

Post-Secondary Institute Athlete Assistance Program Guidelines - USPORT Stream

OBJECTIVE:

The **BC Athlete Assistance Program** (BC AAP) is a financial assistance program funded by the Province of British Columbia and administered by viaSport British Columbia. The program financially supports BC high-performance student-athletes striving to achieve championship performances while representing their post-secondary institution. Athletes can use the funds to offset training, competition, and education costs.

The total contribution under the administration of viaSport for the 2025-26 fiscal year is divided amongst two streams: USPORTS Stream and PACWEST Stream

This document provides all the necessary information to assist USPORT administrators, coaches, and student-athletes in becoming familiar with the program's objectives, selection criteria, and allocation guidelines.

Overall grant objectives are:

- Support B.C. athletes on the high-performance pathway for post-secondary, provincial team, and national team success
- Make varsity participation more affordable for B.C. student athletes in need of financial assistance
- Provide support for the next generation of amateur sport leaders, administrators, coaches and officials
- Make sport participation at the post-secondary level more inclusive to equity-seeking populations

USPORT Stream Priorities

- Prioritize the athlete pathway that is connected to high-performance sport in the amateur sport system
- Prioritize financial need and equity-deserving groups

The program reaches its objectives through adherence to the guiding principles of being athlete-centred, equitable, accessible, fair, and merit-based in its decisions.

Institution/Sport Eligibility and Sport Funding Allocation:

Post-Secondary Institution Eligibility: Registered British Columbia post-secondary institutions (PSIs) with athletic programs in the CANADA WEST conference will be eligible (see Page 7 for list of eligible PSIs).

Sport Eligibility: To participate in the BC AAP, the post-secondary institution must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. The intercollegiate sport must compete in the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA), U SPORTS, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) or National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) national intercollegiate championships that have a national qualifying structure (see Page 7 for list of eligible Sports).

Sport Specific Funding:

- Post-secondary institutions will retain the flexibility to allocate funding to athletes according to their institution's selection criteria but these criteria must reflect current BC AAP Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures including an expectation that funding will be allocated equally between male and female teams.
- At least 50% of the student athlete funding allocated towards specific intercollegiate sports at an institution must be directed to the student athletes from that sport. *The remaining 50% can be reallocated to another BC AAP eligible sport, However;*
- Funding directed towards female teams may not have the remaining 50% diverted towards any male teams. The same is true for funding directed towards male teams. viaSport may monitor to ensure that the flexible 50% of the sport specific funding allocation is being directed appropriately.

Withdrawal of BC AAP Sport Funding: viaSport has the authority to withdraw and/or seek reimbursement of BC AAP support to any PSI, sport or its student athletes, if it is deemed that the PSI or sport is no longer in compliance with the policies of the BC AAP.

Selection Criteria and Student Athlete Funding Levels:

Student athletes at differing levels of excellence will receive commensurate levels of financial support, based on selection criteria and rankings established by the particular post-secondary institution. Such criteria may include the educational or working environment of the student athlete, the required time and financial commitment of the student athlete to excel in the specific sport, and the overall limits of funds available.

Student Athlete Selection: Student athlete selection in each sport will be based on program objectives set out by the BC AAP. The PSI will establish a Selection Committee that will be responsible for the identification, ranking and selection of student athletes for funding assistance through the BC AAP. Preferably, the funded athlete is registered or eligible to be registered with the Canadian Sport Institute – Pacific ([CSI-P](#)) as a BC Identified Athlete for their respective sport.

Student Athlete Funding Levels: The PSI will be responsible for determining the funding amount each of the selected student athletes will receive based on sport-specific funding allocation criteria. It is strongly recommended that minimum allocation be in line with the PSI's standard tuition fee per three credits or equivalent to one course. A minimum of \$350 to a maximum of \$5,000 is strongly recommended.

Student Athlete Funding Allocation Procedure: The BC AAP funding allocation for each eligible sport will be sent to the PSI. The institution is in turn responsible for sending the student athletes selected for the program their individual cheque along with a letter which will recognize the contribution of the Province of British Columbia. The following sentence acknowledging the Provincial contribution and its support of the BC AAP must be prominent in all cheque transmittal letters to student athletes:

"The BC Athlete Assistance Program is funded by the Provincial Government and administered by viaSport British Columbia in support of BC athletes, like yourself, in reaching your athletic and academic goals."

viaSport also retains the right to contact student athletes on behalf of Provincial Government to offer a congratulatory message.

Gender Equity Funding Allocation: Post-secondary institutions must allocate funding as directed between male and female teams unless written approval is granted based on exceptional circumstances.

Student Athlete Equitable Assessment: The Selection Committee will be responsible and expected to prioritize some funding to athletes who have identified themselves as belonging to an equity-seeking group. Equity seeking groups are those facing barriers to equal access opportunities and resources in sport, including (but not limited to): people with disabilities, lower income families, Indigenous peoples, immigrants and new Canadians, and girls, women, and non-binary genders.

Student Athlete Eligibility:

The BC AAP will be athlete-centred. Awards will be allocated to individual student athletes based on their demonstrated commitment to high performance sport and excellence while competing for their post-secondary institution, British Columbia and Canada. Student athletes must meet sport-specific selection criteria based on the following minimum standards:

Citizenship and Residency: To be eligible for BC AAP funding, a student athlete must be a Canadian citizen and *permanent* resident in British Columbia. Out of province athletes who live in British Columbia just for the school year will be ineligible for BC AAP funding.

Post-Secondary Institution Enrollment: The student athlete must be academically eligible to compete for their institution and must maintain full-time status in order to qualify for BC AAP.

Use of Banned Substances and Methods: *BC's Policy on Sport and Physical Activity* clearly outlines the "ethical pursuit of excellence" – which includes competing without the use of banned substances – as one of its pillars of support to sport. The Province of British Columbia and viaSport strongly opposes the use of prohibited substances and methods as they are contrary to the ethics of sport and may be harmful to the health of athletes. Since we look to our elite athletes to set the standards for all who aspire to be at the top level of competition, athletes who are suspended by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport and/or their respective International Sport Federation for an anti-doping rule violation, will be declared permanently ineligible for BC AAP Funding and the student athlete will be asked to reimburse the BC AAP funding received for the current program year.

Withdrawal of BC AAP Sport Funding: viaSport has the authority to withdraw BC AAP support to any student athlete if it is deemed that the student athlete is no longer in compliance with the policies and requirements of the BC AAP.

Note: Student athletes who meet the eligibility criteria are not guaranteed BC AAP funding.

Administration and Timelines:

The post-secondary institution is responsible for providing the resources that will allow a student athlete to excel and fulfill their potential. PSIs will be required to continuously meet the guidelines, policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

On behalf of the Sport Branch, viaSport (www.viaSport.ca) will administer the BC Athlete Assistance Program as follows:

1. **Sport Roster Chart**: April 14th, 2025 to May 2nd, 2025. To start the allocation process, PSIs must confirm the current roster sizes of their eligible sports by completing a Sport Roster Chart. We will utilize a SurveyMonkeyApply online form for the Sport Roster Chart [HERE](#).
2. **Conditional Allotment Calculation**: May 5th, 2025 to May 9th, 2025. Once all PSIs have submitted their rosters, viaSport will calculate each PSIs allotment and communicate sport and gender amounts accordingly via email.
3. **Grant Letter Signature**: To ensure PSI funding allotment is issued quickly and efficiently, viaSport will create a grant letter through the SMA system, and payment will occur via direct deposit. PSI's will be prompted to sign a grant letter, upon receiving the signature, viaSport will begin to process the EFTs.
4. **2025-2026 Summary Report & Impact Stories**: September 1st, 2025 to March 31st, 2026. Once PSIs have allocated their allotment they will complete a brief summary report, providing impact data via the SMA platform. Additionally, funded students will be asked to stories annually to highlight the program's impact.

All questions and reporting are to be directed to the viaSport grants team, grants@viaSport.ca or (778) 655-1756.

Administration Requirements:

viaSport requires documentation by the PSI on the following items:

Pre-Funding Documentation and requirements:

- Completion of the [PSI-AAP Sport Roster Chart](#)
- Confirmation of Program Agreement and Responsibilities

Post-Funding Documentation and requirements:

- **PSI Contribution to BC AAP Funding:** A financial commitment by the PSI toward providing supplemental funding in support of BC AAP student athletes is strongly encouraged.
- **Post-Secondary Institution Communication Commitment:** It is expected that PSIs provide a link on their website to BC AAP information, as well as in other written communication (e.g. newsletter).
- **Non-Compliance with PSI Requirements:** Non-compliance with any of the procedural, administrative, training, competitive, communication, coaching, reporting or funding requirements by a post-secondary institution will be reviewed by viaSport and, at its discretion, will result in measures ranging from determination of a probationary period (during which a PSI/sport must meet required standards) to a recommendation of total withdrawal of PSI/sport eligibility to receive funding from the BC AAP.
- **Public Recognition of Funded Student Athletes:** The Government of British Columbia or viaSport, in its effort to recognize the accomplishments of British Columbia student athletes, may publish the names of BC AAP recipients at its discretion. The personal information would be distributed with the prior permission of the student athletes and would be limited to name, hometown, images and biographical highlights related to their athletic accomplishments.
- **BC AAP Funding Report & Impact Data:** It is expected that PSIs will complete reporting requirements, including impact stories of their students, accompanied by an impact summary report containing the following (in numbers):
 - How many athletes are you funding through PSI-AAP?
 - How many funded athletes are registered or eligible to be registered with CSI-P?
 - How many funded athletes self-identify with an equity-deserving group?

All cheques are to be distributed to student athletes prior to March 31st, 2026.

Contact:

If you have any questions or wish to discuss your school's eligibility prior to submitting an application, contact the viaSport Grants team:

Phone: 778 655 1756

Email: grants@viasport.ca

2025-2026 – USPORT Stream Eligible Post-Secondary Institutions and Sports:

Post-Secondary Institutions:

Simon Fraser University
Thompson Rivers University
Trinity Western University
University of British Columbia
University of British Columbia - Okanagan
University of Northern BC
University of the Fraser Valley
University of Victoria

Eligible Sports

Basketball
Cross Country
Field Hockey
Rowing
Rugby
Swimming
Track and Field
Volleyball
Wrestling
Hockey(Women)
Soccer (Women)