



Women's Coaching Pathway Scholarship | Next Coach Program

AFL Coaches Association

Women in High Performance Coaching

Women's Coaching Pathway Scholarship | Next Coach Program

AFL Coaches Association



**Next Coach Program
Cost \$3000
Scholarship includes
Next Coach + >\$1000
Value**



**Annual Scholarship and
Programs
Next Coach - 6 week
program**



**Expert facilitators.
Mentors with > 10 years
experience**



**Target group: Women
Playing / Coaching in
AFLW/AFL**

Aims and Objectives

Women's Coaching Pathway Scholarship aims to:

- Help coaches realise their potential.
- Fast-track development to coach at the highest level.

The Next Coach Program aims to:

- develop coaches who can think critically about coaching,
- build their own coaching philosophy, and
- deepen their understanding of what constitutes great coaching practice.

Women's Coaching Crusade

Seven AFLW Coaches have been awarded since 2019.

- A funded position to participate in the AFL Coaches Association's Next Coach Program.
- Mentorship from a current AFL Coach (with at least 10 years' experience).
- Professional Development opportunities facilitated by the AFL Coaches Association (value of up to \$1,000).



Next Coach Program

Coaches participate in a 6-week program.

Program includes sessions on:

- Strategy & Tactics and Great Coaches.
- "A Coaching Life."
- Nurturing excellence in Women's Teams through Coach Well-being & Team Dynamics.
- Game Plan & Teaching Skill.
- 1 on 1 sessions to seek best personal growth options and discuss key learnings.

Outcomes and Impact

- 100% of Coaching Scholarship recipients involved in AFLW programs.
- 1 x Coaching Scholarship recipient Head Coach of AFLW Team.
- 2 x AFLW Head Coaches graduated from the Next Coach Program.
- 10 x current AFLW Assistant / Development Coaches involved in the Next Coach Program.

Women's Coaching Pathway Scholarship | Next Coach Program

AFL Coaches Association

Recommendations

Organisations seeking to increase the number of women in high-performance coaching can adapt the AFLCA model by:

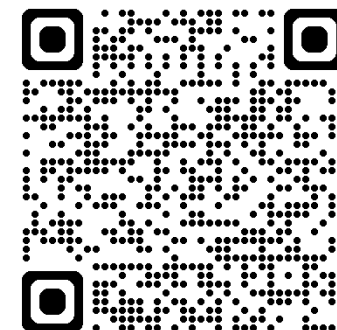
- Identifying women already working within the performance system.
- Offering a dedicated scholarship for women coaches.
- Combining funding with education, mentoring and networking.
- Engaging experienced coaches as sponsors and mentors.
- Creating clear pathways into elite coaching environments.

Lessons for other organisations

- The scholarship has evolved as more women enter elite coaching. Continue adapting it to the cohort's changing needs.
- Plan for growing demand: rising participation in AFLW Study Tours shows a strong appetite for learning.
- Keep subject-matter experts at the centre of delivery; they have been integral to the program's success.
- Creating deliberate access and opportunity for women coaches can be provided by:
 - Targeted scholarships for women coaches
 - Clear pathways from playing to coaching
 - Structured coach-development programs
 - Experienced coach mentors
 - Funded professional development
 - Personalised, needs-based support.



Women's Coaching Crusade
Next Coach Program





“

“It challenged my thinking and my coaching and I gained a new network of passionate coaches. I highly recommend to any male / female coaches that want to take their coaching to the next level. This program is something special.”

- Christina Polatajko, Assistant Coach Hawthorn VFLW, 2021 Graduate