



Experiential Learning on Tour

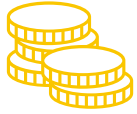
Creating authentic learning experiences at benchmark events

Women in High Performance Coaching



Experiential Learning on Tour

Creating authentic learning experiences at benchmark events



AIS HP Coach Development ELP Grant \$8k



8-month learning program



**Dedicated Mentor Funding
Two 1-day workshops**



**3 Cohorts conducted
26 Women, 6 Men**

Aim and Objectives

The Experiential Learning Program (ELP) was designed as an initiative (within the Women in High Performance Coaching Project) to facilitating an authentic, workplace-based experiential learning experience during international benchmark tournaments.

The aims of the ELP were to support coaches to:

- Identify roles and responsibilities on tour,
- Identify bespoke learning needs and develop a learning plan,
- Utilise mentorship to enhance learning,
- Enhance communication and confidence and,
- Develop and enhance reflective practices to make sense of the learning experience.

Description

Boccia Australia nominated Bruna Accurso to apply for the first pilot ELP, as part of her selection to attend the Fortaleza World Boccia Cup, September 2023.

Bruna had attended one previous tour, but this was in a role as on-court support, review, analysis and strategy support.

The ELP would allow her to undertake the role as a coach and be mentored by the National Coach.

Overall outcome: The first workshop was a turning point for Bruna, helping her make a significant professional shift from support work toward a more secure and intentional coaching pathway.



Program Format

Selection:

- EOI application by the NSO/D on behalf of a coach.

Format:

- 1-day pre-tour workshop
- Dedicated Tour Plan, reflective skills
- Tour Mentor
- 1-day post-tour workshop

Facilitators:

- AIS HP Coach Development Team and support coaches
- Individual Mentor

Evaluation:

- Survey post workshop 2
- Individual story graphic

Coach Outcomes and Impact

- **Stepped into a coaching role:** Took on broader leadership responsibilities beyond support work.
- **Solved accessibility challenges:** Adapted quickly and advocated for athlete needs when arrangements were inadequate.
- **Created space for analysis:** Recorded games, reviewed performance and held individual athlete conversations.
- **Shifted away from support work:** Recognised the need to reduce support hours to progress as a coach, despite personal and financial risk.
- **Advocated for herself:** Gained confidence to ask for a formal contract, paid holidays and greater recognition.
- **Strengthened coaching identity:** Built clarity and confidence in her future as a coach and pathway leader.
- **Improved communication:** Practiced pausing, breathing and using body language when speaking to groups.



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Recommendations

- Provide opportunities to gain experience at international benchmark events, with planned opportunities and clear learning outcomes.
- Design a clear tour plan with goals, success measures and debrief points to support coaches make sense of the experience and relate this to past experiences.
- Build reflective skills to support coaches to reflect before, during and after the event.
- Fund access and equip mentors to support women coaches on tour.
- A strong connection between the coach and a long term learning plan optimises the experience.

Application for others

Providing opportunities for international tour experience works best when event access is paired with deliberate learning design.

Tour plans, mentor guidance and peer reflection help coaches convert experience into action.

A strong connection between the coach, mentor and organisational support optimises the impact upon coach progression.

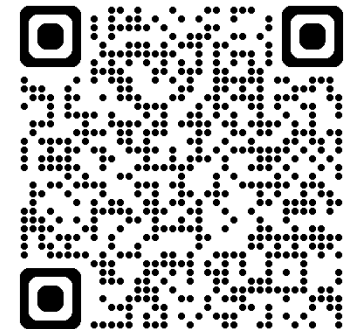
The “rich picture story” captures the 8-month journey and becomes a reusable reflection tool.



Bruna's Tour Story

BRUNA VIDEO:

<https://youtu.be/kkYibbGiiFk?si=khp9VirZLj1Ob0Qq>





Bruna's Journey



Support Worker

Boccia Australia

2019
-2023

ELP Nomination

2023

Part Time Coach

Began Part Time Coaching
Role

ELP Workshop 2

Head Coach U16
Team

Oct '23

Boccia World Cup 2023

Povoa de Varzim 2023 World
Boccia Cup (Oct 2-9)

Mar '24

ELP Workshop 1

1st Tour as a coach.
Previously a support
worker

2025
-2026

National Gen32 Coach

Nominated and employed FT as a
National Generation 2032 Coach
for 2 years.





"I am grateful for the time I had during the workshops, not only because of the connections I made but also because of the knowledge and support I got from the facilitators. This support was pivotal for both my professional and personal growth, inspiring me to advance in my career and contribute more significantly to my sport. Interacting with other coaches proved to be profoundly beneficial. "

- Bruna Accurso, Talent Development HUB Coach (Performance Pathway)