



World Rugby Coaching Internship Programme

World Rugby

Women in High Performance Coaching

Coaching Internship Programme (CIP)

World Rugby



Funded role for 1 year



Inclusion in their National squad's management team for 6 month to 2 years (training, Competition, RWC)



International and National Federations Alumni and Dedicated Mentors



1 coach per National who qualified for the Rugby World Cup can nominate a coach (12 per cohort)

Aim and Objectives

Objective:

To support the development and employability of female coaches at a high performance (HP) level by providing experience of a HP environment, as part of the coaching and management team of a senior women's national squad as it plans, prepares and takes part in the Rugby World Cup (2021-2023 and 2024-2026).

Core Purpose:

- Created to address the low representation of women in high-performance coaching roles at elite international tournaments.

Structure:

- Selected talent-identified coaches are fully embedded into national squad management teams for a multi-month professional placement leading up to and during the World Cup cycle

Description

The program was structured to impact upon Competence, Confidence, Credibility and Visibility.

Key Features and Support

- Practical Experience: Hands-on high-performance integration within national team backroom and coaching structures.
- Mentorship & Planning: Each participant receives an assigned independent mentor from their national union alongside a customized individual development plan.
- Education Access: Priority access to targeted high-performance coaching workshops, professional accreditation, and tailored webinars.
- Notable Alumni: High-profile graduates include Whitney Hansen (New Zealand) and Gaëlle Mignot (France), who transitioned into full-time national coaching roles.



Program Content

Knowing and driving self

- Coaching philosophy
- Reflecting on 360-degree feedback
- Development and support networks

Developing & delivering performance

- Working effectively with others
- Getting your message across
- HP Culture and systems
- Managing your teams

Rugby technical and tactical

Coaching skills and pedagogy; maximising support services

Delivery through:

- Self assessment and 360-degree feedback
- Placement with women's international squad for training and competition
- Individual Performance Plan (IPP)
- World Rugby HP Workshops
- New Zealand programme
- Leadership and Coaching Mentor

Outcomes and Impact

Strategic Target:

Aligns with World Rugby's goal to achieve a minimum of 40% female coach participation at major showcase tournaments like the Women's Rugby World Cup. Over 30 participants have been involved in the program.

- Transition of interns into full-time coaching positions.
- Promoting the acceptance of female coaches in High performance environments to challenge existing stereotypes.
- Improved performance of national team.
- Growth in the representation of female coaches at the national team level in global rugby.
- Program has been iterated and completed with a second cohort.

Coaching Internship Programme 2021-23, 2024-26

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Recommendations

Recommendations made after the first program:

- Improve the initial detail and explanation of the CIP to union leads and head coaches.
- Add a requirement for written submissions for Coach Intern programme as part of the Union's nomination of a coach to the programme.
- Mentoring – greater co-ordination and communication between Union lead, mentor and WR lead to ensure consistent and high standard of mentoring support to the coaches.
- Mentoring support Coach observation and review
- Implement coach observation and review
- Improve liaison and monitoring of CIP from World Rugby with the union leads and their interns.
- The careful selection of mentors for each intern has been a pivotal factor in success.

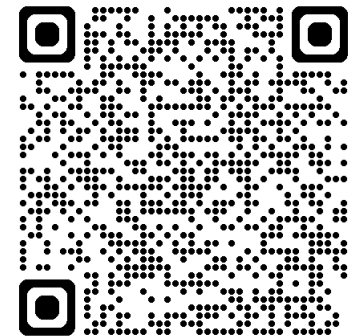


Application for others

- Provide immersive, high-performance experiences
- Invest in long-term placements
- Target high-potential women coaches
- Connect internships to strategic workforce goals
- Pair learning opportunities with mentoring and networks
- Create clear post-internship pathways
- Measure success through progression into leadership and coaching roles
- The international network of interns has served as a valuable and supportive resource for the Australian interns.
- Interns should receive genuine roles and meaningful coaching opportunities.
- Integration is key, as other coaches must not see the intern as a threat.

**Coaching internship programme
| World Rugby**

**Women in High Performance
Coaching: Coach Internship
Programme (CIP21) • IWG
Women & Sport Insight Hub**





“The workshop programme for those of us knocked out. To be able to spend such a long period together and everyone was focused on improving and challenging each other, I found this empowering and really helped me to gain confidence. I definitely came back from there a more confident individual and have used a lot of the information already in my coaching and day to day life.”