



Australian Government



# Australian Sports Diplomacy Strategy

2015-18



**Sports diplomacy is an increasingly important aspect of diplomatic practice and a growing part of the global sports industry. Sport is a universal language and plays a unique role in shaping and showcasing Australia's identity, values and culture.**

**The values of sport—competition, teamwork and fair play—help build trust between countries and bring people together.**

# INTRODUCTION

Australia has a remarkable international sporting pedigree and is internationally recognised as a consistent, high-performing sporting nation. This recognition extends to Australia's domestic system in community, development, and high performance sport.

Planning and delivering major sporting events is a global growth sector and Australia's enviable track record in creating and hosting successful, premier sporting events means the country is well-placed to take advantage of this. Real opportunities exist for Australian expertise and capability in all stages of the major sporting event life-cycle, including: bidding; planning; event staging services; operations and management; cultural ceremonies; and venue design and construction.

Australia has potential to capitalise further on its full suite of sporting credentials by engaging with neighbouring countries and achieving public diplomacy outcomes in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Sports diplomacy provides a practical opportunity to inform, engage and influence key demographics, particularly youth, emerging leaders and women and girls. Through the Australian diaspora in the region and Indo-Pacific communities living in Australia, the influence of sports diplomacy can extend to broader audiences than traditional diplomacy activities allow.

Australia's sports diplomacy strategy is a whole-of-government approach that will maximise people-to-people links, development, cultural, trade, investment, education and tourism opportunities.

The strategy focuses on the goals of connecting, developing, showcasing and sustaining new and existing channels of sports support, sports industry partnerships and international sports networks. It will establish Australia's sports 'brand' in the Indo-Pacific region. It will also demonstrate that Australia is outward looking and 'open for business' in the sports arena.

The strategy's implementation is being guided by a working group co-chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Department of Health's Office for Sport. The Office for Sport has an established framework for promoting and developing national sport policy to complement the Australian Government's sports diplomacy activities offshore.

## Vision

Smart sports diplomacy, effectively delivered, connecting people

## Mission

Growing the value and influence of Australia's sport credentials and assets in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond

## Implementing the strategy

- DFAT will provide the central coordination point for all sports diplomacy activity across the Australian Government. To ensure a complementary approach and best utilise capabilities across government, respective agencies will be responsible for strategy implementation through cross-agency collaboration and external partner engagement.
- Overseas posts, in conjunction with DFAT in Canberra, will play a crucial role in sports diplomacy, providing local context, engagement and in-country ownership. Austrade posts such as Japan, Korea, Brazil, Russia, Peru and the Middle East will pursue specific major sporting event trade objectives around summer and winter Olympics and World Cups.
- Sporting organisations, including all relevant and recognised national, regional and umbrella sporting bodies, will play a pivotal role in the design and implementation of sports diplomacy activities. These organisations include Australian national sporting organisations, Olympic committees and domestic and regional sports organisations.
- Sports diplomacy initiatives will focus on the Indo-Pacific region, with activities occurring in other regions based on the strategic objectives of the Australian Government. Initiatives will be delivered through grants, funding agreements and outsource mechanisms with sports industry partners.
- DFAT will align its internal sports diplomacy-related activities to complement the sports diplomacy strategic goals and maximise accessibility to sports industry partners. The initial focus for greater alignment will be on the Australian Volunteers for International Development program, the Direct Aid Program, grants from the International Relations Grants Program (Foundations, Councils and Institutes) and the Australian Sports Outreach Program.
- Sports diplomacy communications will include a focus on ownership and leadership of sports diplomacy by the sports industry and the ongoing education of government and non-government organisations about Australia's sports diplomacy goals.
- Sports diplomacy programs will evolve under an evidence-based approach. Specific metrics to measure impact will include: advocacy; media; visits; business matches; sponsorships; pro bono support; events; and program exchange data collection (including sport participation rates for women and girls in target countries). Existing data sets, such as Tourism Australia's visitor data that includes arrival and expenditure data, will also provide information on broader aspects of sports tourism, effectiveness and reach.
- All proposed programs under this sports diplomacy strategy will be designed and implemented to ensure they are complementary. This approach will extend to both the agencies and sports partners involved, recognising that some partners will be working across multiple sports diplomacy programs within each of the strategy's four goals. While maximising positive outcomes through the national sporting organisations, the Australian Government will also work to ensure that program governance arrangements include appropriate risk management and ensure that those participating are safeguarded against undue risks.



## Connecting people and institutions

Australia is internationally recognised for its highly effective domestic sports system. An integral part of Australia's success in sport comes from its long-term investment in people and development of technical expertise. Countries in the region are interested in developing their sports systems and see Australia as a highly desirable partner.

Australia can benefit from its sporting profile and 'know how' to connect and engage with the people and institutions of the Indo-Pacific region.

### Australia's strategy is to:

Connect by supporting reciprocal, people-to-people connections that promote partnerships of value between Australia and the region, through sport. This includes exchanging sporting expertise and pursuing professional development and mentoring opportunities.

- **Sports Exchange Australia**—This new program will support exchanges of administrators, coaches, officials and athletes to provide sports knowledge, leadership and skills exchange between Australia and countries in the region. The program will foster reciprocal links and promote partnerships between regional and national sporting organisations and sports industry bodies. The program will complement and link to existing sports exchange initiatives within the region and foster international relationships through Australia's sports network. Exchanges will be led by Australian sport practitioners and include people from developed and developing countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

- **Australian Sports Fellowships**—This program will support sporting organisations and tertiary institutions to host fellows and scholars from the region for sport-related professional development and educational placements in Australia. The program will extend Australia's commitment to international education through sport, and allow Australia to take a lead in developing the region's future sports leaders.
- **The Sports Leaders Mentoring Program**—This program will provide mentoring and networking through the Australian sports network and private sector partners to develop emerging leaders in sports business, administration, and sports technical development. The program will establish mentoring opportunities with high-level counterpart leaders in Australia; will have a focus on the development of female sports leaders; and will target expatriate Australian sports industry experts and athletes for mentoring activities.



## Enhancing sport for development

Sport can be an excellent vehicle to achieve development outcomes. Sport for development programs help address the primary risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases and support people with disability by improving the quality of their lives by increasing their inclusion in society.

Sport for development can also improve social cohesion by bringing people in communities together in a positive way, engaging young people and helping them learn important life skills including leadership, teamwork, respecting rules, discipline and perseverance.

Developing people through sport achieves high-quality development outcomes and is an effective form of public diplomacy.

Australia is regarded as a world leader in using sport to help developing countries achieve positive results in their communities. Since the Australian Sports Outreach Program started in the Pacific region in 2006, Australia has been able to engage communities on important issues such as social inclusion, health, governance and education. The Australian Government will continue the Pacific Sports Partnerships program to 2017.

Building on the Australian Sports Outreach Program's track record of achievement, Australia's sports diplomacy strategy will capitalise on existing sports partnerships with other countries and expand high quality, high-impact sport for development programs into the broader Indo-Pacific region.

Sport for development programs will also provide capacity development opportunities with in-country managers (supported by sporting organisations) and specific sport volunteers. This enhanced program will target activities for emerging leaders, youth, and women and girls.

### Australia's strategy is to:

Enhance development and public diplomacy activities by providing high quality, high-impact sport for development programs that link identified development outcomes with Australia's diplomatic goals.

Australia will create an expanded sport for development initiative in the Indo-Pacific region through:

- **Pacific Sports Partnerships**—This program will partner Australian and regional sports organisations in the Pacific to deliver targeted sport for development activities. Australia will build on the success of the program by piloting support for current partners and identified sports to expand into the Asian region. Supported activities will address regional and country-specific development and diplomacy objectives. This program will also encourage supplementary and/or private funding opportunities and corporate social responsibility programs to enhance sustainability and ownership.
- **Sports Volunteers Australia**—This program will provide high-quality sports volunteers to help improve the capacity of sports organisations and develop people-to-people links in developing countries across the Indo-Pacific region. This program will provide quality volunteer support for existing sports partners in targeted developing countries.



## Showcasing Australia

Australia is known for its international sporting success in the elite arena, including its ability to create and host major sporting events. This profile has shaped how the world views Australia—both as a sporting nation and as a people. Sport contributes between 2.5 per cent and 3 per cent to the gross domestic product of most developed economies (Australian Sports Commission, 2013).

Australia's expertise spans across a range of sectors in the life-cycle of a major sporting event, including: event bidding; venue design and construction; event management and operations; culture and ceremonies; and product design and supply. Australia also boasts a depth of capability around sports medicine and nutrition and is globally renowned for developing innovative technologies in sports.

Australia's investment in sporting success has provided an export capability beyond the Indo-Pacific region and into a number of key markets including China, Brazil, Japan, Korea, Russia, Peru, the Middle East and North Africa.

### Australia's strategy is to:

Showcase and support Australian sporting capabilities by expanding and coordinating sports diplomacy activity around major events and sharing and promoting Australian sports and economic capability beyond the region, into Asia and the Middle East.

Australia will showcase the depth of its capability, support bilateral relationships and promote Australia through:

- **Match Australia**—The Australian Government's international sports business program will enhance economic and bilateral relations through major sporting events. This program will be managed and implemented by Austrade. DFAT will coordinate with Austrade to align sports diplomacy with the economic diplomacy agenda and draw on business networks and the sports industry to

leverage commercial opportunities for targeted sporting events. In addition, DFAT will assist sport partner organisations to implement a strategic and coordinated approach to foreign engagement around targeted sporting events in Australia and overseas. This will enable sports to leverage promotion and link opportunities to major events.

- **The Major Sporting Events Taskforce**—This will coordinate Australian Government involvement in identified major international events in Australia, capitalise on an international reputation for hosting major sporting events, and leverage the economic opportunities associated with such events and the ongoing legacy in areas such as trade, tourism and investment.
- **International Media Visits**—This program will use sport to promote Australia's engagement with the region and generate accurate and well-informed international media reporting on Australia. The program will be expanded to target sports journalists and editors with a focus on Australia's hosting of major events. The program will include senior and respected sports journalists as well as younger, mid-career journalists with strong future career prospects.
- **Sports Envoy**—This program will use high-profile sports people to promote Australia through trade missions, Ministerial-led business missions, Match Australia activities, and targeted sports diplomacy initiatives. This new program will maximise the success and promotion power of domestic and diaspora sports talent through existing partnerships between the Australian Government and national sporting organisations.



## Supporting innovation and integrity

Australia's sports industry and educational institutions have significant and well-established connections with their Indo-Pacific counterparts. These relationships encompass a range of activities, from reciprocal hosting arrangements through to sports investment partnerships in education, training and development.

As the sports industry becomes more globalised, Australia's sports innovation and partnering capability offers a strategic advantage in linking with other countries in our region.

### Australia's strategy is to:

Sustain Australia's sporting advantage by supporting innovative sports projects and partnerships between Australia and the Indo-Pacific region.

Australia will foster an innovative and sustainable approach to engaging with the Indo-Pacific region and support sports integrity through:

- **Sports Innovation Australia**—This new, seed-funding program for sports organisations will establish sports education, business and science initiatives between the Australian sports industry and countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Start-up pilot grants will encourage ongoing sports collaboration between Australian and overseas organisations around innovative sport initiatives. Funding will focus on innovation, sustainability and the promotion of public private partnerships, identified from existing sport partner activity.

- **Sports Memorandums of Understanding**—This initiative will establish government-to-government sports agreements to advance Australia's skills capability in sport-related fields and promote Australia's collaborative relationship with the Indo-Pacific region. MoUs will be based on mutually beneficial sports engagement with identified countries and provide an opportunity to bring all relevant initiatives with another country into a single and coordinated strategy for sports cooperation.
- **The Sports Integrity Program**—This program will provide oversight, monitoring and coordination to advance and protect the integrity of sport in Australia. With a particular focus on doping, match fixing and corruption, the Australian Government will work with like-minded nations to develop best practice in consistent and effective approaches to protect the integrity of sport. Where possible, program activities will fall under the Australian Government Sports MoU initiative.



## Portfolio agencies



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

[www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au)



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



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