



# The 2009 Canada Games Dreams and Champions Legacy Trust Fund

## Final Evaluation Executive Summary Report

September 2016

Prepared by: Steve McQuaid



The Canada Games Legacy Trust Grant Program is an 'add value' Program. All those who were engaged in this evaluation process expressed a strong consensus of support for the Program's value and impact. The Program has been instrumental in assisting and motivating coaches, sports administrators, and Provincial Sports Organizations in more effectively engaging and supporting current and future high performing athletes on PEI.

*'... I must say the Legacy Fund program has been excellent...the funding we received from the Legacy Fund has been a wonderful help in developing our athletes to the next level...I hope you can continue to support future athletes and their programs...'* (HP Coach)

*'... our coaches are more trained...they are helping us better train and prepare for competition...they are able to give us better feedback and support around our training and techniques...'* (HP Athlete)

*'... being involved in a sport at a high, intense level, has taught me to be more focused and disciplined around setting goals both in my sport as well as school...things like time management and confidence, and being motivated...'* (HP Athlete)

*'... we were able to bring in top level coaches and officials to work with our coaches and sport officials...this is huge...this increases the knowledge and confidence of coaches and officials...helps them see where they are at...and set new expectations and goals for themselves...'* (HP Coach)

*'... we brought together high performance athletes from across the province to a Legacy Leadership event... this went over really well with the athletes...they really appreciated meeting other athletes, hearing from established Island athletes, and being exposed to talks about nutrition and healthy eating, and mental preparedness for competition...'* (SPEI Administrator)

*'... there are several key things that need to be in place...high level, nationally certified coaches, access to training facilities and up-to-date equipment, integration of sport sciences in training programs, and access to high level competition...the Legacy funds allows us to work on getting these elements in place...'* (HP Coach)

*'... as a result of the funding we now have a group of younger coaches working with bantam, midget and junior players...we see younger kids with more interest and motivation...they are staying involved and taking more responsibility for their own learning and development...'* (PSO Board Member)

*'... for our sport, that small amount of money made a huge difference...'* (PSO Administrator)

*'...the Legacy Fund should continue to help Island high performance athletes...be interested in what they are doing, how they are doing, and continue to find ways to support them...'* (HP Athlete)

*'... continue the program...it is having a huge impact on PSOs and our efforts to develop high performance athletes and sport in general...'* (PSO Administrator)



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author of this report wishes to acknowledge and thank all coaches, athletes, sport administrators, Canada Games Trustee Committee members, and other stakeholders who provided input, feedback, and suggestions with respect to this evaluation.

YOUR WILLINGNESS TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES, AND PARTICIPATE IN INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SESSIONS PROVIDED RICH AND INFORMATIVE FEEDBACK WITH RESPECT TO THE OPERATION AND IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAM, AND IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

The 2009 Canada Games Dreams and Champions Legacy Trust Fund (hereafter referred to as the Legacy Fund) was established in 2012 as a permanent endowment Fund to support the development of emerging and high performance athletes, coaches, and amateur sports organizations on PEI. Through the interest income earned by the Fund each year, the Trust annually provides financial grants and other material support to programs delivered by/through Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) that are designed to:

- enhance the development of emerging and high performance athletes;
- help increase the leadership capacity and development of coaches, administrators, and officials; and,
- help support and sustain any facilities built for the 2009 Games.

The allocation of financial grants is managed by the Canada Game Legacy Trust Committee. Sport PEI is responsible for the administrative and coordination functions related to the Grant Program. Each year PSOs are invited to apply for funds; the proposal submission must be aligned with at least one of the Legacy Fund's primary objectives noted above.

The Trustee Committee was interested in getting some feedback as to whether or not the Program was achieving its essential goals and objectives. Steve McQuaid, an evaluation consultant affiliated with the consulting firm the Atlantic Evaluation Group, was contracted by the Committee to complete an evaluation of the Program. The key evaluation questions included:

- What have been the impacts of the Legacy Grant Program to date with respect to:
  - The amount of dollars granted, the number of grants allocated, and the number of PSOs impacted.
  - The impacts and results for athletes, coaches and sport officials.
  - The Program's administrative and delivery protocols and practices. And
- Are there any administrative and/or delivery limitations or gaps?
- Are there ways to improve and strengthen the Legacy Fund Grant Program?

. The key evaluation research tasks included the completion of:

**A document review:** a review of all relevant written materials and documents pertaining to the administration and delivery of the Legacy Fund grant program.

**A review of grants allocated:** a review of the financial data with respect to the number and amount of grants allocated each year.

**A survey of grant recipients:** the dissemination of an electronic survey questionnaire to all sport organizations who had received a grant.

**A survey of athletes:** the dissemination of an electronic survey questionnaire to athletes who had participated in an activity or event supported through a Legacy Fund grant.

**Key informant interviews:** conducting interviews with a representative group of grant recipients, coaches, Trustee Committee members, and other relevant stakeholders.

**Focus groups with athletes:** conducting focus groups with athletes who would have been involved in initiatives and/or events funded through the Legacy Fund.



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Canada Games Legacy Fund has had a strong, positive impact in developing and supporting high performance athletes on PEI. Since 2013 a total of \$458,000 has been disseminated to 33 different sports organizations, through a total of 124 separate project grants. These grants were allocated to a wide range of sport organizations, and a large number of athletes, coaches and sport officials have been engaged and supported, either directly or indirectly, as a result of the various high performance related projects undertaken by the recipient sport organizations.

Responses to the grant recipient survey, and the feedback and observations gained through interviews with sport administrators, indicates that there is strong support for the Legacy Fund Grant Program. At a variety of levels, respondents noted the positive impacts that the initiatives undertaken through the Legacy Fund were having on the development of athletes, coaches, and officials within their sport. In addition, respondents were generally supportive of the Fund's key objectives and priority areas; these were viewed as important and should remain as the focus.

Coaches and athletes consulted were highly positive with regard to the impacts of the Fund. They indicated that the Legacy Fund's priority areas were 'on track' with what is needed in terms of high performance development within Island sports. Coaches in particular were unanimous in their view that the Fund is an 'add value' contribution to their work with high performance athletes. The Fund provided them with the extra resources to offer both coaches and athletes new opportunities to move 'to the next level' of training and competition within their sport.

Athletes also reported positive benefits and impacts; they were achieving more personal bests in competition; they were getting more opportunities to attend higher level competitions; and they were feeling stronger, more confident, and better prepared when competing in their sport.

The incorporation of the sports sciences (strength, fitness, nutrition, mental preparation) is increasingly seen as a key element in high performance training and competition. PSOs, coaches and athletes all noted the importance of integrating a focus on strength and conditioning, nutrition and healthy eating, and mental preparation in helping athletes develop and maintain the capacity for high performance competition. This is an area that is only beginning to get recognition and attention from Island sport groups; sports administrators and coaches suggested that more coordinated efforts are needed to integrate these important components into sport development on PEI.

The administration and delivery framework of the Fund's granting program is well developed; the Fund's priority areas are clearly defined, and grant applicants find the application and reporting processes concise, straightforward and 'user-friendly'. Sport PEI has been contracted by the Trustee Committee to manage the administrative and delivery logistics of the Fund. This has worked well to date; however, as PSOs become more proactive with respect to their high performance sport goals, there will likely be more administrative and oversight work required from Sport PEI.

While each individual sport is working within its resources and capacity to identify and support its most promising athletes, some coaches wondered how current and future success milestones will be tracked and measured. Others noted that there is a need for a broader high performance strategy for sports in the province. If such a strategy existed, individual sports could align their high performance work within the broader strategy framework.



Sport PEI is the likely body to provide leadership to such an undertaking. Is this a mandate that the Legacy Fund Committee could see Sport PEI assuming? Could resources from the Legacy Fund be provided to develop a provincial strategy or framework to guide the development of high performance sport? Perhaps a one-year-only matching grant to complete the task would be required.

While there was overall strong support for the Legacy Fund, sport administrators and coaches noted some program limitations, questions and concerns; these included:

**Communication Issues:**

- clarity around the funding priorities in any given year; if certain priority areas are going to receive more emphasis, it is useful for PSOs to know this in advance.
- questions around the grant application, review, decision, and allocation cycle; if a decision is made to not grant the entire amount requested, how is the amount determined? If the submission has merit, why would it not be approved for the entire amount?
- limitations around monies available for equipment and capital requirements (especially for non-2009 Games facilities or venues).

**Sport Development Issues:**

- more focus on, and coordination of effort around, integrating sport science into the training and development of high performance athletes.
- more focus on the development of sport officials.
- more focus on leadership development in the various sport organizations; especially within the smaller sports organizations, or the newly formed sports organizations.
- more focus on volunteer recruitment and retention; how to nurture and sustain the volunteer base within each sport.

**Fiscal Limitation Issues:**

The Fund's annual granting capacity is limited; there is on average about \$100,000 available dollars each year, while the total requested amount through individual funding submissions can be double this amount. This presents the Legacy Fund Committee with a series of challenges and questions:

- which submissions, which sports, which priorities, will receive funding in a given year?
- what approach provides the best 'bang for the buck' in terms of sport development; larger grants to fewer applicants or smaller grants to a larger number of applicants?
- do you invest more in well established sports, or sport groups that may be just getting established?
- do you invest more in those sports where its high performance athletes have the best chance for success at regional, national and international competition?

Some key informants noted that the Legacy Fund has received very little public promotion. In terms of the general public, most people would not be aware of its existence, and most people who were part of the 2009 Canada Games Host Committee would not be aware of what has been happening since 2013. Should the Legacy Fund receive more public profile and promotion? Should its achievements be more publicly promoted? Who would do this? How would it be done?

In addition, a few key informants wondered if efforts should be made to grow the Fund's investment principal; if this were possible, over time the Fund would have more resources to assist the development of high performance athletes. These individuals believed that there are ways that this



could be achieved without interfering and/or compromising the local fund-raising efforts of individual sport groups and athletes. Should efforts be undertaken to grow the Fund? Who would provide leadership to this effort? How would/could this be pursued?

Finally, there is the potential for Sport PEI to undertake a more proactive, leadership role in supporting the development of high performance sport in the province. In addition to the work required to administer and deliver the Legacy Grant Trust Program, Sport PEI could put some additional development steps in place. A more comprehensive reporting/tracking tool for high performance athletes (emerging, established, carded, etc.) could be developed. In addition, as more PSOs develop their plans for high performance sport, Sport PEI could provide a stronger coordination role to ensure that PSOs are working as efficiently as possible to achieve their objectives. This broader role would likely require additional resources.

### PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation findings and results indicate that the Legacy Fund has been successful in meeting its intended goals and objectives. Going forward, the objectives should be to continue to sustain the successes to date; address the lingering communication and administrative issues; explore ways to address those areas requiring further development; and establish and resource the development of a provincial high performance sport strategy.

The following proposed recommendations are put forward to address the above areas.

- A. **Address Administrative and Operational Issues:** this can be regarded as 'fine tuning' the existing administrative, communication and delivery practices; including:
  - Clarity around the funding priorities in any given year; if certain priority areas are going to receive more emphasis, it is useful for PSOs to know this in advance.
  - Clarity regarding questions around the grant application, review, decision, and allocation cycle; if a decision is made to not grant the entire amount requested, how is the amount determined? If the submission has merit, why would it not be approved for the entire amount?
  - Clarity around the limitations regarding monies available for equipment and/or capital requirements for non-2009 Games facilities or venues.
  
- B. **Address Underdeveloped Priority Areas:** explore how to best work with PSOs to address priority areas that are underdeveloped; including:
  - More focus on the development of sport officials.
  - More focus on leadership development in the various sport organizations; especially within the smaller sports organizations, or the newly formed sports organization.
  - More focus on, and coordination of effort around, integrating sport science into the training and development of high performance athletes.
  
- C. **Expand Sport PEI's Contract:** provide additional resources to:
  - Establish and maintain a provincial data base of existing and emerging high performance athletes across all sports.
  - Provide additional support and oversight to PSO's around the development of high performance goals.



- Expand and build on the success of the athletes Legacy Leadership events.
  - Explore ways to work with PSOs on joint projects or initiatives aimed at developing their high performance sport capacity.
- D. **Support the Development of Provincial Strategy:** explore the option of developing a provincial strategy for high performance sport on PEI.
- Sport PEI is the logical group to undertake such an initiative; are there resources available through the Legacy Fund to take this on?
- E. **More Promotion of the Legacy Fund:** develop and implement a 'modest' Legacy Fund promotion strategy.
- Create a concise PowerPoint slide deck of evaluation findings and results; take this on a 'road show' to targeted groups within the sports community (e.g. PSO's, 2009 Canada Games Host Committee members, PEI Coaches Association, etc.). There may be other interested groups that are associated with the preparation of upcoming 2017 Canada Games.
  - Using the findings and results of this evaluation, create a brief newsletter; disseminate this newsletter to a target audience (e.g. broader Sport PEI membership list).
  - Building on above, create a 'twice yearly' 2009 Legacy Fund newsletter; provide profiles and success stories of athletes, sport teams, and coaches who were assisted through the Legacy Fund. Disseminate this newsletter to targeted groups, and broader Sport PEI membership.
  - Continue to do press releases around the annual grant recipients.
- F. **Grow the Legacy Fund Principal:** explore the option of growing the principal investment of the Legacy Trust Fund. How could this be achieved? Who would provide leadership?