

BC Ferries Sport Experience Program

Funding is available for travel from April 1st, 2026 through March 31st, 2027.

Applications must be submitted at least 10 business days (between and including Monday to Friday, not including weekends and public holidays) before the first day of travel.

BACKGROUND:

BC Ferries and viaSport British Columbia recognize that travel is often a barrier to amateur sport teams and organizations as they seek competitive opportunities. The BC Ferries Sport Experience Program assists with ferry costs for athletes, coaches, and team managers.

Eligible applicants may apply for up to two one-way passenger vouchers per eligible traveller.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Applications may be submitted individually or on behalf of a group by:

- A. Athletes aged 18 years and younger or someone representing the athlete (e.g. parent, guardian, coach)
- B. Not-for-profit Provincial or National Sport Organizations
- C. Not-for-profit Local Sport Organizations, clubs and associations that:
 - o Are a member in good standing with an appropriate Provincial Sport Organization OR are working in partnership with an appropriate provincial organization; and
 - o Demonstrate inclusive and equitable practices that maximize sport, recreation, physical activity, and leadership opportunities in the community
- D. Coaches or officials traveling to a recognized certification or professional development opportunity.

When multiple athletes from one club or organization are applying for travel to the same event, one application should be submitted for the group.

TRAVEL ELIGIBILITY

Vouchers may be used by athletes aged 18 years and younger that are traveling to compete in International Events, National Championships, Western Canadian Championships, Provincial Championships, or Selection Camps in British Columbia.

Eligible events are defined as:

- **International Event:** An elite-level event such as a World Cup where you have qualified to represent Canada.
- **National Championship:** An event sanctioned by the relevant NSO where you have qualified to represent B.C. The winner of said event would be crowned National Champions.
- **Western Championship:** An event sanctioned by the relevant PSO/NSO where you have qualified to represent B.C. The winner of said event would be crowned Western Canadian Champions.
- **Provincial Championship:** An event sanctioned by the relevant PSO where you have qualified to represent your city or region. The winner of said event would be crowned Provincial Champions. (Provincial qualification events are not eligible).
- **Selection Camp:** A camp or event after which an athlete is chosen by the relevant PSO or NSO to represent Team BC or Team Canada.

Coaches and managers traveling with athletes are eligible to be included in applications, but the **priority of the program is to fund travel for athletes**. Additional parent chaperones are not eligible to receive funding.

In the event of uncertainty, viaSport will contact the relevant PSO or NSO to determine event eligibility.

Please note the following are not eligible for funding under this program:

- Pre-season games, tournaments, regular season league and qualification events.
- Teams traveling to BC Secondary School Senior Provincial Championships. These teams may be eligible for coverage from the Sport on the Move grant program and should speak with their school's principal and/or athletic director for more information.

APPLICATION CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT:

Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Submitted by an eligible applicant (as outlined above)

- Submitted a minimum of 10 business days (between and including Monday to Friday. Not including weekends and public holidays) before the first date of travel. Exceptions will **not** be made for late applications **unless** late qualification is clearly demonstrated with evidence in the application form.
- The following holiday dates are **not** included when calculating 10 business days: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Family Day.

Due to overwhelming demand, we are unable to fulfill all applications and requests. Priority will be given to:

- First time users of the BC Ferries Sport Experience Program.
- Individuals or organizations will not be funded for multiple applications within a 30-day window.

The goal of the program is to support as many athletes as possible. Based on priorities and demand, certain applications may only be approved for partial funding (i.e. a request for a round trip may be approved for a one-way trip).

HOW TO APPLY:

Application Steps:

- Complete the online application form: https://viasportgrants.smapply.io/prog/2026-27_bc_ferries_sport_experience_program/
- You are required to create an account to apply for the grant. If you have applied for any grants through our online portal before, please use your existing account.
- You are able to save your application and return to it at a future time. Please be reminded to review your application prior to submission as you will not be able to modify your application after.
- An auto-generated email will be sent to the email address provided in the application to confirm that you have successfully submitted an application (*make sure to check your junk/spam folder*)

APPLICATION REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION:

- Applications are collected on a rolling intake basis and ordered by travel date. Applications are then prioritized based on the outlined criteria above, and funding is allocated based on funds available.

- Organizational applications for large events or those involving a high volume of athletes should be submitted one month in advance and will be prioritized for earlier processing.
- Application status for those applying as individuals will be communicated via email from grants@viasport.ca two to 10 business days prior to the first day of travel.
- If successful, the email will contain PDF vouchers – you **MUST** print out the vouchers before traveling. In order to be valid for travel, **the vouchers must be printed out and presented to the BC Ferries agent at the ticket booth at time of check-in. Vouchers presented on electronic devices will not be accepted. Vouchers are valid for only the routes/dates shown. Unauthorized use of the voucher will result in the inability for BC Ferries to apply the applicable subsidy to your travel fares.**

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR VOUCHER HOLDERS – HORSESHOE BAY TERMINAL

As of October 15, 2025, BC Ferries requires reservations for all travel from Vancouver (Horseshoe Bay) to Nanaimo (Departure Bay) due to terminal construction.

If you're using a voucher or gift certificate, please:

- Call BC Ferries at 1-888-223-3779 to book and pay in advance;
- Provide your voucher number during the call;
- A credit card is required to hold the booking (no-show fees apply);
- Bring your voucher to the terminal with you just in case.

Travel from Nanaimo (Departure Bay) to Vancouver (Horseshoe Bay) remains unchanged — you can still book online with a voucher.

More info: www.bcferrries.com/hsb-travel

CONDITIONS:

Applicants agree to and acknowledge the following conditions:

- All information provided in the application is true and complete.
- Partial funding may be awarded based on demand.
- Vouchers are only valid for the event, route, and dates specified on the application. Once the application is submitted, changes cannot be accommodated.
- Vouchers are only valid if printed (vouchers will not be accepted at the terminal by showing a smart phone or computer screen).
- Successful applicants will be asked to complete a survey to report on the event and trip. The survey will be distributed via email after travel has concluded.

CONTACT

If you wish to discuss your request and its eligibility prior to applying, please contact:

grants@viasport.ca

If you wish to learn more about how we are transforming and scaling the impact of sport in our province, upcoming grant opportunities, and the latest sport and physical activity news in BC:

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