



APSO ASSOCIATION OF
PARALYMPIC SPORTS
ORGANISATIONS

OUR PATH FORWARD
Strategy 2025-2032



FOREWORD

Dear Friends,

Over the past few years, we've worked to be a source of value for our members and partners. However, as the world around us continues to change rapidly, the Association of Paralympic Sports Organisations (APSO) – like every membership organisation in sport – must adapt to stay relevant. We recognise that what we've been doing so far may no longer be enough.

In October 2024, we began shaping a clearer, long-term direction for our organisation. We started by listening – to our members and valued external stakeholders – to better understand expectations, needs and opportunities for improvement. This strategy is the result of those conversations, alongside our own internal reflection on what's worked and what could be done better.

From these insights, four consistent themes emerged: the need to speak with one voice, build stronger foundations, work more openly with partners and strengthen how we serve our members. These priorities form the backbone of our strategic pillars.

We thank all of our members for their invaluable input and engagement in shaping this strategy. We are equally grateful to our partners who took part in the consultation process: the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the European Paralympic Committee, the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and the Organising Committees of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (OCOG) in Los Angeles and Brisbane.

We are proud to work with you every day.

Now, it's time for our next chapter.

We will continue to represent and support our members.

We will gradually grow our influence within the Paralympic ecosystem.

We will strive to unite all stakeholders, remain a credible partner and focus on what matters most to our members.

We are APSO. This is our path forward.

Sabrina Ibáñez
APSO President

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

In 2017, a few years after the dissolution of the IPC Sports Council, APSO was established to fill a critical gap in the Paralympic Movement – giving International Federations (IFs) that are IPC members a collective voice and a mechanism to coordinate on issues of shared importance.

Since then, APSO has contributed to a range of key initiatives – from IPC governance consultations and Paralympic Games planning to the development of the classification code. Alongside this, APSO has played an active role in representing IFs and acting as a partner – helping them build capacity, coordinate responses and engage with key stakeholders. As of 2025, APSO has 21 members.

Below are examples of how this strategic direction has already resulted in concrete initiatives.

2019 & 2023

APSO MEMBER SURVEY – PARA SPORT EXPENDITURE

Identifying members' spend on Para sport
(€5.6 million in 2023)

ANNUAL

SPORT TECHNICAL MEETING

Facilitating annual meeting between
APSO members and IPC

2021, 2022 & 2024

PARALYMPIC GAMES VIEWERSHIP DATA RESEARCH

Understanding broadcast coverage
of the event – cumulatively and by sport

2022-2024

WOMEN IN SPORT LEADERSHIP COURSE

Creating educational opportunities for female
leaders (120+ participants)

JUN 2022

WORKSHOP ON TV AND DIGITAL VIEWERSHIP

Analysing trends in Para sport viewership
and social media engagement

APR 2023

SAFEGUARDING POLICY TEMPLATE

Providing safeguarding guidance based
on APSO members' best practices

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

WHAT WILL GUIDE US

Mission

We unite, support and represent International Federations in the Paralympic movement - helping them grow stronger, work together and create better conditions for athletes to succeed.

Vision

We strive to be an influential voice in shaping a stronger Paralympic movement.

Values

Unity – We connect and empower through collaboration.

Relevance – We focus on what matters most to our members.

Credibility – We earn trust by delivering consistently and acting transparently.

Shared Progress – We grow together by sharing knowledge, experience and challenges.



STRATEGIC PILLARS

WHERE OUR FOCUS WILL BE

#1

Smarter Foundations

We strengthen what's under the surface: governance, classification, learning, and practical support. Through shared tools, clear guidance and direct peer exchange, APSO supports IFs to lead with confidence.

#2

Stronger Together

We help our members speak with one voice, ensuring IFs are heard and represented. From classification systems to sport development, APSO brings members together to shape shared positions and push for what matters most.

#3

Open Doors

We work with the IPC, OCOGs, ASOIF, WOF (Winter Olympic Federations) and other stakeholders for the benefit of the whole Paralympic movement. Our goal is to ensure IFs play a more visible and influential role in shaping the future of Para sport and the success of Para athletes. APSO brings insights, modern approaches and coordination to make collaboration easier and delivery smoother.

#4

Growth from Within

To deliver consistent value, APSO must grow its visibility, capacity, resources and communication. We are investing in becoming a more organised, strategic, and member-driven organisation that adds value every day.

OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

WHAT WE ARE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

1 Smarter Foundations

Objective #1

Build IF capability through education

Quick Wins

- Develop short-form learning resources that answer common questions from IFs
- Highlight practical tools and examples members can apply directly
- Continue to host workshops and programmes that enhance capacities

Looking Ahead

- Build a searchable IF knowledge base / case study library
- Develop joint education offers with IPC, National Olympic Committees (NPC) or other stakeholders
- Create modular online training for IFs

Objective #2

Improve classification knowledge and adaptation

Quick Wins

- Host virtual sessions on adapting classification systems to IPC standards
- Create a coordination group to provide support and exchange knowledge on classification
- Understand current scope of classification opportunities across IFs

Looking Ahead

- Develop a clear classification calendar
- Initiate a cross-organisation consultation on creating more classification opportunities
- Support implementation through templates, tools, and workshops

Objective #3

Help IFs strengthen governance and compliance

Quick Wins

- Produce and distribute governance templates and compliance checklists
- Host Q&A sessions on integrity and policy development
- Share case studies of strong governance practices from IFs (inside or outside APSO)

Looking Ahead

- Identify shared service opportunities for smaller IFs
- Develop a governance benchmarking tool adapted from international standards (e.g. ASOIF)
- Launch a voluntary peer-review system to support IFs in assessing and improving their structures

Objective #4

Support member visibility, resilience and funding opportunities

Quick Wins

- Collate and provide examples of successful Para sport sponsorships
- Explore and share in regular intervals external grant and funding opportunities
- Establish a shared events calendar to improve visibility of IF competitions

Looking Ahead

- Pilot a shared funding application model for members
- Explore sponsorship framework for cross-sport partnerships
- Provide sponsorship templates and best practices for IF use

OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

WHAT WE ARE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

#2 Stronger Together

Objective #1

Coordinate member voice and advocacy on shared issues

Quick Wins

- Develop structured consultation cycles on shared issues such as classification
- Launch working groups with IF leads to discuss most relevant themes
- Run federations-only policy alignment calls ahead of major decisions

Looking Ahead

- Lead consolidated responses to sector-wide issues
- Position APSO as the recognised voice of IFs on Paralympic Games planning and rules
- Enable IFs to co-create forward-looking guidance on emerging Para sport challenges

Objective #2

Amplify member insights to influence decision-making

Quick Wins

- Continue a post-event member survey following Paralympic Games
- Collect key data and best practices from members across priority topics
- Use post-event debriefs to generate actionable insights for IPC and future hosts

Looking Ahead

- Establish APSO as a knowledge source for OCOGs and other event organisers
- Produce annual insight reports on issues such as venue accessibility and event logistics
- Map out shared data needs and encourage member contributions

Objective #3

Clarify APSO's role and impact

Quick Wins

- Create 'What APSO Does' material for member staff and executives
- Encourage members to showcase their affiliation with APSO in their communications
- Start regular executive-level IF engagement

Looking Ahead

- Initiate onboarding briefings for new IF staff/board members
- Launch an annual survey to assess APSO's performance and impact
- Embed APSO into relevant IF planning and governance processes

Objective #4

Facilitate dialogue between IFs

Quick Wins

- Run informal online sessions for peer exchange on key topics
- Match IFs with common challenges to start shared workstreams
- Launch regular APSO calls with members

Looking Ahead

- Organise annual member-led APSO Forum
- Establish annual data collection exercise to understand broadcast, social media and audience engagement landscape.
- Develop a shared workspace or online forum for informal IF-to-IF support and discussion

OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

WHAT WE ARE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

#3 Open Doors

Objective #1

Deepen the relationship with IPC

Quick Wins

- Facilitate regular engagement and consultations between APSO and the IPC
- Proactively support IPC with its projects and initiatives
- Engage with IPC Board and Presidential candidates ahead of future elections

Looking Ahead

- Coordinate IF positions on IPC governance and statutes
- Secure a permanent IF or APSO seat on the IPC Governing Board
- Collaborate with IPC to unlock new revenue opportunities that benefit the Para sport ecosystem and strengthen IF development

Objective #2

Support better coordination with multisport event organisers and owners

Quick Wins

- Coordinate information flow for IFs ahead of events
- Run event debriefs with IFs to collect challenges and lessons
- Establish IF-OCOG contact groups and invite OCOGs to sport technical meetings

Looking Ahead

- Publish IF feedback reports for future event hosts to support knowledge transfer
- Create event engagement protocols in collaboration with OCOGs
- Formalise a planning forum with future OCOGs

Objective #3

Strengthen collaboration and influence with key stakeholders

Quick Wins

- Connect and engage with regional organisations and platforms
- Identify shared regional needs with IFs and NPCs
- Draw on ASOIF's and WOF's experience to strengthen APSO's approach to IF coordination and governance support

Looking Ahead

- Develop joint initiatives with other stakeholders in areas such as governance, education and leadership
- Explore collaborative opportunities on shared development priorities
- Position APSO as a key partner in sector-wide initiatives

Objective #4

Enhance sector-wide coordination and engagement

Quick Wins

- Invite key stakeholders to APSO-hosted sessions to share updates and expectations
- Participate in and support cross-stakeholder meetings
- Build a recurring calendar of joint forums and reviews

Looking Ahead

- Establish a recurring APSO-led stakeholder roundtable
- Secure role in consultation processes of IPC and other stakeholders
- Propose a joint framework for sector consultation on selected issues

OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

WHAT WE ARE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

#4 Growth from Within

Objective #1

Grow APSO's operational capacity

Quick Wins

- Define and publish clear APSO deliverables per year
- Explore hiring interns and volunteers to support project work
- Map out roles for staff and board members

Looking Ahead

- Establish a small, flexible secretariat to lead coordination and deliver member services
- Develop a flexible staffing model combining paid staff, project consultants and expert volunteers
- Formalise annual reporting and progress sharing

Objective #2

Strengthen APSO's communications and visibility

Quick Wins

- Refresh APSO website to highlight members and actions
- Create regular APSO newsletter for members and partners
- Provide consistent branding tools that members can use to show alignment with APSO

Looking Ahead

- Build an annual communications plan co-designed with IFs
- Launch APSO storytelling campaigns aligned with member events
- Establish APSO as a reference point in sports media covering disability sports

Objective #3

Make APSO easier to engage with

Quick Wins

- Improve documentation and communication of decisions
- Create guides for how members can get involved
- Create a shared calendar of APSO events, calls and deadlines

Looking Ahead

- Introduce digital tools for engagement and collaboration
- Launch a user-friendly member portal
- Host quarterly forums with members to report on APSO activities

Objective #4

Build external partnerships that benefit members

Quick Wins

- Identify and reach out to potential collaborators
- Invite guest speakers into APSO sessions
- Map aligned initiatives by other organisations

Looking Ahead

- Formalise strategic partnerships and explore commercial opportunities with external organisations
- Pilot joint programmes with development or education partners
- Secure APSO participation in sector-wide leadership initiatives

MOVING FORWARD

The publication of this strategic plan marks a new phase in APSO's journey.

This strategy shows the direction, but delivering real impact will require determination and strong collaboration across APSO's members and partners.

APSO is committed to:

- Developing a clear roadmap for implementation with timelines and responsibilities
- Updating members on progress and seeking their input
- Creating opportunities for members to lead and shape specific areas of work
- Maintaining open communication with key partners to build shared understanding
- Embedding this strategy into planning, delivery and decision-making

The strategic pillars and objectives are not about just doing more.
It's about doing what matters – with clarity and purpose, engaging members and partners.

This is APSO's path forward – and our next step starts now.

