

Paddle England Athlete Support Fund

Overview

To compete in sport incurs a financial cost. Paddle England recognises that individuals and their families at all levels make significant sacrifices and financial contributions to enable participation and pursue their sporting ambitions.

To better support athletes selected to a representative British or English team who are undergoing financial difficulties relative to their peers, Paddle England has created an Athlete Support Fund for eligible English athletes.

The purpose of the fund is to provide some financial assistance to support athletes competing at British or English Team representative competitions that may otherwise have been unaffordable to them.

If you are experiencing significant financial hardship, we would also signpost you to third party support services, such as [Citizens Advice](#).

Guidelines

To be eligible to apply to the Athlete Support Fund the athlete must be a current member of Paddle England based in England and have been selected for a representative British or English Team through a Paddle UK approved selection process at junior, U23 or senior level.

Please note that funds can be awarded “in principle,” subject to the applicant being selected.

We are keen to make the process as simple as possible and welcome applications from athletes based in England struggling to afford to compete as part of a British or English team in any Olympic, Paralympic or non-Olympic discipline.

If one or more of the statements below apply to you, we will look at your application more favourably:

- Your family is undergoing significant financial hardship (defined as any family currently claiming statutory benefit (other than child benefit) to supplement their household income*.
- You are an adult living independently without dependents who is experiencing severe hardship currently claiming statutory benefits.
- You are a university student who qualifies for maximum maintenance loan or grant support
- You are a pupil who qualifies for free school meals
- You are living in local authority care
- You are recognised as Carer or Young Carer by your local authority or other agency

Those in direct receipt of UK Sport Lottery funding are not eligible to apply to the Athlete Support Fund.

Application Process

Senior or Under 23 athletes or parents/guardians of junior athletes are invited to complete the application form [HERE](#).

Each application will be considered by the Independent award panel (the 'Panel'), made up of Paddle UK and Paddle England staff members, discipline committee representatives, and Chaired by the Director of Paddlesport. The Panel will consider applicants three times a year and will award funds "in principle", subject to confirmation of selection.

The anticipated closing dates for 2024 are as follows, these are subject to change based on confirmation of British or English team selection event dates.

2024 key dates:

Round 1: Closing date for applications is 9am, Monday 29th April 2024

Round 2: Closing date for application 9am, Monday 24th June 2024

Round 3: Closing date for application 9am, Monday 26th August 2024

The information within the application will be treated as sensitive and confidential. It will not be shared beyond the members of the Panel, except in exceptional circumstances. On occasion there may be a need to seek input from team managers and coaches in the interest of providing further context to support the application. The Panel Chair may also seek additional information regarding an application directly from the applicant (or parent/guardian if under 18). In the interest of impartiality the names, gender and ethnicity of the applicant will be anonymised from the application prior to the Panels consideration.

The funds available are limited and absolutely discretionary. There is no guarantee that an application will be successful and when considering applications the Panel will take a majority view in assessing the severity of financial hardship and the potential impact of the grant.

Applications will be decided on a case by case basis and no decision of the Panel will create a precedent for future cases.

The Panel will consider a range of factors in order to assess which grant will have the greatest impact. These factors include (but are not limited to) the degree of financial hardship, the applicant's personal circumstances (such as location, other bursaries or grant funding available), the purpose of the application, the potential impact of the fund and the current performance level of the athlete.

It is important that we are there to support those who are most in need and are at risk of being unable to compete. Should the fund be oversubscribed the panel may prioritise grants to athletes competing at the highest level within their discipline.

We treat fraudulent claims very seriously and we urge you to consider your own personal circumstances prior to applying to help ensure funds are allocated fairly to those most in need of support.

The Independent Awarding Panel will consist of the following Members;

Director of Paddlesport (Panel Chair), Club Support Manager, Finance Director, Head of Pathways, Competition and Events and two discipline Committee Representatives.

A normal award is anticipated to not exceed £500, in exceptional circumstances (such as, but not limited to, high travel costs) the panel will consider awarding grants up to £1000. Each application will be acknowledged and all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application after the panel meeting.

Eligible expenditure

Applications can be made to cover necessary expenditure associated with the cost of international competition attendance. Funds can only be used to cover the costs of:

- Athlete contributions to international competition
- Travel and accommodation for competition
- Entry and accreditation fees

Paddle England might request evidence that expenditure has been made in line with the athletes' original application at any point within a 12 month period of the fund being awarded.

Terms and Conditions

- Funds are awarded at the absolute discretion of Paddle England.
- Applicants may be asked to provide evidence of hardship based on specified criteria.
- Funding cannot be applied for retrospectively..
- Except in exceptional circumstances, only one grant per athlete will be awarded within a 12 month period.
- The Athlete Support Scheme will be subject to regular review.
- The Athlete Support Scheme should not be viewed as a regular source of income. There is no guarantee that this fund will continue on an annual basis and so it must not be relied upon to support continued involvement in the sport.
- Athletes should inform the Panel immediately in writing of any changes in their personal circumstances, during the term of the funding, which may directly or indirectly affect their application for funding (e.g. withdrawal from the team or squad due to sickness, injury, other incapacity, any other change in your personal circumstances.).

- Funding can be awarded “in principle” subject to the applicant being selected for a particular event or competition.

Conflicts of Interest

Paddle England is committed to upholding high standards of integrity, and as such, any applicant or person who is part of the funding decision making process shall declare any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest.

Data Protection

Paddle UK is a privacy conscious organisation and is strongly committed to an individual’s right to privacy. All data gathered during the course of any application will be processed and stored in compliance with the Paddle UK Data Protection Policy and in accordance with all applicable Data Protection laws in effect at the time of publication of this document, including but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which came into effect on 25 May 2018.

Further information on Paddle UK’s approach to privacy and data protection, including our privacy notices, policies and contact details, can be located in our Privacy Centre (<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/about/privacy-centre>). Should an individual wish any data we hold relating to them to be deleted at any point, they should contact us at GDPR@paddleuk.org.uk

Policies

For the avoidance of doubt this policy operates in conjunction with all relevant Paddle UK policies including but not limited to, Equality Policy, Complaints Policy, Anti-Doping Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Anti Bribery Policy.

Contacts

For further information please contact daniel.clarke@paddleuk.org.uk

* The median of UK equivalised household disposable income in 2022 as determined by the [Office of National Statistics](#)

For the purposes of the Athlete Support Scheme a family undergoing significant financial hardship is defined as any family currently claiming statutory benefit (other than child benefit) to supplement their household income of no more than the current median of UK equivalised household disposable income as determined by [Office of National Statistics](#). The latest figure will be used in defining this, which currently is the 2022 figure of £32,300.

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