

EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

STRATEGY 2021-2024



Section 1

About Us

Gymnastics is one of the largest participation sports in Ireland, one of the biggest sports in the world and one of the three 'Category A' sports in the Olympic programme. We are recognised worldwide not only as a major sport in our own right but also as a sport that provides the building blocks for almost all other sport.

Gymnastics Ireland is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of gymnastics in Ireland and is officially recognised as such by Sport Ireland (SI). We are an inclusive club-based member organisation with clubs in all urban and rural communities nationwide. Our clubs come in all shapes and sizes with some being small, voluntary run set-ups; however, the majority are now run as small to medium enterprises (SMEs). These hugely successful community-based sports businesses have been growing year-on-year. Participation demand still greatly outstrips current club capacity; therefore, there is still massive untapped potential for future growth.

On a daily basis our clubs work with their members to unlock the full physical potential of every child or adult who wishes to participate in the sport, whatever their abilities or their sporting ambitions. For the vast majority that will be through the enjoyment and camaraderie of being involved at participation level and for a smaller number it will be as they progress through our pathway to sporting success at the highest level. Our hope is that for all it will be the beginning of a lifelong involvement with sport and physical activity through gymnastics.

Sport Starts Here.

What do we value?

ENJOYMENT

in our inclusive sport, whether it is at recreational or competitive level - a positive experience for our members.

PRIDE

in ourselves, in Gymnastics Ireland and in wanting to represent Ireland well on the international stage.

TEAM WORK

underpins our approach, as working together we are stronger.

HARD WORK

is how we achieve success.

AMBITION

to strive to achieve success in everything we do, from training sessions through to competition results.

FAIR PLAY

is the way we work and the way we win.

RESPECT

for each other, our competitors and ourselves.

1.1 Our Programmes & Events

Gymnastics Ireland offers an extensive range of programmes and events covering participation through to performance levels. Each unique programme has varying elements ranging from education courses through to technical resources and events.



The Floor is an annual showcase event for member clubs. Clubs perform to show everyone just how skilful, fun, entertaining and exciting gymnastics is.



The National Series encompasses all national level competitive events including all National Championships.



GymEDGE is a series of gymnastics-based workshops for any coach from any sport designed to develop the complete athlete/player.



GymSTART is the participation programme for Gymnastics Ireland consisting of coaching courses, workshops, club programming tools and events.



GymABLE is an inclusive programme targeted at creating inclusive gymnastics environments from club to national level for people with disabilities.



GymACTIVE is a fun gymnastics-based fitness program focusing on strength, flexibility, and physical literacy skills for the leisure, fitness & wellbeing sectors.



The National Awards Ceremony is an annual celebration of our members achievements from participation through to performance, and club through to national.

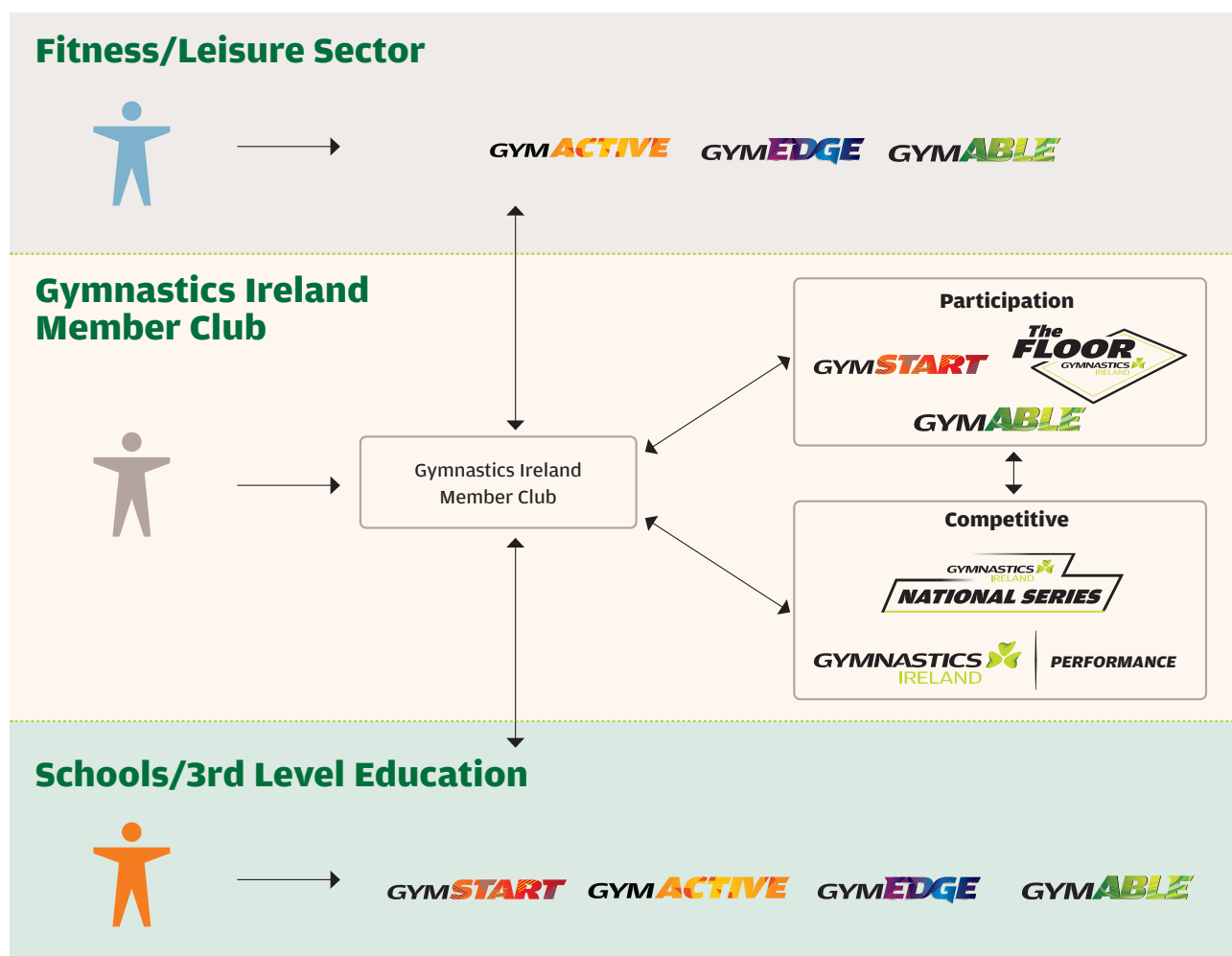
The Gymnastics Ireland master brand and all programme sub-brands are legally registered and protected trademarks owned by the company Irish Gymnastics CLG T/A Gymnastics Ireland.

For full programme details visit the programme section of gymnasticsireland.com

Sport Starts Here.

1.2 The Gymnastics Ireland pathway

There are three main routes to participate in gymnastics in Ireland. The pathway diagram below illustrates each of these and highlights the relevant Gymnastics Ireland programmes to each pathway route.



This sub-strategy has been developed to support the aims and objectives of the main 'Gymnastics Ireland Strategic Plan 2021-2024'.

To review this please [!\[\]\(d66ff64371a51729ac8c1cdaa685ba6f_img.jpg\) **CLICK HERE**](#)

1.3 Our Partners

While our clubs and members are our main partners we regularly work with a number of key partners outside of our membership to further develop our sport.

Sport Ireland

The government appointed agency tasked with the development of sport in Ireland covering participation, high-performance, anti-doping, ethics & coaching. Sport Ireland also is responsible for the development and operation of:

- The Sport Ireland Campus
- The Sport Ireland Institute
- The Local Sports Partnership (LSP) Network

Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI)

The National Olympic Committee (NOC) and representative branch of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Ireland. Its main responsibility is planning, preparing and supporting Team Ireland to compete in Olympic events in addition to leveraging the Olympic brand in Ireland.

Federation of Irish Sport (FIS)

The voice of Irish sport ensuring sport is kept at the top of the agenda within political, government and media circles in Ireland while providing shared support services for members. The FIS also runs key sports sector events such as the Irish Sport Industry Awards.

European Gymnastics (EG)

The European governing body responsible for the governance and development of the sport on a continental level including the operation of the European Championships.

International Gymnastics Federation (FIG)

The world governing body responsible for the governance and development of the sport on a global level including the operation of the World Championships and Olympic qualification pathway.

Ireland Active

The representative body for the leisure, health and fitness sector in Ireland.

Sponsors

Gymnastics Ireland regularly partners with long-term or project-specific sponsors in the roll-out and delivery of various programmes and initiatives.

Media

Gymnastics Ireland maintains a close working relationship with national TV, digital and print media in order to maximise exposure of our sport to the Irish general public while engaging with the global gymnastics media to ensure Irish stars are visible to gymnastics fans all over the world.

Section 2

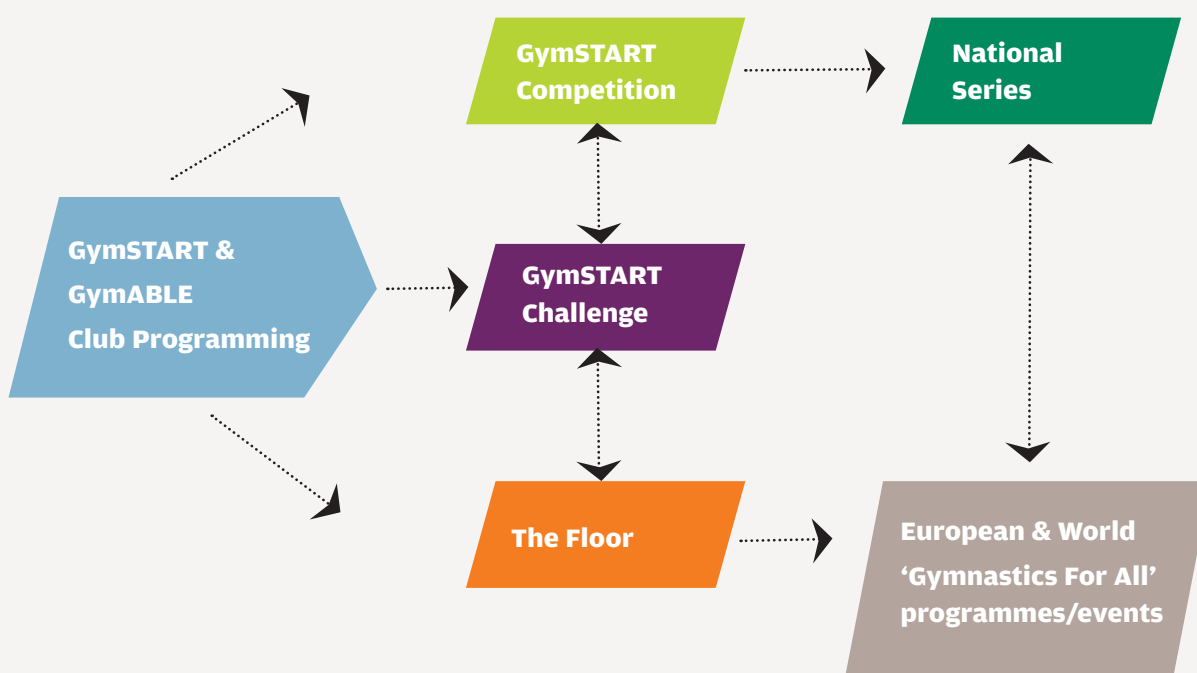
Education & Participation Programmes

As referenced in section 1, Gymnastics Ireland operates a range of programmes and events for our membership, some of which are focussed on the more competitive pathways of our sport and others purely on participation. Each programme has a series of varying elements/ areas such as education courses, events of other resources. In this section we will highlight the programmes relevant to the areas of education and participation, provide detail on the specific programme elements/areas, summarise where we are now and highlight where we want to be by the conclusion of this strategy.

For the duration of the strategy Gymnastics Ireland will seek to maximise available resources and roll-out operational plans in order to get us to where we want to be.

The following pathway diagrams are directly relevant to our participation and education programmes, and provide a quick reference top-line overview with detail provided in the following sections 2.1 – 2.8.

Participation Programme & Events Pathway



*All Gymnastics Ireland programmes and events are designed to be as inclusive as possible for people with disabilities and are aligned with our GymABLE programme

Coach Education Pathway

Leisure & Fitness Sector

GymACTIVE
Instructor

Gymnastics Ireland Clubs & Schools

GymSTART Foundation

Introduction to
club participation
coaching

GymSTART Level 1

Club
Participation
Assistant Coach

GymSTART Level 2

Club
Participation/
Competitive
Development
Coach

GymSTART Level 3

Club
Participation/
Competitive
Development
Coach

Gymnastics Ireland Clubs Competitive (Discipline Specific)

Discipline Level 1

Assistant National
Competitive
Development
Coach

Discipline Level 2

National
Competitive
Development
Coach

Discipline Level 3

Performance
Development
Coach

Discipline Level 4

High
Performance
Coach

Workshops & Add-on Modules

GymSTART
Teachers Workshop

GymABLE
Disability Awareness
Module

GymEDGE Coach
Development
Workshop

Gymnastics Ireland
Continuous Professional
Development (CPD)
Workshops

*Details of full coaching course transfer matrix/system can be found by [clicking here](#).

Judge Education Pathway

Women's Artistic & Rhythmic

Discipline
Level 1

Discipline
Level 2

Discipline
Level 3

Discipline
Level 4

Discipline
Level 5

Acrobatics, Trampoline, Tumbling & Men's Artistic

Discipline
Level 1

Discipline
Level 2

Discipline
Level 3

Discipline
Level 4

*Details of each discipline specific judging system can be found in Gymnastics Ireland Judging Policy [clicking here](#).

2.1 GymSTART



80% of Gymnastics Ireland members are involved at a recreational/participation level through our expanding network of clubs that are spread across all urban and rural areas nationwide. To cater for this large and growing community of members we developed, launched, and have continued to evolve, our flagship participation programme brand GymSTART.

There are 3 key elements/areas within the GymSTART programme:

- 1. Education**
- 2. Events & Activities**
- 3. Club Programming & Supports**

2.1.1 Education

The foundation of all gymnastics participation is centred around delivering recreation and participation-based gymnastics coaching programmes. To deliver these efficiently clubs require several qualified coaches. Our current GymSTART coaching pathway supports, educates and qualifies coaches to deliver fun, safe, inclusive and developmental coaching programmes within a gymnastics club environment.

The GymSTART Coach Education Pathway

Gymnastics Ireland Clubs & Schools



- The GymSTART Level 1 & 2 coaching courses provide coaching qualifications to members aged 16 years and above. Level 2 is the minimum coaching level required to be able to run a recreational gymnastics programme as lead coach, with a Level 1 coach able to work under the direction of a Level 2 coach.
- The qualifications also allow coaches to actively coach at specific participation and competitive development level competitions.

GymSTART Level 3 Coaching Course

- The GymSTART Level 3 coaching qualification aims to provide coaches with the skills and understanding to support participants through a competitive development training cycle as a lead into the lower levels of competitive coaching.

2.1.2 Events & Activities

- **GymSTART Challenge:** This is a series of national events, based on our GymSTART Awards, that are designed specifically to provide gymnasts of all ages and abilities with a fun and progressive event structure to take part in, where the focus is on enjoyment, friendship and celebrating personal achievement.
- **GymSTART Competition:** This event aims to provide our recreational members with an opportunity to experience developmental level competition within a fun and relaxed environment while also celebrating personal achievement.
- **GymSTART Virtual/Online Engagement:** These include a variety of online activities and challenges designed to digitally promote the GymSTART programme and act as a lead into physical events while encouraging fun physical activity.

2.1.3 Club programming – The GymSTART Awards

- **The GymSTART Awards Scheme** is a fun and progressive reward-based programme for gymnasts. It is designed to support coaches running participation-based gymnastics programmes/clubs in order to aid coaching and help structuring gymnastics sessions. The awards also form the basis of the GymSTART Challenge events and can be used in both a club and school setting.

[Get Involved | GymSTART Programme Gymnastics Ireland](#)



Where are we now?

Education:

- Delivering regular GymSTART, Level 1 and 2 coaching courses covering 80% of coaching base internally.
- Developed a GymSTART Foundation Level coach support course for participants aged 15 years+ targeting gymnasts/ex-gymnasts.
- Rolling-out GymSTART Level 3 coaching course.
- Migrating specific course content to E-learning.
- Delivering support webinars on topics to complement and enhance the knowledge of GymSTART coaches.

Events:

- Annually running 2 x National GymSTART Challenge events per year for thousands of recreational gymnasts.
- National GymSTART Competition launched providing an introduction to developmental level competition with the focus on fun and enjoyment.
- Launched a virtual 'GymSTART Club Takeover' initiative - a series of daily workout videos during an 8-week period through social media.
- Launched a virtual GymSTART celebration week online engaging members with daily challenges, associated prizes, workouts and throwback videos/photos.

Club Programming & Supports:

- GymSTART Floor and Group/Apparatus Awards available to all clubs to assist in structuring club participation programming.

Where do we want to be?

Education:

- Delivering Foundation Level coaching courses to candidates as young as 15 years old throughout all regions of the country.
- Increased delivery of GymSTART Level 1 and 2 courses for Gymnastics Ireland club network and schools/3rd level institutions by 30%.
- Roll-out/delivery of Level 3 coaching courses as need dictates.
- Develop and roll-out a coach mentor program across all clubs to support GymSTART coaches through their coaching journey.
- Continue to deliver and create coaching workshops, webinars and conferences that support GymSTART coaches.
- Create and deliver a new specific GymSTART Judging qualification course pathway.

Events:

- Ensuring GymSTART event programme content is kept up-to-date, fresh and relevant to membership.
- Running 4+ GymSTART Challenge events per year rolling out nation-wide to make events as accessible as possible.
- Running 2+ GymSTART Competition per year.
- Develop and roll-out an inclusion section for GymABLE participants within all GymSTART events.

- Hosting an annual virtual GymSTART Challenge celebration week in addition to other – regular virtual club engagement initiatives and activities.
- Develop and rollout a new GymSTART discipline specific competition that creates a bridge between GymSTART and the National Series events.
- Develop and roll-out GymSTART camps linked into wider expo events focusing on recreational-based gymnasts targeted at providing a fun-based learning environment where gymnasts can learn age/ability appropriate skills as part of a wider sports camp experience.

Club Programming & Supports:

- Develop and launch new suite of online GymSTART resources designed to support club programming development as part of the wider club development/support programme.

2.2 GymABLE



GymABLE is an inclusive programme currently in development, targeted at creating inclusive gymnastics environments from club to national level for people with disabilities.

The programme is supported and endorsed by Sport Ireland and CARA (Ireland's national pan-disability sport organisation).

GymABLE | Disability Opportunities Gymnastics Ireland

There are 3 key areas within the GymABLE programme:

1. Education

2. Events & Activities

3. Club Programming & Support

2.2.1 Education

GymABLE – Coaching Add-on Module

- The GymABLE coaching add-on module is available to all qualified Gymnastics Ireland coaches. It is delivered as an information-based coaching module focused on disability awareness and covers the social model of disability, terminology, barriers & solutions, practical advice and examination of key theories/models for inclusion.
- This module is not a requirement for Gymnastics Ireland qualified coaches working with gymnasts with a disability, however it is recommended to raise awareness and to progress coaching ability.

2.2.2 Events & Activities

- Clubs are encouraged to enter gymnasts where relevant to ability and in-line with any gymnast safety considerations while requesting assistance when/where needed.
- The National Disability day is an event targeted at raising awareness of the GymABLE programme and wider associated disability issues.
- Our GymABLE Inclusion Forum is an information sharing & networking event open to all clubs/members targeted at providing attendees with up-to-date insights & information from key expert speakers while allowing clubs/members to meet and exchange ideas.

2.2.3 Club Programming & Support

- **Club resources:** We have a selection of resources, research studies, and various other materials online in relation to various disability/inclusion areas that are available to support clubs run their GymABLE programmes.
- **Ambassador Program:** Gymnastics Ireland's Disability Ambassadors are member gymnasts and member clubs who, through their participation and work in our sport, provide visibility and motivation to other people with disabilities who may wish to get involved in gymnastics.
- **Disability Policy:** This policy represents Gymnastics Ireland's agreed principles and commitments for disability inclusion in line with the CARA 'Charter for Inclusion'. This policy underpins our commitment to support and develop an inclusive environment for children and adults within our sport.

Where are we now?

Education:

- Annually delivering 3 x GymABLE add-on modules to compliment standard coaching qualifications with 25% of clubs having had a club member participate.

Events:

- Launched the National Disability day to raise awareness of GymABLE and associated disability/inclusion matters.
- Hosting our annual GymABLE Inclusion Forum with approximately 14% of Gymnastics Ireland clubs attending.

Club Programming & Supports:

- Providing annual funding through Sport Ireland investment covering 10-15% of clubs to implement a GymABLE programme within their wider club programme annually increasing the number of member clubs engaged.
- Promoting our GymABLE ambassadors to raise GymABLE visibility.
- Providing disability-related club resources e.g., National Disability Policy, Atlantoaxial resource pack, Club coaching videos etc.

Where do we want to be?

Education:

- Continuing to deliver 3+ GymABLE add-on modules annually (as need dictates) to compliment standard coaching qualifications targeting 75% of clubs having a club member/ coach as lead for the club GymABLE programme.
- Deliver 4+ additional complimentary GymABLE Disability Workshops annually (as need dictates).
- Provide training for all Gymnastics Ireland tutors regarding delivery of the GymABLE add-on module.

- Develop & rollout GymABLE add-on judging module to upskill current/future judges in disability gymnastics.

Events and Activities:

- GymABLE ambassadors gaining similar levels of recognition within Gymnastics Ireland community as other Gymnastics Ireland stars.
- Increase the number of clubs involved in entering GymABLE gymnasts in GymSTART & National Series events by 25%.
- Continue to annually host the GymABLE National Inclusion Forum & Networking event targeting 50% of member clubs attending.
- Develop & roll-out new GymABLE specific categories/sub-divisions within the GymSTART Challenge event framework while continuing to improve accessibility of GymSTART for gymnasts with a disability.

Club Programming/ Support:

- Achieve CARA Xcessable NGB Accreditation – Bronze, Silver and Gold.
- Continue to provide annual funding through Sport Ireland investment targeting 10% of clubs (each year) to implement a GymABLE programme within their wider club programme annually increasing the number of member clubs engaged.
- Develop and roll-out new GymABLE Award Scheme to assist with GymABLE programming as part of the wider club programme.
- Create new club resources e.g. ‘How to become a GymABLE club’, and improve information signposting.
- Establish GymABLE Club Accreditation Awards (Gold, Silver, Bronze). Target greater alignment of GymABLE with and as a pathway to other national disability/inclusive sport organisations/programmes.

2.3 GymEDGE



GymEDGE is a workshop-based sports coach development programme that uses core fundamental gymnastics skills and training techniques to build the complete athlete or player. GymEDGE makes a real impact in the on-going development of coaches from all sports across Ireland while simultaneously increasing the awareness and understanding of gymnastics within other sports.

GymEDGE | Development Programme Gymnastics Ireland

GymEDGE is targeted at any group of coaches from any sport and caters for all levels of coaching.

- GymEDGE is targeted at any group of coaches from any sport and caters for all levels of coaching. It can also be delivered as a continuous professional development (CPD) workshop through any LSP, NGB, college or university and is certified as a qualification through Sport Ireland Coaching.

Where are we now?

- An accredited Continuous Professional Development course endorsed by Sport Ireland Coaching for all other sports.
- Delivering multiple workshops annually through Local Sports Partnerships, a select number of other sports and third level institutions.

Where do we want to be?

- Continue to develop course content to ensure GymEDGE is relevant and attractive to wider sports sector.
- Increase delivery by 80% through consistent workshops rolled-out nationwide through all LSP's, NGB's and third level institutions.
- Continue to promote GymEDGE as a CPD qualification to other sports and gain recognition of same within 50% of other Irish NGBs.

2.4 GymACTIVE



GymACTIVE is a fun gymnastics-based fitness program focusing on strength, flexibility, and physical literacy skills for the leisure, fitness & wellbeing sectors. It has been designed to be low-cost from a set-up/resource perspective and to operate within a typical fitness studio/sports hall. There are two main elements:

1. Education

2. Programming

2.4.1 Education

GymACTIVE – Gymnastics Instructor Course

The GymACTIVE Instructor course is a very accessible course designed specifically for the leisure fitness & wellbeing sector. The course qualifies instructors to deliver the Gymnastics Ireland GymACTIVE programme in facilities/gyms/leisure centres that are signed-up/accredited to run the GymACTIVE programme with Gymnastics Ireland.

2.4.2 Programming

The GymACTIVE programme is underpinned/supported by detailed and in-depth programme content that assists GymACTIVE instructors in the delivery of GymACTIVE fitness-based lessons/classes. Instructors are supported by a comprehensive bank of easy-reference resource cards covering warm-up, fundamentals based gymnastics fitness content for main lessons/classes and cool down.



Where are we now?

- Developed 'GymACTIVE KIDS' to focus on pre-school to 6th class ages as a target market enabling the leisure, fitness & wellbeing sector to open up a new membership and revenue stream during low footfall times within their facilities when fitness studios and sports halls may be quiet during the standard working day.
- Preparing to nationally launch the GymACTIVE brand with an emphasis on 'GymACTIVE Kids' to the leisure, fitness and well-being sector in partnership with Ireland ACTIVE, the Irish representative body for these sectors.
- Developing programme content and resources for the youth, adult and later-years gymnastics-based target-market element of the GymACTIVE programme.



Where do we want to be?

- Targeting 15% of Ireland Active member facilities signed up for GymACTIVE with the GymACTIVE KIDS programme operating as successful new membership and commercial revenue stream for each on an annual basis.
- Developed, nationally launched and rolling-out the youth, adult and later years targeted GymACTIVE programme elements with 10% of the Ireland Active member facilities operating these on an annual basis opening up further membership and commercial revenue streams.
- Advancing links between leisure/fitness facilities running GymACTIVE and traditional Gymnastics Ireland clubs in order to grow membership and filter potentially talented gymnasts into the club system.

2.5 The Floor



The Floor is Gymnastics Ireland's annual flagship participation-based display event.

The aim of this event is to create an annual showcase where our member clubs pull together a performance to show everyone just how skilful, fun, entertaining and exciting our sport is. This event is open to all levels of ability, ages and categories of Gymnastics Ireland membership. For this event Gymnastics Ireland brings the X-Factor to 'The Floor' providing a lights, camera, action event experience.

[The Floor | Programmes | Gymnastics Ireland](#)

Where are we now?

- Annually running 'The Floor' with circa 20 clubs participating (22% of total clubs).
- Producing bespoke club specific digital content for social media that clubs can use for promotional purposes at local level.
- Using the event to act as a pathway to key international participation events.

Where do we want to be?

- Increase the number of clubs participating by 20%.
- Launch and advertise the event as a key event on the international participation events circuit attracting participants from other countries.
- Work with media partners to gain national media coverage to promote the event on an annual basis.

The aim of this event is to create an annual showcase where our member clubs create performances to show everyone just how skilful, fun, entertaining and exciting our sport is.

2.6 Discipline Specific

Gymnastics Ireland annually rolls out programming to support the various FIG recognised competitive disciplines nationwide.

These include Women's Artistic, Men's Artistic, Trampoline gymnastics, Rhythmic gymnastics and Acrobatic gymnastics. For each there are four core elements to each national programme:

- **Education – Coaches & Judges**
- **National Development Plan (NDP)**
- **National Series Events**
- **National Squad Programme**

In this section we will outline the specifics in relation to coach & judge education plus give a top-line overview re the National Series events structure.

For full detail on the National Series events, the various discipline NDPs and national squad programme please refer to the following:

- **The Gymnastics Ireland High Performance Strategy 2024 & 2028**

 [CLICK HERE](#)

- **The National Series section of the Gymnastics Ireland website**

 [CLICK HERE](#)

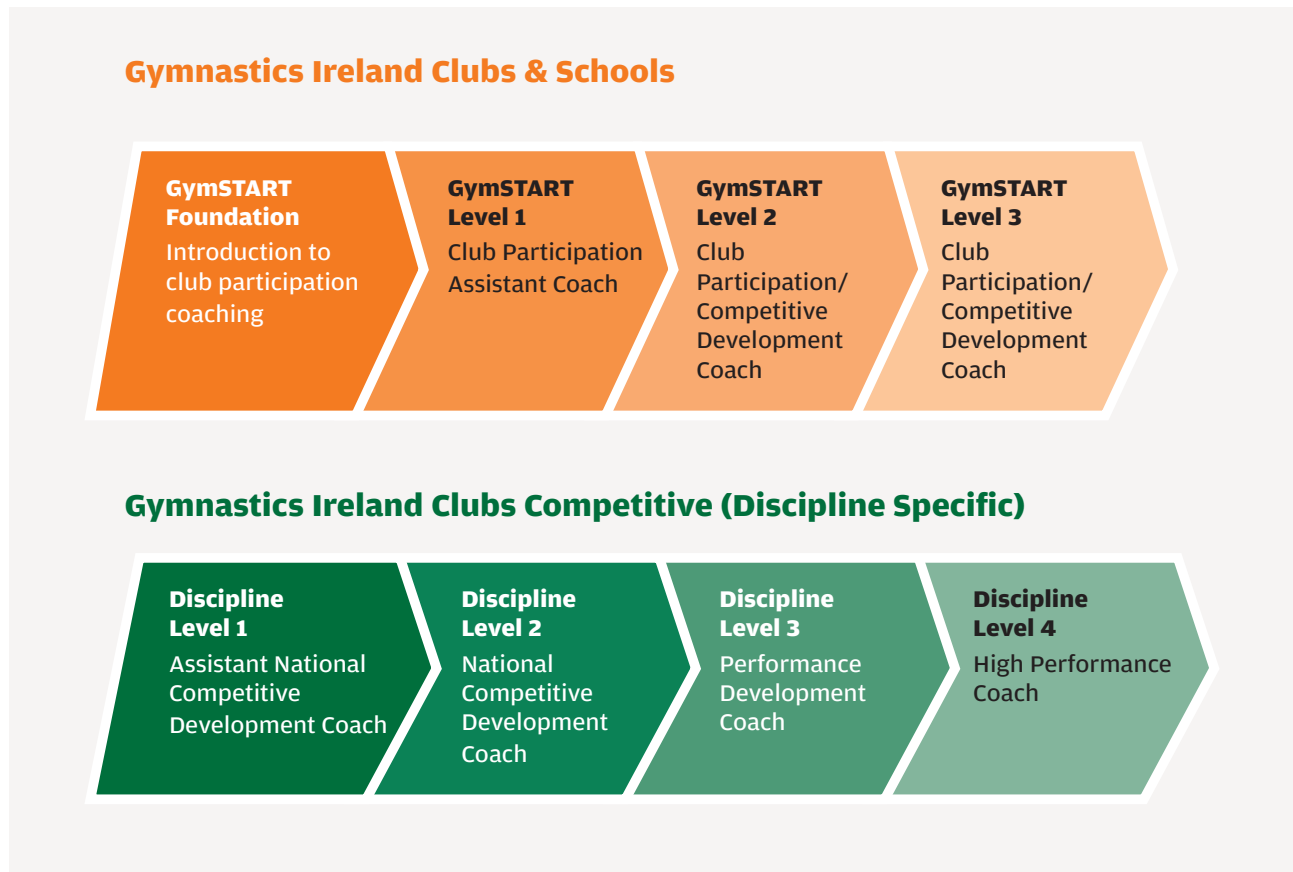
- **The various discipline sections of the Gymnastics Ireland website**

 [CLICK HERE](#)

2.6.1 Coach Education

The coaching qualifications members gain at each level, across each discipline are specific to educating and developing coaches that are coaching gymnasts from competitive development through to competitive performance levels within all our clubs.

Coach Education Pathway



The coach education programme will continue to qualify, support and mentor coaches through the discipline specific coaching pathway. The pathway consists of five levels of coach education courses that includes: Foundation Level, Level 1 (Assistant Coach), Level 2 (Competitive Development Coach), Level 3 (Performance Development Coach) and Level 4 (High Performance Coach).

GymSTART Foundation

- A new foundation-level coaching course will serve as the first entry point for every candidate beginning their coaching journey through the discipline specific coaching pathway.
- It will provide candidates as young as 15 with a foundation level of coaching that will allow them to get involved in coaching support within a club recreational gymnastics programme.
- We aim to retain current/retiring gymnasts by providing them with an early pathway into a coaching role within their club.

Level 1 – The Assistant Coach

- The Level 1 discipline specific coaching courses are delivered for candidates aged 16 and above.
- Candidates qualify to be an assistant coach in their club allowing coaches to support and develop the skills within the syllabus for participants in their club to enjoy and have fun.
- Assist participants to develop the skills required to compete at specific developmental levels of competition.

Level 2 – The Competitive Development Coach

- The Level 2 coaching courses are delivered for coaches aged 18 and above.
- A level 2 qualification is the second stage of the coaching pathway and will enable coaches to work independently to help participants develop their skills, strength, and co-ordination.
- Coaches can lead their own sessions, mentor, and oversee fellow coaches. A Level 2 qualification is the minimum level of qualification required to operate a club.
- A coach at this level can also help participants develop the skills required to compete at specific levels at national competitions.

Level 3 – The Performance Development Coach

- The Level 3 coaching courses provides adult coaches with the responsibility for an individual, group, class, or club when coaching skills within the syllabus.
- The course is made up of a coaching theory module and a series of technical modules which together make up the complete Level 3 qualification.

- The Level 3 coaching theory qualification has been designed to provide coaches with the skills and understanding to support participants through a competition training cycle. Candidates develop the skills to evaluate, analyse and implement a training plan using a wide range of tools.
- Each of the Level 3 technical modules cover the technical aspects of the syllabus and how to support progress and physically prepare participants for the skills covered within the syllabus.

Level 4 – The High Performance Coach

- The Level 4 course is to qualify and support candidates who are working at a high-performance level.
- It provides coaches with the skills and expertise to achieve excellence on an international level.
- It enables coaches to develop the skills to coach the latest trends and techniques, and work with ambitious participants who want to compete nationally and on the world stage.

For further information on coaching courses and specific levels of competition that coaches are qualified to attend please see:

The Gymnastics Ireland Coaching Policy

 [CLICK HERE](#)

The coaches section of the Gymnastics Ireland website

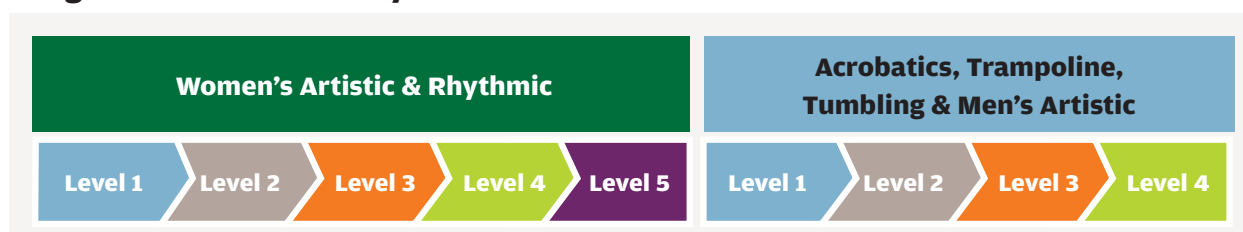
 [CLICK HERE](#)

2.6.2 Judge Education

Introduction

The Judge Education programme covers all FIG competitive disciplines and ensures that the process of accreditation for courses, delivery of courses, the assessment of judges and accreditation of qualifications is efficiently administered and managed. The judge education pathway outlines each level of judging across all disciplines from entry point level to high performance judging. Our judging policy provides full detail for each level of course and the requirements needed to qualify/judge at specific levels of competition.

Judge Education Pathway



Women's Artistic & Rhythmic

Level 1 - 3:

- Entry to development level
- Early stages on the Judges pathway with potential to progress

Level 4:

- Development to performance level
- Provides judging support for: Level 1 - 3 Women's Artistic & Rhythmic and Level 1 - 2 Acrobatics, Trampoline, Tumbling & Men's Artistic
- Judges at all national competitive/National Series events
- Judges in international selection trials where required
- Potential to progress to Level 5 International Brevet Judge

Level 5:

- Senior judge within the national programme
- National & International performance level
- Educator for lower judging levels
- Direct involvement in international selection policy/process
- Technical input for national squad system
- Judge at International competitive events

Acrobatics, Trampoline, Tumbling & Men's Artistic

Level 1 - 2:

- Entry to development level
- Early stages on the Judges pathway with potential to progress

Level 3:

- Development to performance level
- Provides judging support for Level 1 - 2 Acrobatics, Trampoline, Tumbling & Men's Artistic
- Judges at all national competitive/National Series events
- Judges in international selection trials where required
- Potential to progress to Level 4 International Brevet Judge

Level 4:

- Senior judge within the national programme
- National and International performance level
- Educator for lower judging levels
- Direct involvement in international selection policy/process
- Technical input for national squad system
- Judge at International competitive events

Details of each discipline, specifically judging course, can be found in the Gymnastics Ireland Judging Course Policy – to view full policy: [CLICK HERE](#)

2.6.3 Discipline Events

‘The National Series’



The National Series is Gymnastics Ireland's competitive events programme for the six gymnastics disciplines in Ireland namely Men's Artistic, Women's Artistic, Rhythmic, Trampoline, Tumbling and Acrobatics.

The National Series programme encompasses all national level competitive gymnastics events throughout the year, including:

- National Series Qualifiers
- National Series All-Around Championships
- National Series Super Championships (Apparatus Finals)
- National Series Team Championships
- National Series Super Camp

For further information on National Series events and how the events relate to the Gymnastics Ireland High Performance system please see:

The National Series section of the Gymnastics Ireland website



The Gymnastics Ireland High Performance Strategy 2024 & 2028



The various discipline specific National Development Plans (NDPs)



Where are we now?

Coaching

- Delivering regular Level 1, 2 and 3 coaching courses to meet demand within the club network.
- Rolling out a Foundation Level coaching course to be used as an entry point into the discipline specific coaching pathway.
- Developing a new Level 4 coaching course for high-performance coaching.
- Delivering webinars on topics that support/compliment all levels of discipline specific qualified coaches.

Judging

- Delivering regular judging courses to meet demand within the club network.
- Supporting qualified judges at National Series events.
- Operating a revalidation process for every Olympic cycle where we continue to deliver courses and accredit judges active within the system.
- Talent ID'ing judges who demonstrate ability to progress through the judging pathway towards international level and involving their technical input within the national squad system and international competition selection.

Where do we want to be?

Coaching

- Delivering Foundation Level coaching courses to candidates as young as 15 years old throughout all regions of the country.
- Delivering Level 4 coaching courses to educate and qualify more high-performance coaches for individuals who display the ability.
- Increase number of qualified discipline specific coaches by 30%.
- Ensuring delivery of courses is as accessible as possible utilising IT solutions where possible.
- Develop a new coach mentor program across all clubs to support coaches through their coaching journey.
- Create and deliver more workshops, webinars and conferences that support coaches as part a new Continuous Professional Development system (see section 5).

Judging

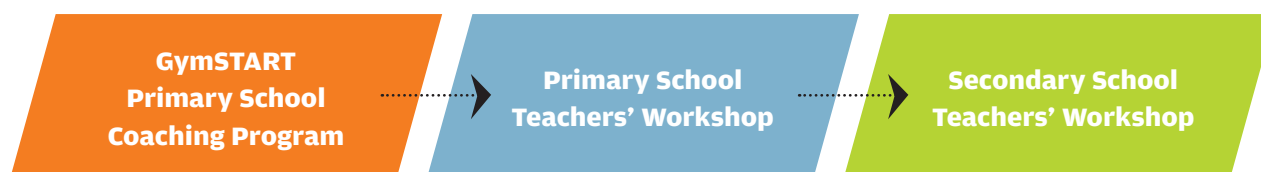
- Increase number of qualified judges by 30%.
- Continued development of the mentor program that includes support for newly qualified judges to help retention plus encourage individuals progress through the pathway.
- Develop additional judge education support workshops for coaches and qualified judges during each Olympic cycle.
- Develop and deliver new judging courses specifically for judging at GymSTART events.
- Ensuring delivery of courses is as accessible as possible utilising IT solutions where possible.

2.7 Schools/3rd Level

2.7.1 Introduction

Gymnastics is a curriculum sport for primary and secondary schools and we aim to support the growth of participation in schools and delivery of the curriculum by providing educational and coaching programs for students teachers, schools and universities through our GymSTART programme. The growth and development of creating gymnastics participation in schools is based around a child centred approach where the focus is on fun, enjoyment, inclusion, developing fundamental skills and creating awareness around physical literacy.

2.7.2 Education



Primary School – Teachers' Workshop

- We deliver primary school teachers' workshops that will support candidates in teaching gymnastics within a primary school environment. The workshops are available for all teachers and teaching assistants who hold a formal teaching qualification or for candidates working towards teaching qualifications at university level.

Secondary School – Teachers' Workshop

- We have developed and will deliver new secondary school teachers' workshops that will support candidates in teaching gymnastics within a secondary school environment. The workshops will be available for all teachers and teaching assistants who hold a formal teaching qualification or for candidates working towards teaching qualifications at university level.

- To support this programme, we aim to educate primary school teachers through the primary school teachers workshop (see above).

Where are we now?

- Piloted a successful Primary Schools' project in conjunction with Cork LSP targeted at primary school-aged students (1st, 2nd, 3rd class).
- Regularly engaging with Department of Education initiatives e.g., the Active School Flag (ASF) program, which are supported by Healthy Ireland and part of the National Physical Activity Plan.
- Currently delivering primary school teacher workshops through LSP's across the country.

Where do we want to be?

- Delivering the Primary Schools' coaching programme in conjunction with all LSP's nationwide to primary school-aged students (1st, 2nd, 3rd class).
- Continue to engage the Department of Education and associated organizations such as the PEAI, the PDST and other teacher support services.
- Delivering an increase of 50% more GymSTART primary school workshops and introducing secondary school workshops nationwide to teachers and 3rd level teaching students.

2.7.3 Programming

GymSTART Primary School – Coaching Program

- We aim to deliver a primary school gymnastics coaching program nationwide in association with all Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs). The aim of the programme is to introduce 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class primary school children (boys, girls & mixed) to the sport of gymnastics in a supportive & fun environment.

2.8 Other continental/Global initiatives

2.8.1 FIG/EG Education

FIG & European Gymnastics provide a series of educational supports which Gymnastics Ireland regularly engages with as a member federation of both. These include:

- The FIG Academy Programme
- Discipline specific training camps
- Education symposiums
- Technical webinars

More information can be found via:

[FIG – Education \(gymnastics.sport\)](#)
www.europeangymnastics.com

2.8.2 FIG Gymnastics for All (GfA)

Gymnastics for All is the FIG's participation focussed discipline which focusses on four pillars:

- 1. Fun**
- 2. Fitness**
- 3. Fundamentals**
- 4. Friendship**

The discipline centres around two signature mass participation events:

- The World Gymnaestrada
- The World Gym for Life Challenge

Both events are held at four-year intervals with an alternating timetable ensuring there is an international participation event every two years.

Gymnastics Ireland provides a pathway to each of these mass participation events through GymSTART and 'The Floor'.

For more information on FIG Gymnastics for All



[CLICK HERE](#)

Section 3

New Programs/Initiatives & target groups

Global participation in gymnastics tends to vary between 60-70% female participation and 30-40% male. By comparison Gymnastics Ireland's membership base is approx. 80-85% female. The variance here can be attributed to the historic strength of field sports for male participants in Ireland, in addition to the fact that gymnastics as an Irish sport has only really developed to its recent position of prominence over a relatively short time period of the last 10-12 years. While we are now one of the largest participation sports in Ireland our sport is relatively new in terms of its establishment in the consciousness of Irish sporting culture with the gymnastics club now very much a fixture in urban and rural communities nationwide. It is therefore not surprising that our membership base is also largely child/youth based.

While we will continue to grow and cater for our large female membership base, going forward we will also be specifically targeting programmes/initiatives that can assist us in attracting more male members in addition to retaining our child/youth based members through to active participation during adult and later life years. We believe the following programmes/initiatives in addition to those already in operation will drive this push.

3.1 TeamGym

TeamGym is a discipline that was developed by European Gymnastics and is growing in popularity within the continent, particularly within Scandinavian nations. It takes various elements from the traditional gymnastics disciplines and combines them to create an entertaining and inclusive team competition format. TeamGym has proven particularly effective at attracting and retaining youth and adult participants, it has also proven effective as a discipline in attracting/retaining male participants.

TeamGym | European Gymnastics

Where do we want to be?

- Develop, launch and roll-out a national education and development plan for the discipline.
- Target key interested clubs to support establishment of local club TeamGym programmes.
- Pilot TeamGym test events as part of wider National Series event programme.

3.2 Parkour/Free-running/Urban Gymnastics

Originating on the streets, Parkour can be summed up as the art of getting from one point to another by respecting one key principle: efficiency and fluidity. As the newest member of the global gymnastics discipline family the FIG has been working to establish & roll-out an education, development and events structure that could see Parkour take its place beside the traditional gymnastics' disciplines within the Olympic programme.

In the context of FIG development Parkour is designed for a club-based environment through bespoke equipment constructions consisting of a variety of blocks, walls and bars designed to mirror the different obstacles found in urban areas. To overcome them, athletes must make use of a range of techniques, such as the cat leap (saut de chat), arm jump (saut de bras), drop jump (saut de fond) and wall run (passe-muraille).

There are two categories: Speed and Freestyle. In the Speed event, athletes must overcome obstacles as quickly as possible to reach the finish line in the quickest time. In the Freestyle event, athletes make use of the obstacles to show off their style and creativity as their technical performance is judged.

As the discipline format develops and establishes itself within the FIG, Gymnastics Ireland will see to roll-out an education, development & events programme for the discipline that will focus on establishing parkour safely within our club network while providing a national events structure that will act as a pathway into the international parkour events structure. Given the huge popularity of Parkour/Free running globally and given that it tends to attract strong youth/young adult male participation we believe this discipline will help grow the male and adult membership within Gymnastics Ireland.

FIG – Disciplines ([gymnastics.sport](https://www.gymnastics.sport))

Where do we want to be?

- Develop, launch and roll-out a national education and development plan for the discipline.
- Target key interested clubs to support establishment of local club Parkour programmes.
- Pilot Parkour test events as part of wider National Series event programme.

3.3 Older Adult /Later-life Gymnastics

At the very basic level gymnastics is about body movement. Globally there have been some excellent research and development programmes rolled-out utilising basic gymnastics movement-based work to assist with general later-life fitness and treatment for more specific conditions. We aim to proceed with a research driven approach to developing our own gymnastics-based programmes in this area to ensure we can truly claim to provide programmes for participants of all ages.

Where do we want to be?

- Develop, launch and roll-out a national education and development plan for later-life years.

We aim to proceed with a research driven approach to developing our own gymnastics-based programmes in this area to ensure we can truly claim to provide programmes for participants of all ages.

3.4 Women in Sport

As stated earlier, Gymnastics Ireland's membership base is 80-85% female and predominantly child/youth based. We therefore run one of the largest 360 sport programmes for females in Ireland. Retainment of young girls through teenage to adult participation in sport remains a societal issue around the world and this is no different for Gymnastics Ireland. We wish to ensure that as we continue to grow, we bring our huge community of young girls with us and that they continue through a life-long active engagement with our sport.

Where do we want to be?

- Engaged in active annual research regarding women in sport to shape our programme developments across all areas from education through to events.
- Continue to grow our large female membership base in line with global participation rates within our sport.
- Increase the age profile of female gymnasts within our membership base through key retainment strategies/programmes developed from credible research.

Section 4

E-Learning/accessibility

Gymnastics Ireland will continue to invest in IT solutions such as utilising Learning Management Systems (LMS), video conferencing & streaming systems to ensure our education courses, webinars etc. are as accessible as possible and support the training needs for all Gymnastics Ireland programmes.

Section 5

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is an important process and commitment coaches should make to remain up to date and broaden their knowledge and skills. Engaging in regular CPD will ensure coaches deliver quality gymnastics programmes and can provide more breadth to their existing qualifications, which will allow them to offer more to the gymnasts.

Gymnastics Ireland will deliver educational CPD via:

- **Education Courses**
- **Workshops**
- **Webinars**
- **Coaching Conferences**

Catering to coaches from participation through to performance coaching levels will cover some of the following areas:

- **Sports Psychology (applied by coaches and gymnasts)**
- **Strength and Conditioning**
- **Diet & Nutrition**
- **Physiotherapy – Injury Prevention**
- **Safeguarding and Gymnast Welfare**
- **Anti-Doping**
- **Club Management/ System Operation**
- **Women in Sport**
- **Inclusion**
- **Coaching Disabilities**
- **Positive Coaching**
- **Performance Analysis**
- **Other relevant areas**

Gymnastics Ireland CPD System

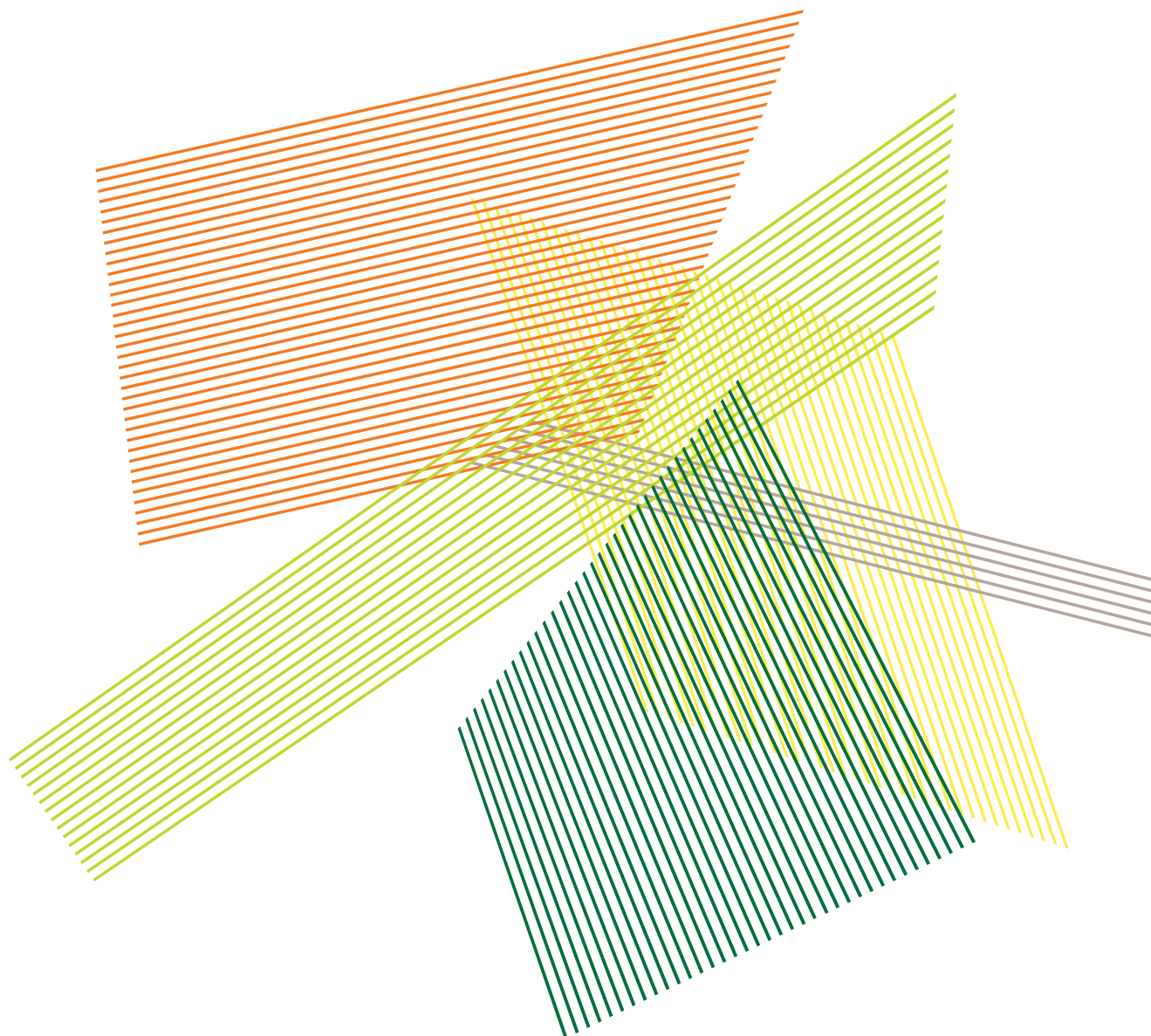
Gymnastics Ireland will operate a CPD system that will be based on the accumulation of credits on an annual basis. A minimum number of credits will be required annually by a coach wishing to remain active.

The CPD credits can be gained through attendance on recognised courses, webinars, workshops, or conferences. The number of credits required and the time frame for completion will be specific to the level of qualification. All active coaches must ensure CPD target credits are met within the defined timeframe to ensure qualification is valid.

The completion of attendance at CPD events and further relevant coach education courses is an ongoing process and will therefore enhance the competence of our coaches, as well as their own career in coaching. This will help ensure that all coaches maintain, or even improve the knowledge and skills required to deliver the best possible service to our gymnasts. Completing CPD will therefore mean that coaching knowledge stays up to date and informed of the latest trends within the sport of gymnastics.

Full information on the Gymnastics Ireland CPD system is available through the Gymnastics Ireland Coaching Policy

 [CLICK HERE](#)



Section 6

Club Development/Support

As per the Strategic plan 2021-2024 one of the key strategic areas identified is Club Development. We need to support current clubs to be able to grow and encourage new clubs to start-up. Our supports will focus on the following areas:

- **Rebuilding post Covid-19**
- **Growing membership in current clubs (including male & adult participation)**
- **Helping current clubs to expand**
- **Setting up new clubs**
- **Supporting club coach/staff recruitment, education and development**
- **Communicating effectively with our clubs**
- **Supporting gymnastics clubs as community-based sports businesses**
- **Enabling clubs to engage with partners at local level (Local Sports Partnerships, Local Authorities, politicians, potential commercial partners etc.)**

We need to support current clubs to be able to grow and encourage new clubs to start-up.

During this timeframe of this strategy Gymnastics Ireland will develop and roll-out a new club development strategy which will include the allocation of resources (people/staff, financial & other) to drive the same.

Section 7

Mass participation events/ Trade Shows and Expos/ Conferences and Symposiums

Gymnastics Ireland has made excellent progress in recent years regarding the development and roll-out of various events, programmes and initiatives. Going forward we will investigate the hosting of mass participation events, large scale trade shows, expos, conferences & symposiums as part of a wider Gymnastics Ireland events strategy.

Section 8

Staffing

In order to deliver in relation to the wide variety of programmes in operation and planned for the future Gymnastics Ireland will continue to invest in full-time & part-time staff, 3rd party contractors in addition to working with volunteers in order to deliver for the needs of our members and partners.

Section 9

Finance

Gymnastics Ireland will seek to secure programme/initiative start-up and development investment through a variety of sources which include:

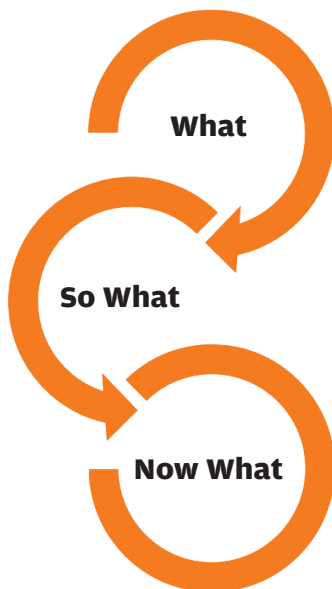
- **Sport Ireland and Irish government department funding**
- **Commercially generated membership revenues**
- **EU funding/International Funding**
- **Sponsorship/Commercial investment**
- **Philanthropy**

While we will seek to secure investment for start-up and development of programmes they will be designed to be financially self-sustaining to ensure the long term success of each.

Section 10

Monitoring, Review & Improvement

Gymnastics Ireland will set key performance indicator (KPI) targets as part of the annual company operational plan. These KPIs will be set in-line with the stated end-of-plan objectives/targets as outlined in each previous 'Where do we want to be' section. We will also complete an end-of-strategy review to inform subsequent strategy developments. In doing so our approach will be as follows:



- WHAT HAPPENED?
- DESCRIPTION AND FACTS

- WHAT WAS THE EXPERIENCE?
- INTREPRETATION
- THE FEELINGS INVOLVED
- WHAT WAS LEARNED

- WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?
- SEEING THE BIGGER PICTURE
- APPLYING THE LESSONS LEARNT
- PLANNING THE FUTURE ACTION



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