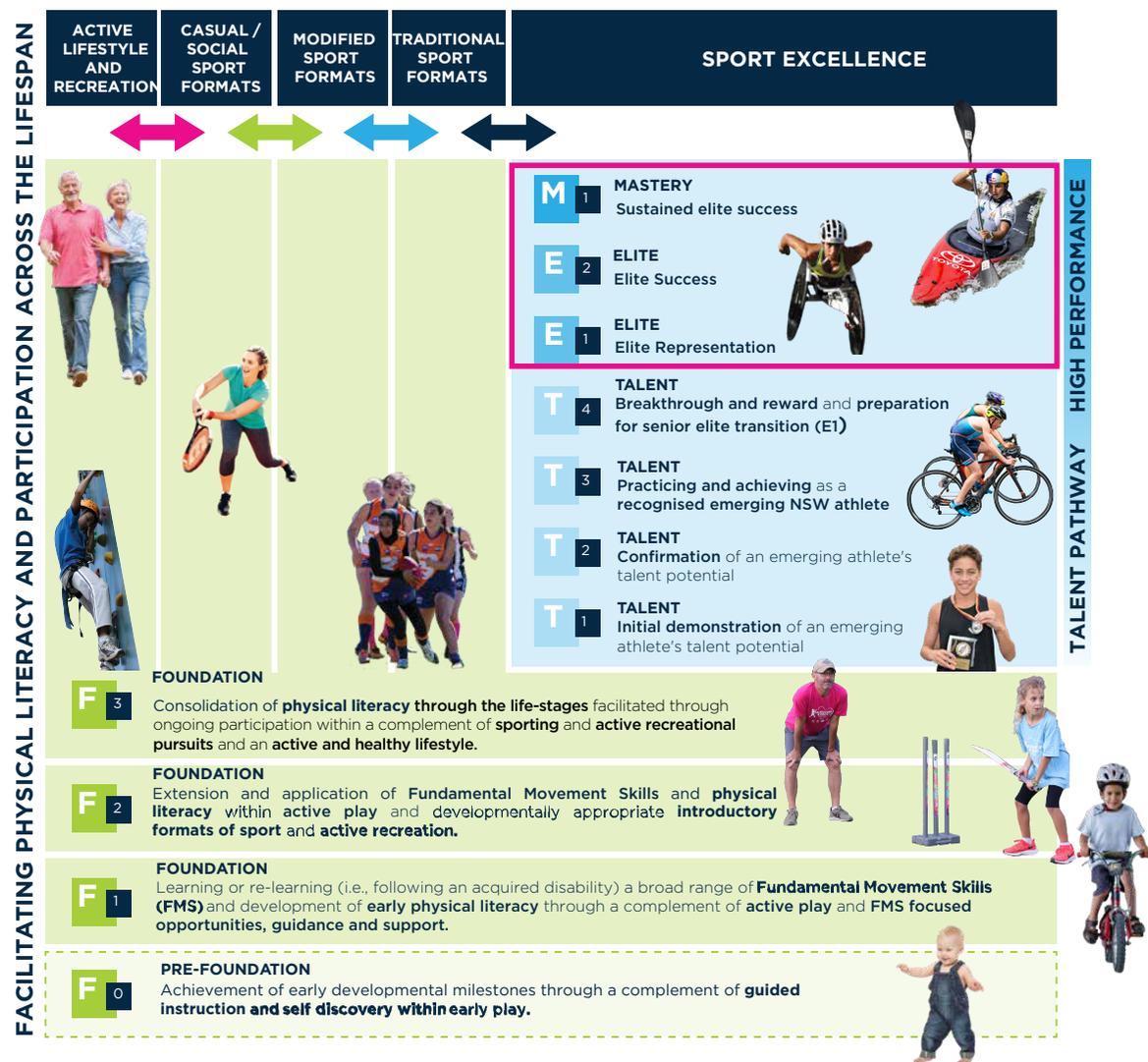
Commonly the pinnacle or 'ceiling' of other athlete frameworks and models is National representation and competitive performance at an International level within Olympic and Paralympic sports. As a result, they do not integrate and incorporate learnings from athletes and their coaches that have succeeded at the highest levels in their sport and have achieved this consistently over multiple high-performance cycles – achievement of the holy grail in elite sport, sustainable podium success.

Considerate of this fact and the reported limited conversion of elite level athletes to podium and beyond, FTEM features a progression of three elite and mastery levels – E1, E2 and M.

By having greater insight specific to what athlete, environmental and system factors must be integrated to ensure continued performance success and continuity and longevity at the highest levels of sport, this critical information can in turn, inform underpinning foundational, talent and elite level strategies.

A key feature of the profile of successful podium athletes is their balance of elite sport with an active and healthy lifestyle and recreational pursuits. The inherent flexibility of FTEM NSW through its representation of all outcomes of sport and active recreation, visualises and integrates this critical aspect of an elite level athlete's profile and importantly, their sport-life balance.

FTEM NSW is proud to feature at its pinnacle our NSW high performance sporting ambassadors Olympian Jessica Fox and Paralympian Madison de Rozario.



Personifying and operationalising the **Elite and Mastery** levels

Over the next few pages, we will unpack each of the Elite and Mastery levels of the FTEM NSW Framework.

Integrating a holistic and ecological approach to athlete development, performance and support inspired by the 3D-AD* (*Three Dimensional Athlete Development*) model, three progressive layers of information and advice centred around the high-performance athlete, will be provided specific to each level and as depicted in the graphic below.

Please use the interactive tabs on the right of each page to access information and advice specific to each level.

Layer 1: Description of Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus• Desired competencies & knowledge• Support Providers• Approximate age range• Physical Literacy Level
Layer 2: In ACTION: Key Considerations for Best Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy, Engagement & Planning• Stakeholder Engagement• Program fit and delivery• Coaching• Insights
Layer 3: In ACTION : Key Considerations for Environmental and System Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance• Delivery and Support Partners



Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Elite level 1

Description of level

Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Focus: Elite Representation

Context for the Elite Athlete

Achievement of an elite athlete status through selection and representation at the highest level of senior international competition or professional sport.

Examples include -

- An Australian representative competing at the highest level of Olympic and Paralympic sport (e.g., Senior World Championships, Olympics, Paralympic or Commonwealth Games etc.)
- A member of a team/squad that competes at the highest level of Professional sport domestically and/or internationally (e.g., team member of an AFL, NRL team etc.)

Receives ongoing, individualised and coordinated support coordinated through effective deliberate programming.

Approximate age range

As competition and performance at this level is at a Senior or Open Age level, athletes supported within this level are predominately aged 18 years and over

Physical Literacy Phase

Consolidation & Mastery / Transfer & Empowerment



Elite Athlete Profile

In Action- Key considerations for best practice

Effective strategy, planning and management inclusive of :

- Individual Athlete Performance Plans that are periodically reviewed and updated.
- ongoing monitoring and review informing the mastery athlete's individualised case management and coordinated and tailored inter-disciplinary support domestically and internationally.
- direct funding assistance
- match of coaching expertise and support
- interdisciplinary best-practice and innovation, ongoing data and performance intelligence and insights including international benchmarking

Effective individualised case management inclusive of:

- ready access to best practice DTEs and training partners and supported by best practice coaching
- consistent access to high quality interdisciplinary support domestically and internationally
- extensive competitive opportunities and exposure at key National and International Benchmark events
- dedicated and ongoing Athlete Career and Education support including flexible educational delivery and flexible working arrangements
- effective monitoring and management of training and competition load, injury etc.
- psychological and physical wellbeing and maintenance of effective sport-life balance and lifestyle
- effective support networks in and out of sport including access to mentors
- preparation for life after competitive sport.

Ongoing engagement and education of athletes, their coaches, support staff, significant others and managers etc.

Excellent knowledge and application of the athlete covering all areas of preparation and performance, psychological skills and strategies including effective self-management and self regulation to facilitate autonomy, continual learning and improvement and performance gains.

Education, opportunity and support specific to effectively engaging with community as an **athlete ambassador**.

Education and ongoing guidance specific to interacting with the **media and financial literacy**.



Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Elite level 1 - Required environmental and system support

Governance :

- National Sporting Organisations
- Sporting Organisations for People with Disabilities
- NSWIS (Categorised athletes within Olympic and Paralympic prioritised sports)
- National Professional sport Organisations
- Professional Clubs
- Australian Institute of Sport
- Paralympics Australia
- Australian Olympic Committee
- Commonwealth Games Australia
- International Sporting Organisations
- International Olympic Committee

Delivery/Support Providers :

- NSO High-Performance Managers
- NSWIS Managers & Service Providers
- NSO Coaching Coordinators & Service providers
- NSO High-Performance Coaches
- Professional Club High-Performance Managers, Coaches & Service Providers
- Wellbeing & Engagement Providers
- University and Vocational Providers
- Significant others



Elite Athlete Profile

Elite level 2

Description of level

Focus: Elite Success.

Context for the Elite athlete

Achievement of a medal winning performance within peak competition at a senior elite level such as -

- the World Championships, Olympics or Paralympics
- a Professional league or championships
- and/or individual recognition and accolades at the highest level of sport (e.g., Brownlow (AFL) or Churchill medallist (NRL)).

Receives ongoing, individualised and coordinated support coordinated through effective deliberate programming.

A critically valuable voice and ambassador to support aligned advocacy/policy, strategy, research, practice and education.

Approximate Age Range

As competition and performance at this level is at a Senior or Open Age level, athletes supported within this level are predominately aged 18 years and over

Physical Literacy Phase

Consolidation & Mastery / Transfer & Empowerment



Podium Athlete Profile

In Action - Key considerations for best practice

Effective strategy, planning and management inclusive of:

- Individual Athlete Performance Plan that is periodically reviewed and updated.
- ongoing monitoring and review informing the mastery athlete's individualised case management and coordinated and tailored inter-disciplinary support domestically and internationally.
- direct funding assistance
- match of coaching expertise and support
- interdisciplinary best-practice and innovation, ongoing data and performance intelligence and insights including international benchmarking

Effective individualised case management inclusive of:

- ready access to best practice DTEs and training partners and supported by best practice coaching
- consistent access to high quality interdisciplinary support domestically and internationally
- extensive competitive opportunities and exposure at key National and International Benchmark events
- dedicated and ongoing Athlete Career and Education support including flexible educational delivery and flexible working arrangements
- effective monitoring and management of training and competition load, injury etc.
- physical maintenance
- psychological and physical wellbeing and maintenance of effective sport-life balance and lifestyle
- effective support networks in and out of sport including access to mentors
- preparation for life after competitive sport.

Excellent knowledge and consistent application of all aspects of being a podium level athlete including superior self-regulation to directly inform ongoing preparation, performance, sport-life balance and effective engagement and integration of support providers and support network in and out of sport.

Implementation of a proven complement of evidence-based strategies for **performance progression and maintenance**.

Preparation for life after sport including formalised and supported roles within sport e.g., mentoring, coaching, management etc.

Engaged formally to share experiences, perspectives and recommended strategies to inform underpinning sport and system level strategy and practice.

Effective engagement with community as an ambassador and mentor of other athletes.

Effective skills interacting with the media and financial literacy.



Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Elite level 2 - Required environmental and system support

Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Governance :

- National Sporting Organisations and Sporting Organisations for People with Disabilities
- NSWIS (Categorised athletes within Olympic and Paralympic prioritised sports)
- National Professional sport Organisations
- Professional Clubs
- Australian Institute of Sport
- Paralympics Australia
- Australian Olympic Committee
- Commonwealth Games Australia
- International Sporting Organisations
- International Olympic Committee

Delivery/Support Providers :

- NSO High-Performance Managers
- NSWIS Managers & Service Providers
- NSO Coaching Coordinators & Service providers
- NSO High-Performance Coaches
- Professional Club High-Performance Managers, Coaches & Service Providers
- Wellbeing & Engagement Providers
- University and Vocational Providers
- Significant others



Podium Athlete Profile

Mastery

Description of level

Focus: Sustained Elite Success.

Context for the Elite Athlete

Sustained success over multiple High-Performance cycles at the highest level of International or Professional sport.

Receives ongoing, individualised and coordinated support coordinated through effective deliberate programming as E1 and E2 level and also potential for re-invention and innovation within main sport.

A critically valuable voice and ambassador to support aligned advocacy/policy, strategy, research, practice and education.

Approximate age range

As competition and performance at this level is at a Senior or Open Age level, athletes supported within this level are predominately aged 18 years and over.

Physical Literacy Phase

Consolidation & Mastery / Transfer & Empowerment



Podium Athlete Profile

Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

In Action- Key considerations for best practice

Effective strategy, planning and management inclusive of :

- Individual Athlete Performance Plan that is periodically reviewed and updated.
- ongoing monitoring and review informing the mastery athlete's individualised case management and coordinated and tailored inter-disciplinary support domestically and internationally.
- direct funding assistance
- match of coaching expertise and support
- interdisciplinary best practice and innovation, ongoing data and performance intelligence and insights including international benchmarking

Effective individualised case management inclusive of:

- ready access to best practice DTEs and training partners and supported by best practice coaching
- consistent access to high quality interdisciplinary support domestically and internationally
- extensive competitive opportunities and exposure at key National and International Benchmark events
- dedicated and ongoing Athlete Career and Education support including flexible educational delivery and flexible working arrangements
- effective monitoring and management of training and competition load, injury etc.
- physical maintenance
- psychological and physical wellbeing and maintenance of effective sport-life balance and lifestyle
- effective support networks in and out of sport including access to mentors
- preparation for life after competitive sport.

Excellent knowledge and consistent application

of all aspects of being a podium level athlete including superior self-regulation to directly inform ongoing preparation, performance, sport-life balance and effective engagement and integration of support providers and support network in and out of sport.

Implementation of a proven complement of evidence-based strategies for **performance progression and maintenance.**

Explore potential for re-invention and innovation

within same sport. **Preparation for life after sport** including formalised and supported roles within sport e.g., mentoring, coaching, management etc.

Engaged formally to share experiences, perspectives and recommended strategies to inform underpinning sport and system level strategy and practice.

Effective engagement with community as an ambassador and mentor of other athletes.

Effective skills interacting with the media and financial literacy.



Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Mastery - Required environmental and system support

Elite Level 1

Elite level 2

Mastery level

Governance :

- National Sporting Organisations
Sporting Organisations for People with Disabilities
- NSWIS (Categorised athletes within Olympic and Paralympic prioritised sports)
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- Wellbeing & Engagement Providers
- University and Vocational Providers
- Significant others



Podium Athlete Profile

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For more information and advice on FTEM NSW please email: futurechampions@sport.nsw.gov.au

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