



ASPIRE Coach Program - Pilot

Designing a Women only program targeting entry to HP coaching

Women in High Performance Coaching



ASPIRE Coach Program - Pilot

Design: Targeting entry to HP coaching



Funded by Women Leaders in Sport Grant
Coaches needed to fund transport to Canberra



6-month learning program
12-month monitoring



6 Women Coach Leadership Team
20 Women Coaches as 'Support Crew'



38 Women Coaches selected (from 95 applicants)
47 Women Coaches in the Talent Pool

Aims and Objectives

This initiative aimed to support and enhance the skills of early-career aspiring women coaches by providing opportunities to develop:

- Self-awareness
- Understanding of the HP environment
- Communication and career navigation skills.

The Leaky Pipeline identifies significant challenges for women coaches entering HP coaching. This can include the lifestyle and expectations of HP coaches, resulting in early departures.

Deliberate design and delivery was planned to optimise the pilot program.

Description

The program was developed over a 3-year period, observing programs in the USA and NZ, and utilising insights from 3 years of women coach workshops.

Three workshops were held with over 50 HP women coaches to create the selection criteria and prioritise focus areas and design. Key capabilities identified:

- Continuous learning
- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence
- Mission, Vision and Values (Passion)
- Psychological Safety
- Understanding the Individual
- Communication.

A Talent Pool was created from those coaches who applied, but were unsuccessful, supporting their development with 6 months of online learning.



Program Format

Selection:

- Open EOI for coaches.
- Video submission, written letter of application, letter of recommendation and application form.

Format:

- Pre-work (AIS Self Evaluation tool & CoachDISC).
- 3-day residential program at the AIS.
- 3 Virtual workshops over 6 months.
- 6 & 12-month monitoring and support.

Facilitators:

- Women Coach Facilitator Team
- 20 Women Coaches over 3 days as support crew
- Subject Matter experts and HP leaders as part of the 'Leaders Lunch'

Evaluation:

- Selection survey to accept position.
- 3-day residential survey & facilitator interviews
- 6 & 12-month progress & impact survey

Outcomes and Impact

Key findings so far:

- Early career coaches lack access and opportunities
- Achieved Key Outcomes of enhancing self awareness, building confident communication, supporting career navigation and understanding the HJP environment.
- Dedicated selection process identifying key capabilities
- Lived experiences impact
- Women only facilitator team
- Follow-on (learning and support) post program continues to embed learning and provide support.



ASPIRE Coach Program - Pilot

Design: Targeting entry to HP coaching

Recommendations

- Deliberate design and delivery of a women only early career program can have high impact.
- Dedicated selection process, targeting key HP capabilities identifies curious, lifelong learners, with a dedication to learn, progress and understand HP coaching.
- Sharing stories with lived experiences from a diverse cohort of women coaches at varying career positions elevates visibility of women in HP coaching and supports understanding of how to navigate the HP landscape.
- Blended learning program and 'follow-on' learning and support post program embeds learning and enables stronger support.
- Open entry application processes can remove barriers that exist with NSOD nomination and identify unknown talent but must also maintain connections with NSODs post program.

Application for others

There is significant need to address the bridge between competitive coaching and HP coaching with a supported, facilitated program for women. This not only supports the narrow entry pool but can ensure those entering have greater understanding of the HP ecosystem and how to navigate it.

Use of the AIS HP Capability Framework to select applicants was reported as highly indicative of the top three capabilities: Vision, Mission, Values; Self Awareness and Emotional Intelligence; and Continuous Learning. There is potential in utilising the framework as a talent identification tool for HP coaches.

Creating a '**catching net**' for unsuccessful applicants through the establishment of a Talent Pool and the delivery of three online workshops proved to be a low-cost, high-impact approach. It broadened the coaching talent pipeline by retaining engagement with promising coaches who may otherwise have been lost from the system.

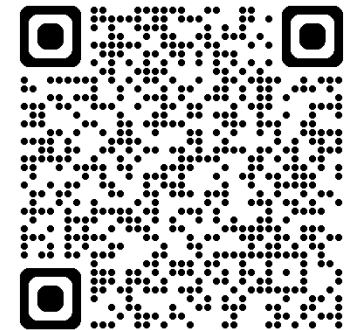
Tracking coach progress post program over a 12-month period can deepen understanding and evidence of program impact.



Coaches who ASPIRE to greatness | ASC

ASPIRE connects coaches across the Tasman | ASC

Women in HP Sport connects New Zealand aspiring HP coaches with Aussie counterparts – HPSNZ





One thing that really stood out was the genuine openness and generosity of the leaders and guest speakers. Their willingness to share their experiences, lessons, and challenges with honesty was incredibly inspiring. It reaffirmed that even in a highly competitive environment, we are all human at the core driven by connection, purpose, and a shared desire to see others succeed. It reminded me that leadership is strongest when it's authentic and rooted in care

- Participant