

# National High Performance Program

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Selection Criteria

**2025-26**



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## 1. General Information

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to select athletes to the National High Performance Program (NHPP) who are following the performance pathway progression (see Appendix A) in relation to their global competitors to achieve podium success at the Olympic Winter Games and World Ski Championships.
- 1.2 This document is created following the NST Selection, Nomination and Announcement Policy.
- 1.3 Final decision authority for NHPP selections is the Nordiq Canada High Performance Director (HPD) as per the NST Selection, Nomination and Announcement Policy.
- 1.4 Selection decisions may be appealed under the Nordiq Canada Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy.
- 1.5 The HPD, or designate, has the authority, and reserves the right to amend this document prior to the selection date under the following circumstances:
  - a. In the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of Nordiq Canada that prevents the HPD from fairly and objectively implementing these selection procedures.
  - b. When additional (or altered) information deemed relevant by Nordiq Canada to the criteria is provided by external parties, such as (but not limited to) an event organizing committee, Sport Canada, The Canadian Olympic Committee, FIS, or any other relevant organization.
  - c. To correct, clarify or amend any inconsistencies, errors, or omissions in the criteria.
  - d. Occurrences pertaining to, but not limited to: race cancellations or rescheduling, any country border limitations, travel restrictions, travel limitations, inability to maintain safety of athletes, etc.

Changes to this document will be communicated directly to the ski community by whatever means and wherever the original criteria was published. Nordiq Canada is not responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any amendments.
- 1.6 Athletes and coaches are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of this and supporting documents and policies. For clarification contact the HPD.
- 1.7 Athletes who are nominated to more than one NHPP group will be given the choice of which one they wish to join. An athlete cannot be a member of more than one group.

## 2. Selection Guidelines

- 2.1 Only Nordiq Canada members in good standing (see Nordiq Canada Bylaws) with a registered Nordiq Canada club, a valid Canadian passport, a valid Nordiq Canada racing license, and a valid Canadian FIS license will be considered for NHPP selection.
- 2.2 The only races considered for NHPP selection are the World Ski Championships, World Cup, World JR/U23 Ski Championships, Nordiq Canada Selection Trials races, the Nordiq

Canada Ski Nationals, International FIS races, or other events as needed and identified by the HPD. Any event added or replaced to the above list will be communicated in a timely manner.

- 2.3 Selection race results must meet the respective definitions for Final Finish Race Result, pts. 7.2 and 7.4, and definitions for respective Depth of Field, pts. 7.3 and 7.5.
- 2.4 Selection criteria are based on a combination of international performance benchmarks using major international events; World Ski Championships, World Cup, World JR/U23 Championships (per age and development stage, see Appendix A). U19 and U18 categories will also use domestic national events results (WJR trials and Nationals).
- 2.5 The HPD, in consultation with the High Performance Committee and the HP staff team (SDD, IST, NST Leads) has the right to subjectively select an athlete to any NHPP program based on exceptional circumstances and performances that enhance the athlete's development pathway and overall performance of the Team.

### 3. Curtailment of Health, Training and Competition (COH)

- 3.1 Nordiq Canada will consider nominating athletes for the NHPP based on a Curtailment of Health. The basic philosophy for selecting an athlete by granting an injury or illness request is that all things being equal, the athlete nominated has clearly demonstrated superior performances in previous competition to other athletes being considered for NHPP nomination. An injury or illness request is considered as the last means by which an athlete can earn selection and is intended to provide for exceptional circumstances outside the normal selection criteria rather than being part of the normal means by which an athlete can earn selection. This provision only applies when athlete performance is compromised because they have not been able to train or compete for an extended period and has a positive prognosis within 8 to 12 months.
  - 3.2 A and B Team, and Development Team athletes that met a 2024-25 NHPP objective criteria, who at the end of the 2024-25 competitive cycle, have not achieved the standard required for NHPP status strictly because of health-related reasons, may be considered for re-nomination for the upcoming year provided the following conditions are met:
    - a. An athlete must, within seven (7) days following the incident or occurrence, submit to the HPD:
      - i. A certificate of diagnosis within seven (7) days,
      - ii. documentation confirming diagnosis by a licensed, relevant medical practitioner
- Provide:
- iii. consistent communication of the athlete's health and performance status to the HPD or designated Nordiq Canada staff or IST-Lead during the time the athlete is unable to train or compete;
  - iv. a return to training and competition plan for the upcoming season within 30 days, and;
  - v. supporting documentation of the athlete's treatment by an accredited

professional (e.g., physiotherapist/ massage) that supports a return to training and competition plan.

- b. In the case of injury or illness, no NHPP nominations will be made for injuries that are determined by the HPD in consultation with medical professionals to be career-ending.
  - c. If an athlete competes in a qualifying event, they may not invoke Section 3 in respect to the qualifying event in which he or she competed. The intention of this provision is to ensure that athletes who are injured, suffering from an illness, or medical condition do not compete, which could cause further ill health, or harm. **If an athlete does compete, they must accept the race result they have achieved.**
- 3.3 The athlete may be nominated to the NHPP on the at the sole discretion of the HPD based on 3.2 and the following factors:
- a. the nature and details of the diagnosis and prognosis;
  - b. assessment and training data provided by the Athlete that is verifiable by the Nordiq Canada Lead, DTE coach and IST;
  - c. evidence of the Athlete’s level of performance prior to injury;
  - d. the strength of the Athlete’s rehabilitation and training plan as evaluated by the HPD;
  - e. the advice of medical experts provided to the HPD; and
  - f. the expectation that the Athlete can return to full fitness and continue to demonstrate performance pathway progression in relation to their global competitors to achieve podium success at the Olympic Winter Games and World Ski Championships
- 3.4 Athletes nominated by Curtailment of Health will be ranked according to the priority order listed in the 2025-26 NHPP criteria.
- 3.5 The declaration and all documentation must be submitted to the HPD by March 26, 2025, 11:59 PM in the time zone the athlete resides in. Submissions that have not adhered to 3.0 will not be accepted nor will submissions received after the deadline.

## 4. National High Performance Program

- 4.1 The National High Performance Program (NHPP) is comprised of the National Ski Team (A and B Teams), National Group (NG1 and NG2), and the National Development Group (Development Team and Prospects).
- 4.2 **NATIONAL SKI TEAM AND NATIONAL GROUP**
- a. Athletes meeting criteria 5.8.a will be nominated for two (2) years as per Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program International criteria - <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>.
  - b. Athletes meeting criteria 5.6.a-f and 5.7.a-g. can be discretionally nominated to international competitions for the 2025-26 season as determined by appropriate goals

of the NHPP program and aligned with their Individual Athlete Performance Plans (IAPP) in consultation with their DTE coach, Nordic Canada staff, IST lead and HPD.

#### 4.3 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

- a. Designed for athletes U20 and younger to provide camp-based opportunities that are driven by the Athlete Performance Pathway.
- b. Athletes can be discretionally nominated to the Development Team if they have been previously nominated to the Development Team and are still a U20 athlete in 2025-26. Recommendations will be made by the Sport Development Director in consultation with the NST Development Lead and will consider but not limited to their training and health history evidenced by their IAPP, their commitment to the goals of the NHPP program, and their positive contributions to their teammates, staff, and community.

### 5. National High Performance Program Selection Criteria

5.1 Athletes who meet the following criteria between November 1st, 2024, and March 23rd, 2025, are eligible for nomination to the NHPP.

5.2 All criteria are for competitions held in the 2024-25 season.

5.3 Team Size:

- a. National Ski Team and National Group: Athletes meeting criteria will be nominated.
- b. National Development Team: Minimum of 10, maximum of 16

5.4 Athlete ages referenced in selection criteria is as of December 31, 2024.

5.5 Selection criteria YOB and abbreviations:

26+ = Athletes born in or before 1998  
U26 = Athletes born in or after 1999  
U23 = Athletes born in or after 2002  
SR = Athletes born in or before 2004  
JR = Athletes born in 2005 - 2009  
U20 = Athletes born in or after 2005  
U19 = Athletes born in or after 2006  
U18 = Athletes born in or after 2007  
WSC = World Ski Championships  
WC = World Cup  
WJR = World Junior Ski Championships  
U23 WSC = U23 World Ski Championships

#### NATIONAL SKI TEAM

##### 5.6 A TEAM

- a. Any athlete meeting Sport Canada International criteria - <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/athlete-assistance/policies-procedures.html>
  - i. Top-8 WSC individual final finish race counting three entries per nation

- ii. Top-8 AND top half of the field WSC team event
- b. Any athlete finishing the 2024-25 World Cup season in the Top-15 of the FIS World Cup Sprint or Distance standings.
- c. Top-12 WC or WSC individual final finish race result.
- d. Top-3 U23 WSC or WJR individual final finish race result
- e. HPD discretion
- f. Curtailment of Health

#### 5.7 B TEAM

- a. Any athlete finishing the 2024-25 World Cup season in the Top-30 of the FIS World Cup Sprint or Distance Standings
- b. 2 x Top-20 WC or WSC individual final finish race result
- c. Top-12 U23 or WJR WSC individual final finish race result
- d. U23 top half of field WC or WSC individual final finish race result
- e. Top-3 U23 or WJR Team final finish race result
- f. HPD discretion
- g. Curtailment of Health

### NATIONAL GROUP

#### 5.8 NG1 – National Group 1

- a. Top 20 U23 or WJR WSC individual final finish race result
- b. U26 2 x top 30 WC or WSC individual final finish race result
- c. Top half of field U23 or WJR WSC individual final finish race result
- d. Top-8 U23 or WJR WSC team final finish race result
- e. Top 4 NCAA Championship individual final finish race result
- f. HPD discretion
- g. Curtailment of Health

#### 5.9 NG2 – National Group 2

- a. Athletes who were nominated to one of the following Canadian Project Teams in the 2023-24 or 2024-25 season.
  - i. World Ski Championships
  - ii. World Cup
  - iii. U23 WSC
  - iv. WJRs

- v. Athletes born in 2004 from the 2023-24 Development Team
- vi. Athletes born in 2005 from the 2023-24 or 2024-25 Development Team

## NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

### 5.10 DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- a. Top-8 AND top half of field WJR team event.
- b. Top-half of field WJR final finish individual final finish result.
- c. SDD discretionary selection.
- d. National Development Ranking List: Additional athletes will be nominated from the National Development Team Ranking List, up to the maximum of 10 athletes (5 men and 5 women) including athletes nominated under 5.14.a-c.

#### Selection Events:

- Nordiq Canada Selection Trials – Thunder Bay, ON, January 2-5, 2025
- Nordiq Canada Ski Nationals – Canmore, AB, March 17-23, 2025

#### National Development Ranking Lists:

Two (2) ranking lists will be created for both the U18 and U20 categories for each gender, one sprint and one distance, using finishing place results from the following races as outlined below using the World Cup Scoring System (see appendix).

- i. U18 Sprint Ranking List
  - Sprint Qualifier Nationals (U18 category)
  - Sprint Finals Nationals (U18 category)
  - Team Sprint Qualifier Nationals (U18 category)
- ii. U18 Distance Ranking List
  - Interval Start Nationals (U18 category)
  - Mass Start Nationals (U18 category)
- iii. U20 Sprint Ranking List
  - Sprint Finals Trials
  - Sprint Qualifier Trials
  - Sprint Finals Nationals
  - Sprint Qualifier Nationals
- iv. U20 Distance Ranking List
  - Interval Start Trials
  - Mass Start Trials
  - Interval Start Nationals
  - Mass Start Nationals

#### Selection event ranking process:

- STEP 1: First U18 male and female from the sprint and distance list. Athletes who have already met criteria a. will not be removed from the ranking list. If



there is a tie, athletes will be ranked by the number of 1, 2, 3 place finishes. For example, an athlete with two first place finishes and two second place finishes will rank higher than an athlete with two first place finishes, one second and one third.

- STEP 2: First U20 male and female from the sprint and distance list. Athletes who have already met criteria a. will not be removed from the ranking list. If there is a tie, athletes will be ranked by the number of 1, 2, 3 place finishes. For example, an athlete with two first place finishes and two second place finishes will rank higher than an athlete with two first place finishes, one second and one third.
- STEP 3: Next available spots within the maximum team size will go to the next best ranked male and female athlete from the same order of priority under step 1 and 2 and will be repeated until the 10 development spots are filled.

#### 5.11 PROSPECTS GROUP - Under review

## 6. Removal of an Athlete Once Selected

6.1 The HPD reserves the right to withdraw an athlete from the NHPP if:

- a. the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities with respect to mandatory training camps, testing, and competitions;
- b. the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities as identified in the Nordiq Canada Athlete Agreement;
- c. the athlete has not fulfilled responsibilities as identified in the Nordiq Canada Code of Conduct or Nordiq Canada Discipline Policy;
- d. the athlete has demonstrated toxic behavior eroding the Nordiq Canada culture of excellence;
- e. the athlete has not adhered to responsibilities as they pertain to WADA, and CCES antidoping protocols;
- f. the athlete is unable to perform due to injury, illness or other medical reasons as supported by the Nordiq Canada Chief Medical Officer or appropriate IST.

6.2 The HPD may recommend the withdrawal of an athlete's national team status under the following condition:

- a. Provide a written warning to the athlete, including the steps and timelines to remedy the situation and the consequences of a failure to heed the warning.
- b. If the above steps are not successful in resolving the matter and Nordiq Canada recommends withdrawal of team status, Nordiq Canada must inform the athlete in writing. This communication must indicate:
  - i. The grounds on which the recommendation is being made;
  - ii. The steps already taken to address the issue (verbal warning followed by a formal letter of warning);

- c. Provide notice to the athlete of the athlete's right to contest the Nordiq Canada recommendation to withdraw team status through Nordiq Canada's Dispute Resolution and Appeal policy process within the prescribed time.

## 7. Definitions

- 7.1 **Competition Ready:** The ability of the athlete to achieve equal or superior performance(s) onsite at the scheduled event, as compared to the performance(s) the athlete achieved in qualifying.
- 7.2 **Individual Final Finish Race Result:** The final time and ranking attributed to an athlete at the completion of an entire individual event, i.e., time of day, qualification heats, or pre-qualification times are not considered individual final finish race results. An athlete must complete the race and obtain FIS points for any result to be considered a race result.
- 7.3 **Depth of Field Individual Event:** For a final finish race result to be achieved, the athlete must be top-half of field.

Additionally, for World Cup events, there must be 15 of the top 30 FIS athletes according to the FIS World Cup Overall Sprint or Distance standings that have started the race.

The ranking used will be the most up-to-date standings of the FIS World Cup (Sprint or Distance).

Field size will include all athletes who start the race, i.e., athletes that are lapped out, disqualified or do not receive a time for another reason will count towards the total field size.

- 7.4 **Team Final Finish Race Result:** The final time and ranking attributed to a team at the end of an entire team event, i.e., qualification rounds are not considered. A team must complete the race and obtain a final finish time to be considered a race result.
- 7.5 **Depth of Field Team Event:** For a final finish race result to be achieved, the team must be top-half of field, including all teams that start the event, i.e., teams that are lapped out, disqualified or not permitted to start will count towards the total field size.

## 8. APPENDIX A – Canadian Tire Performance Benchmarks

### Cross Country Skiing - Performance Profile Benchmark Summary



Each metric across the top of the table below has a set of benchmarks for each gender and race type group - A: Major Podium; B: WC Top 12; C: WC Top 30.

Each of these groups are cumulatively exclusive, meaning each subsequent group contains all athletes not within a previous group. Athletes are placed in each group if they have achieved that target performance since 2010. Their career performance data, dating back to the 2000 season, is then used in the benchmark calculations.



The benchmark for each group is the 75th Percentile of the metric for those athletes within the group. The 75th Percentile was selected to eliminate any extreme out.

Gender	Race Type	Target	Number of Athletes	First Age	U/WCH Best Rank	U23/WCH Best Rank	U23 WC Best Rank	U25 WC Best Rank	U28 WC Best Rank	29+ WC Best Rank	U23 WC Best 5 Avg. Rank	U25 WC Best 5 Avg. Rank	U28 WC Best 5 Avg. Rank	29+ WC Best 5 Avg. Rank
Men	Distance	A: Major Podium	33	29.0	8.0	5.0	29.5	6.0	2.0	2.0	37.5	12.1	3.9	2.6
		B: WC Top 12	140	27.0	14.3	13.0	33.0	21.0	11.0	13.0	43.4	32.9	19.2	21.0
		C: WC Top 30	127	27.0	30.0	21.0	49.0	41.0	36.0	35.5	58.9	54.7	46.8	43.9
	Sprint	A: Major Podium	15	26.5	11.5	6.0	4.0	2.0	1.0	3.5	7.9	5.5	3.3	5.0
		B: WC Top 12	162	26.0	19.0	16.0	28.0	17.0	12.0	17.0	40.7	31.8	22.3	28.6
		C: WC Top 30	148	26.0	30.0	25.0	45.0	37.8	38.0	38.0	57.1	51.4	51.1	50.8
Women	Distance	A: Major Podium	20	27.3	5.5	1.3	5.0	1.5	1.0	1.3	8.1	3.7	4.4	2.4
		B: WC Top 12	133	28.0	19.0	7.8	34.0	25.3	14.0	11.0	42.1	32.4	22.3	19.0
		C: WC Top 30	143	26.0	25.8	16.5	37.0	35.8	31.0	30.3	47.8	44.6	41.9	41.1
	Sprint	A: Major Podium	15	28.0	6.0	8.0	5.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	10.2	7.1	3.6	3.9
		B: WC Top 12	122	25.0	17.0	10.8	27.0	17.0	10.5	11.3	34.1	27.8	20.6	20.2
		C: WC Top 30	126	26.0	25.0	22.5	36.0	35.0	32.0	33.0	47.8	42.4	42.9	44.7

