



Women's Summit Pilot

Supporting Women Stepping Into New Leadership Roles

Women in High Performance Coaching



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Stepping Into New Leadership Roles



Supported by Women in ASC New Projects Funding; no cost to participants



18-month program
2 cohorts selected
3 face-to-face summits



Facilitated by AIS HP Team WE-I Expert



11 women
National team leads / head coaches new to the role

Aims and Objectives

New women head coaches may face distinct challenges as they step into leadership roles.

Drawing on insights from the WiHPC project and AIS Summit Program, this pilot aimed to provide targeted learning and engagement for a selected cohort of coaches new to leadership roles.

The program sought to:

- Provide authentic professional development through collaborative, socially connected learning.
- Foster an inquiry-focused culture and develop adaptable leaders and skilled custodians.
- Enhance coach wellbeing.

Description

Program activities included:

- **Online social learning:** Facilitated yarning circles using First Nations methodologies.
- **Face-to-face summits:** Multi-day gatherings to build relationships, leadership and connections with senior women leaders.

Topics included:

- Leadership, decision-making and head coach responsibilities.
- Communication, feedback and stakeholder management.
- Athlete development and performance.
- Team dynamics and collaboration.
- Strategic planning and goal clarity.
- Performance under pressure; wellbeing and self-care.
- Games reviews, transitions and uncertainty.



Program Format

Selection:

- 11 women new to head coaching roles
- Cohort 1: five pre-Paris 2024
- Cohort 2: six post-Paris 2024
- Targeted expression-of-interest process

Format:

- Three three-day summits over 18 months
- Fortnightly or monthly social learning
- Additional WE-I profiling sessions

Facilitators:

- AIS HP Coach Development Team Leaders
- WE-I expert

Evaluation:

- 18-month evaluation using focus groups, a survey and one-to-one interviews

Outcomes and Impact

The Women's Summit was highly valued, with five key insights:

- **Connection and storytelling:** Support networks enabled learning through shared experience.
- **Women's business:** A dedicated space fostered openness, vulnerability and trust.
- **Expert facilitation:** Skilled facilitators created meaningful learning environments.
- **Cross-sport sharing:** Olympic and Paralympic coaches broadened perspectives and connections.
- **Legacy and growth:** Coaches wanted to leave a lasting impact on athletes, sport and high-performance coaching.





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Recommendations

Continue dedicated development and support for women in leadership, with participants transitioning into ongoing programs.

- **Continue dedicated support:** Maintain structured learning and informal networking opportunities.
- **Sustain virtual and in-person engagement:** Schedule regular touchpoints to strengthen relationships and professional development.
- **Connect established and emerging leaders:** Enable cross-generational mentoring with experienced women leaders from the Summit Program.
- **Tailor mentoring and learning:** Address individual needs in emotional intelligence, communication and decision-making.
- **Keep delivery flexible:** Adapt content, resources and scheduling as coaches' roles and responsibilities evolve.

Applying the learnings

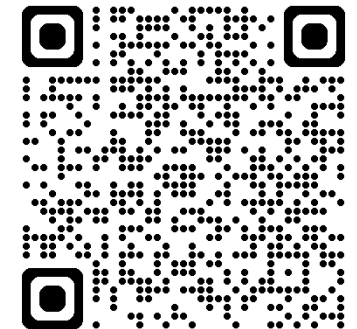
Organisations can strengthen underrepresented leadership communities by combining safe spaces, connection, expert facilitation and adaptable support.

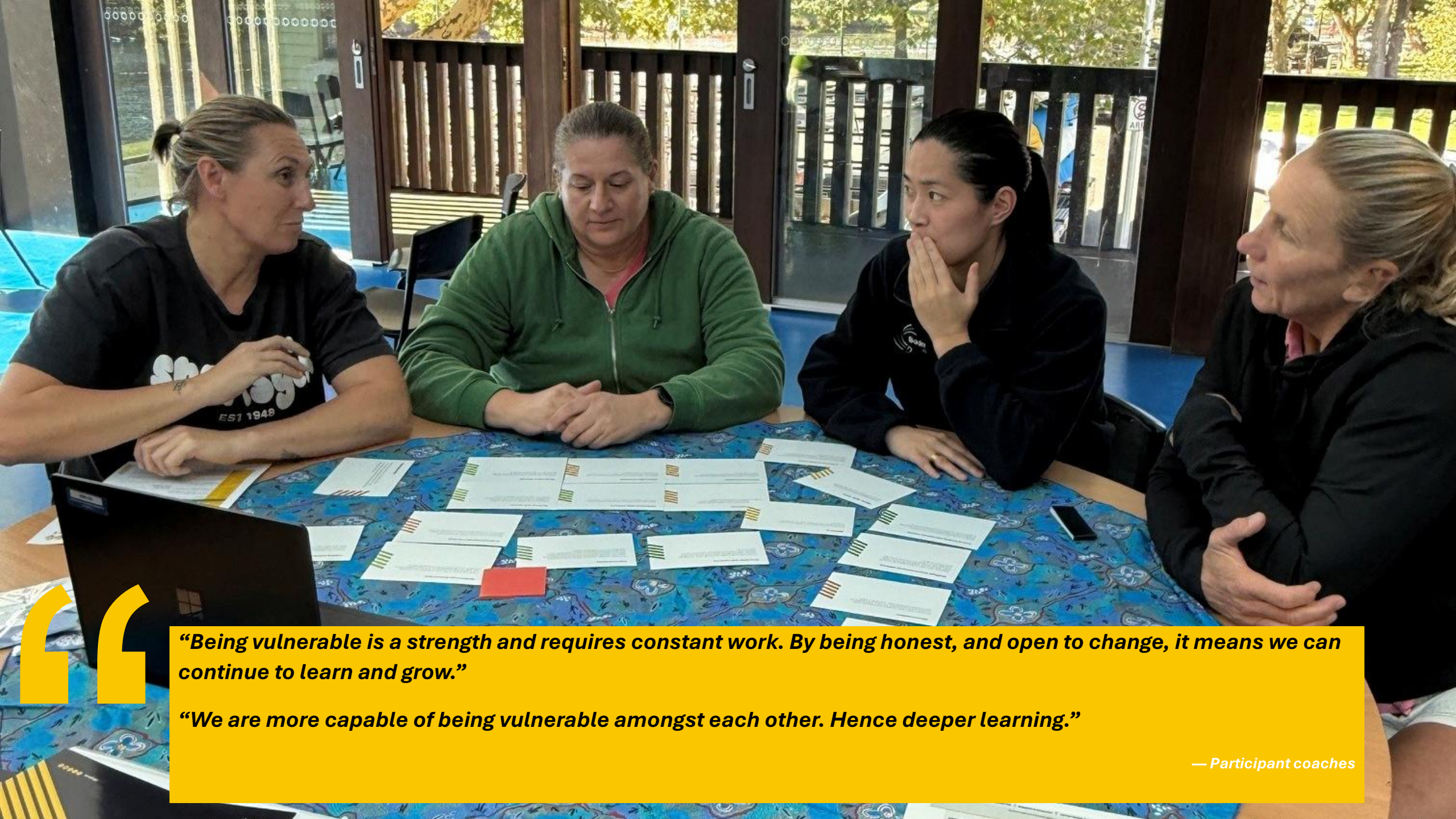
- Create dedicated, psychologically safe spaces.
- Blend structured learning with informal connection.
- Centre storytelling and peer learning.
- Use expert facilitators with relevant experience.
- Enable cross-generational and cross-disciplinary mentoring.
- Design around individual needs and changing responsibilities.
- Embed wellbeing and self-care.
- Build a lasting culture of empowerment.



Summit | ASC

Top coaches reach the Summit | ASC





“Being vulnerable is a strength and requires constant work. By being honest, and open to change, it means we can continue to learn and grow.”

“We are more capable of being vulnerable amongst each other. Hence deeper learning.”

— Participant coaches