

Internship Programme Guidelines

The Programme

This document outlines the PM Athlete Scholarship internship programme, including who is eligible, how athletes apply, how internships are matched and funded, and how applications are assessed.

HPSNZ helps athletes prepare for their post-sport careers by working with employer partners to provide flexible, paid work experience opportunities. Up to 10 internship scholarships are available each year.

The HPSNZ Internship Lead will work with successful candidates to match them with an employer partner and establish the internship.

Applications

- Applications are open from 1 October to 30 October 2026.
- A limited number of applications may be considered outside the usual cohort application period in extenuating circumstances, on a case-by-case basis, if the programme budget allows.
- Athletes apply via the Microsoft Forms link on the PM Scholarship page of the HPSNZ website.
- Shortlisted athletes will have a 45-minute online interview with a three-person panel, including one external panel member.
- Athletes provide the following supporting documents:
 1. CV
 2. Cover letter
 3. NSO endorsement form
 4. Calendar with sport and life commitments for the period you are intending to do your internship
 5. Career plan summary template

The NSO endorsement form and Career Plan Summary template are available to download from the Useful Links section of the PM Scholarship page on the [HPSNZ website](#).

Eligibility

- Current TAPS supported athletes
- Athletes within their 6-month TAPS transition support
- If continuing in sport, athletes must remain in an HPSNZ-supported sport and must not be transitioning to a non-supported sport.
- Applicants should have either an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification, or equivalent experience aligned to their career plan.
- Before applying, applicants are expected to have developed a career plan and identified target employer partner organisations and role types with their Performance Life Coach or Personal Development Manager.

Internship scholarships

- 10 scholarships of up to \$15,000 awarded each year
- Employer partners are asked to contribute 50% of the cost of employing the athlete, with HPSNZ contributing the remaining 50%.
- Additional funding is available for one not-for-profit employer partner each year. HPSNZ may pay up to \$30,000 to cover athlete remuneration, with no cost to the employer partner.
- Employer partners pay the athlete and invoice HPSNZ for their contribution
- Internships are for up to 12 months, and athletes have 18 months to access the funds. Funds can be used from 1 January to 30 June the following year.
- The hourly rate is negotiated between the employer partner and the Internship Lead, ensuring it is appropriate for the role and sits within the internship budget.
- Although all endeavours will be made to find an internship position, HPSNZ cannot guarantee this or predict how long the matching process may take.

Placing athletes

- The Internship Lead works with athletes to find an organisation aligned with their career plan, using the athlete's employer partner target list, the programme employer network, and the athlete's own networks.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) forms the agreement between all three parties and includes the internship role details, hourly rate, days of work, and responsibilities of each party.
- The MoU specifies whether the athlete is a fixed term employee or contractor
- The athlete completes a Learning Objectives document, which is shared with the employer partner and used to check progress.
- The Internship Lead meets regularly with the athlete and employer partner to ensure the internship is meeting needs and expectations. Meetings are usually monthly with the athlete and bi-monthly with the employer, depending on the length of the internship.

Key Dates

1 October – applications open

30 October – applications close at 5pm

4–6 November – shortlisted athletes will be advised

6–13 November – shortlisted applicants interviewed

16–19 November – decisions communicated

1–15 December – internship cohort online induction

1–15 December – Internship Lead meets with successful applicants to review the target organisation list and agree which organisations to approach.

Selection Criteria

Internship is a good fit for the athlete: ▪ Athlete readiness and commitment to undertake an internship and the related cohort shared learning opportunities. ▪ Positive impact on athlete development and wellbeing ▪ Athlete in final year or recently completed tertiary qualification/training or alternative pathway aligned to career plan ▪ Demonstrated compliance and commitment with the PM Scholarship programme	20%
Internship alignment to sport campaign, career path, training and education (unless on break or retired/in transition)	15%
Employment opportunity that fits with their sport/life/career plan	15%
Athlete would not otherwise have an internship opportunity	10%
Diverse representation across successful applicants	10%
Diverse sport representation across successful applicants	10%
Geographical spread of athletes – regions represented	10%
Potential positive future impact on community	10%

PM Scholarship guidelines selection priority

Demonstrates good record of past PM Athlete Scholarship compliance. Adherence to the programme's athlete requirements	Potential positive impact on HPSNZ Vision, particularly by way of international sporting results Ability to adhere to the programme's athlete requirements	Positive impact on HPSNZ Vision, particularly by way of international sporting results and alignment with key strategic priorities including: Athlete Pathway Wellbeing & Engagement
Past international sporting results		

The key selection criteria may not be weighed evenly, and other selection criteria may be considered.

Selection priorities

HPSNZ Podium Sports will have priority. In special cases, Aspirational Sports may be considered.

1. Elite - HPSNZ Podium Sports
2. Elite - HPSNZ Aspirational Sports.
3. Potential - HPSNZ Podium Sports.
4. Potential - HPSNZ Aspirational Sports
5. Confirmation - HPSNZ Podium Sports
6. Confirmation - HPSNZ Aspirational Sports

*For team sports only Elite level (Black shirt, senior NZ team) TAPS athletes are eligible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You must be a New Zealand citizen, HPSNZ supported athlete and adhere to Schedule 3 of PM Scholarship Guidelines (link on PM Athlete Scholarship page on HPSNZ website)

Priority will be given to athletes who have recently completed or are in their final year of their tertiary qualification/training or alternative experience.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE INTERNSHIP?

HPSNZ contributes up to \$15,000 towards the internship remuneration. Employer partners are asked to match this amount.

Each year there is provision for one not-for-profit employer partnership where HPSNZ will provide up to \$30,000 towards the athlete internship.

Hourly rates will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNSHIP?

The length of the internship and structure of when the work is performed, based around sporting commitments, will be agreed between athlete, Performance Life Coach/PDM and Prime Minister's Athlete Scholarship (PMAS) Internship Lead.

The PMAS Internship Lead will negotiate with the partner organisation on behalf of the athlete and agree on a communication plan to ensure pastoral care of the athlete.

HOW IS THE INTERNSHIP FUNDED?

HPSNZ will pay 50% and the partner organisation will pay 50%, unless the internship is funded under the not-for-profit employer partner provision.

The athlete will be paid by the partner organisation (employer), and the partner organisation will invoice HPSNZ in the same way as tertiary institutions invoice for fees.

HOW LONG CAN THE INTERNSHIP GRANT BE ACCESSED?

Internship funds can be accessed from 1 January of the first year of the intake to 30 June the following year (18 months).

WHAT IF AN ATHLETE WANTS TO WORK WITH A CHARITY/NOT-FOR-PROFIT?

This is accepted and encouraged as part of the programme and aligns with our strategic focus on athlete give back.

If the organisation is not in the position to contribute to paying the athlete's salary, then HPSNZ will consider funding the full amount (subject to availability of funds).

CAN AN ATHLETE DO MORE THAN ONE INTERNSHIP?

Yes. Athletes are encouraged to identify multiple internship options that fit with their career exploration plan over the 18-month internship period.

CAN YOU DO YOUR INTERNSHIP OVERSEAS?

No – internships are to be undertaken in New Zealand.

CAN GOLD SCHOLARSHIP ATHLETES APPLY?

If you are eligible for a Gold level scholarship this opportunity is open to you. Please discuss with your Performance Life Coach/PDM

CAN AN ATHLETE BE ENROLLED IN A TERTIARY PM SCHOLARSHIP AT THE SAME TIME AS DOING AN INTERNSHIP?

If you have up to three papers left to complete in your degree, you may continue with these while doing an internship if this fits with your sport and life plan and is approved by your Performance Life Coach or PDM.

CAN AN ATHLETE DO AN INTERNSHIP IN A DIFFERENT REGION FROM WHERE THEY LIVE?

Yes, but this is at the discretion of HPSNZ and will be discussed according to specific athlete needs

IS THERE A MINIMUM COMMITMENT OF TIME FOR INTERNSHIPS?

No. Possible internship periods could be three, six, nine or 12 months in duration but an athlete could also apply for shorter time periods. For example, they might choose to do a three-week full-time project with an organisation if they have some time off during the year. Payments will be pro-rated according to the number of hours/days that an athlete is able to commit to.

The key is that the work experience should work around athlete needs.

Specific funding details will be worked through with the successful applicants subject to the requirements of their internship.

CAN I DO AN INTERNSHIP AT HPSNZ OR AT MY SPORT NSO?

No. Athletes are encouraged to seek internship opportunities in organisations aligned with their career plans that also allow them to gain experience outside their immediate environment and networks. Athletes may however seek internships with NSOs other than their own.

WILL THERE BE A MID-YEAR INTAKE?

Applications may be considered outside the usual cohort application period in extenuating circumstances, on a case-by-case basis, if the programme budget allows.

WHO HAS DUTY OF CARE FOR ATHLETE WELFARE AND WORKPLACE STANDARDS FOR SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

All partner organisations will be vetted and must provide a healthy and safe environment for the athlete, taking measures to safeguard occupational health and safety as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

ARE THERE FINANCIAL/TAX CONSIDERATIONS?

The partner organisation or employer will deduct tax from internship payments. HPSNZ does not provide tax advice, but athletes seeking independent tax advice can be referred to athlete-friendly network partners. To access this support, please contact your Performance Life Coach.