



Club Guide

**Special
Olympics**
New Zealand



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The Special Olympics New Zealand Club Guide provides clubs information and resources to support their regular operations and functioning. It includes details specific to Special Olympics and links to best practice resources and guidance from across the sector.

Remember, any challenges your club is facing are likely to be shared by others across the Special Olympics network – don't hesitate to seek advice and support.

If you would like further information on anything within this Guide, or help connecting with other clubs, please contact your RSC or the RSC Director on rscdirector@specialolympics.org.nz



Section 1

Introduction

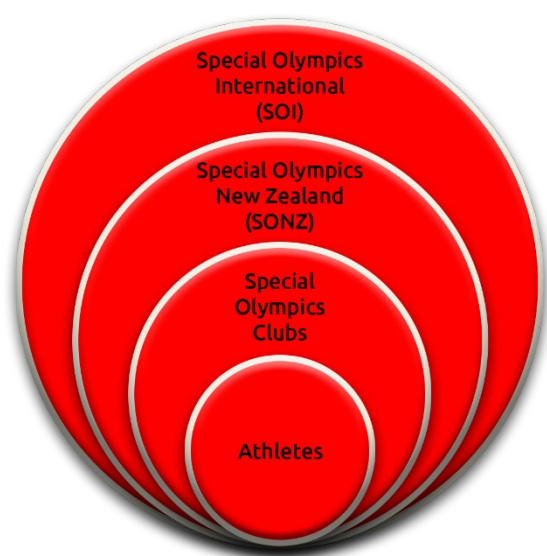
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Environment

Special Olympics International (SOI) is the governing body of the global Special Olympics movement and is responsible for maintaining and implementing the [Special Olympics General Rules](#), which include the requirements and policies that guide all levels of the movement.

Special Olympics New Zealand (SONZ) is the National Sports Organisation responsible for the execution of the SOI mission and objectives in Aotearoa. SONZ is responsible for the policies and procedures which govern and guide its operations and those of its member clubs. While SONZ has autonomy over many elements of programme delivery in New Zealand, some principles and regulations are determined by SOI.

SONZ member clubs are responsible for the local execution and achievement of SOI's global mission to provide year-round sports training and competition for their athletes. Clubs are autonomous entities responsible for their own functioning and operations, with support from SONZ and within SONZ and SOI parameters.



Affiliation

The working relationship between SONZ and each member club is underpinned by a *Relationship and Accreditation Agreement* that helps provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of both parties. It is signed on an annual basis and represents clubs' formal affiliation with SONZ. Once the Relationship and Accreditation Agreement is signed, SONZ provides clubs with a certificate of affiliation which will need to be provided to funders when applying for Class 4 Gaming Trusts.

Club Affiliation Fees

The setting of an annual club affiliation fee enables SONZ to demonstrate to key funding agencies that our own people can contribute a base sum to ensuring our ability to successfully operate, giving them the confidence to continue to support us. This affiliation fee directly covers SONZ's affiliation with Special Olympics International and insurances that are extended to clubs. The current affiliation fee is \$20 + GST per active athlete and is reviewed every two years.

RSC Support For Clubs

SONZ has eight Regional Sports Co-ordinators (RSCs) based across the country, each responsible for delivering, promoting and supporting Special Olympics activity within their respective regions.

This includes being the key point of contact and support for the region's identified clubs; the nature of this support role is outlined in the [RSC Support for Clubs document](#).

Special Olympics in New Zealand

Special Olympics New Zealand provides and supports sports opportunities for people with an intellectual disability throughout Aotearoa. Special Olympics utilises sport as a vehicle to promote a more inclusive society where people with an intellectual disability are empowered, visible and valued.



OUR VISION

People with intellectual disabilities in Aotearoa are valued



OUR PURPOSE

To enrich the lives of people with intellectual disabilities through sport

● [Special Olympics New Zealand Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#)

Participation and engagement with Special Olympics occurs primarily through the following programmes and events:



Young Athletes Programme

The Young Athletes Programme is a sport and play programme for tamariki aged approximately 2 – 10 years, delivered in both school and community settings. It introduces participants to basic sport and movement skills and includes a focus on social skills; learning to share, take turns, and follow instructions.



SONZ School Programme

SONZ delivers regular, adapted sport and physical activity sessions and multi-school events to secondary school students with an intellectual disability across Aotearoa. Through the School Programme, opportunities are available for clubs/Athlete Leaders to support, share their experiences and promote their offerings.



SO Club Programme

Special Olympics Clubs provide training and competition opportunities across a range of sports throughout Aotearoa, as well as social and leadership opportunities for their athletes. The Participation Framework outlines the types of participation opportunities and the associated eligibility criteria.



Major Events

SONZ hosts a National Summer Games and National Winter Games on a four-yearly basis. In line with the SOI directed quota, SONZ selects and supports a New Zealand representative team to compete in the World Summer and Winter Games, which are also held four-yearly.



Athlete Leadership

SONZ delivers an Athlete Leadership Programme (ALP) on an annual basis, that supports athletes to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills and contribute in ways beyond the sports field.

The Athlete Input Council (AIC) is made up of Athlete Leaders who are representatives of each Special Olympics region. It's a forum for athletes to discuss and share ideas, and a vehicle through which to advise and provide feedback to SONZ and the SONZ Board.

Special Olympics Club Sports

There are 13 officially sanctioned Special Olympics sports in New Zealand. Clubs can choose to offer any number of these sports to their athletes and, subject to registrations, these sports will be offered at SONZ national competitions.



Alpine Skiing



Athletics



Basketball



Bocce



Bowling



Equestrian



Football



Golf



Indoor Bowls



Powerlifting



Snowboarding



Swimming



Table Tennis

● [Special Olympics New Zealand Sports Rules](#)



Section 2

Club Governance and Management

1. Function of the Board/Committee
2. Board/Committee Roles
3. Legal Status of Clubs
4. Annual Returns
5. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Function of the Board/Committee

Effectively running a club requires strong planning, co-ordination, and communication. This includes being clear on what you are trying to achieve, the activity that needs to be completed to support this, and identifying who is responsible for doing what.

The performance of a club is greatly dependent on the effectiveness of its Board/Committee, and in particular the core roles of **Chairperson**, **Secretary** and **Treasurer**. Depending on the size and goals of your club, other roles or pieces of work that might need allocation (either inside or outside of the Board/Committee) include;

- **Defined roles and responsibilities and clarity of understanding** - people know what's expected of them and core tasks are allocated and executed efficiently.
- **Club sustainability** – ensuring knowledge and information can be retained when there is a changeover in personnel.
- **People's skillsets are well utilised** – when seeking support or recruiting new volunteers, you are clear what your needs are.



Fundraising
Co-ordinator



Volunteer
Co-ordinator



Athlete
Representative



Sports
Co-ordinator

Note – depending on their size, makeup and level of resourcing clubs will divide and allocate tasks and responsibilities in different ways across roles and have different role titles across their Board/Committee or wider club. In all scenarios, being clear on the structure and roles of your Board/Committee (and wider club) are important in ensuring;



Key Board/Committee Roles

The following example job descriptions and templates are guides only that can be tailored to reflect the specific needs and environment of your clubs.

Club Chairperson



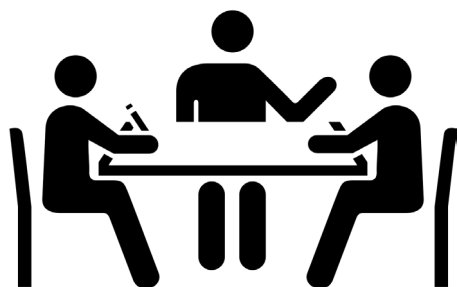
The Chairperson is the principal leader of a club and has overall responsibility for a club's leadership and governance delivery.

Core Responsibilities

- Overall leader of the club's programme delivery, and primary representative in dealings with external bodies.
- Ensure the club complies with all its obligations – for example with SONZ, the NZ Companies Office, Charities Services, grant funders etc.
- Chair meetings – regular meetings of the Board/Committee, the AGM and any Special General Meetings as required.
- Manage any complaints or issues of misconduct.
- Primary point of contact with SONZ.

● [Job Description Template](#)

Club Secretary



The Secretary is the chief administration officer of a club, often acting as the first point of contact for enquiries and requests for information.

Core Responsibilities

- Manage the registration of club athletes and volunteers
- Ensure that athlete and volunteer details and documentation held by the club are up to date and accessible by those who need them
- Prepare an annual schedule of Board/Committee meetings; prepare and distribute agendas
- Record and communicate minutes of meetings; follow up on action points with people responsible

● [Job Description Template](#)

Club Treasurer



The Treasurer is the chief financial management officer for a club and has overall responsibility for ensuring the club develops and maintains appropriate financial procedures.

Core Responsibilities

- Prepare and manage a budget (if deemed appropriate for the size of your club).
- Keep records of accounts and present these to the Board/Committee.
- Arrange invoicing, receipt of monies, banking and overall financial management of the club accounts, as approved by the Board/Committee.
- Preparation of the club's accounts annually.
- Arrange the audit (if required).
- Present the accounts at the AGM.
- File the club's annual returns with Charities Services.

● [Job Description Template](#)

Legal Status of Clubs

The majority of Special Olympics Clubs in New Zealand are incorporated as Charitable Trusts with the New Zealand Companies Office and are registered Charities with Charities Services. In these capacities, clubs have a range of responsibilities in operating in line with their charitable status, ensuring details are kept current and accurate, and filing annual returns.

Each Charitable Trust has a Trust Deed outlining the specific conditions under which it operates. These details can be found on the [Charitable Trusts Register](#).

Below are some links with helpful information in understanding your club's responsibilities;

- [NZ Companies Office – Your responsibilities as a charitable trust board](#)
- [Charities Services – Running your charity](#)

Annual Returns

Clubs are required to submit their [annual returns](#) to Charities Services annually, **no later than June 30**.

Different reporting standards apply to different sized charities; [click here](#) to understand what standards your club needs to meet.

Similarly, different audit and review requirements apply to different sized charities; [click here](#) to understand the differences between these processes.

Regardless of legal requirement, clubs should have robust systems in place to ensure that the club's finances are being managed accurately and responsibly. In addition, some grant funders may require a certain level of assurance around how accounts are reviewed.

Annual General Meeting

AGMs are a reporting meeting for the club which means that your club's aims, activities, and finances are reported on at the meeting. They are open to anyone directly involved with the club and are also when key roles like the chairperson are decided upon.

Clubs need to host an AGM on an annual basis (usually in February, March or April), in time to submit their annual returns to Charities Services no later than June 30. The required period of notice to be given to members ahead of the AGM, along with the process for the election of people to positions on the board is outlined in a club's Trust Deed.

Example AGM Agenda

1. Opening of meeting
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of previous AGM
4. Presentation of annual report and financial statements
5. Adoption of annual report
6. Election of board/committee members
7. Vote of thanks to outgoing board/committee members
8. Appointment of auditor (if required)
9. Notice(s) of motion
10. General business (as applicable to a general meeting; not core work of the board/committee)
11. Close of meeting

Helpful Links

- [Sport New Zealand have a range of Club Management resources and templates available to support sports clubs to operate effectively.](#)
- [CommunityNet has some helpful information for running an AGM.](#)



Section 3

Club Operations and Administration

1. Eligibility and Registrations
2. Volunteer Management
3. Managing Finances
4. Fundraising
5. Health & Safety

Eligibility and Registration

Athletes

To participate within a Special Olympics Club, an athlete must be officially [registered with Special Olympics New Zealand](#). This registration includes completion of a [medical screening](#) on joining the programme, and renewal of the medical certificate/registration every four years.

Unified Partners

A Unified Partner is a participant without an intellectual disability who participates alongside Special Olympics athletes. Unified Partners could be peers, friends, family members or club volunteers.

Unified Partners complete their registration using the same form as our athletes. However, Unified Partners are not required to complete and submit a medical to participate in SONZ activities.

More information will be shared around this process in 2024, as Unified Sport opportunities are formally introduced into the Special Olympics programme in New Zealand.

Volunteers

Individuals wishing to volunteer in a club should contact the club directly to understand the volunteering opportunities available. Once this has been established, volunteers need to officially register with SONZ, which includes completing a police vetting process at the time of registration, and on a three-yearly basis thereafter to maintain volunteer registration.

While SONZ manages the administration around volunteer registrations and the police vetting process, individual clubs manage the communications and liaising with volunteers, and leads their induction and upskilling regarding their role and responsibilities within the club.

The full process for registering a volunteer is outlined on the following page.

Athlete/Volunteer Transfers

The process for an athlete or volunteer transferring from one club to another is outlined [here](#).



Registering as a Volunteer

1.	Either the volunteer or a club representative completes the Volunteer Registration Form online.
2.	<p>An automated confirmation email is sent to both the nominated club address and, where different, the volunteer - noting that the registration has been received by SONZ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>If a confirmation email has not been received within an hour of submitting, the registration has not been received by SONZ - please contact admin@specialolympics.org.nz</i>- <i>If the club has any questions or concerns around the volunteer registration, they can also contact admin@specialolympics.org.nz to pause the processing of the registration while they work those through with the (potential) volunteer.</i>
3.	<p>When the registration has been completed in full, the SONZ Administration Officer will submit the registration for police vetting. This will be done as soon as possible, and within 5 working days of being received.</p> <p>If the registration has not been completed in full, the SONZ Administration Officer will contact the volunteer or club to source the missing information. This will result in a delay in being submitted to Police Vetting. Common errors to avoid include Page 4 of the Police Vetting form not being signed and dated, and Photo ID not being submitted and/or signed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>An application with Police Vetting can take anywhere between a couple of days to up to three months to be returned, though the large majority of applications are processed within 20 working days. SONZ is unable to get a status update from the Police Vetting service along the way.</i>
4.	Where the Police Vetting comes back clear, the SONZ Administration Officer will update the (re)-registration date in GMS and send a <i>Volunteer Approval Letter</i> to the club's nominated address and the relevant RSC. The club is then responsible for contacting the volunteer to confirm their (re)-registration and support their induction and onboarding as appropriate.
5.	If the police vetting returns a result, the volunteer registration will be referred to the SONZ Athlete Safeguarding Leads to review and follow the process outlined in the SONZ Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteer Ratios

Clubs are required to comply with a minimum 1:4 volunteer: athlete support ratio for all Special Olympics events. It is recommended this ratio is adhered to during trainings. Volunteers must be aged 18 years or older to be included in the 1:4 ratio.

The nature of a given activity (e.g. the unpredictable environment of Snow Sports) and clubs' understanding of their athletes may mean that a smaller ratio is committed to. In some instances, for the safety of an athlete themselves and/or those around them, it is appropriate that an athlete has 1:1 support. At national competitions, this level of support is an option for clubs to apply for.

Volunteer Management

Recruitment

Determining how many volunteers you need and the precise roles you would like them to play is important to ensure you are recruiting the right people and that the club is ready to utilise their skills when they come on board.

Role descriptions can help volunteers understand exactly what it is they're committing to and allows clubs to set clear expectations from the start. Volunteers can then make an informed decision as to whether they are suited to take on the role, increasing the likelihood of strong retention.

The [SONZ Participant Protection Framework](#) includes some guidelines and resources to support safer recruitment processes, ensuring appropriate screening takes place.

Induction and Orientation

An induction is key to ensuring new volunteers feel supported, clear on their role, and that they have made a great decision in joining your club. Investing time and effort in this process helps to ensure

new volunteers are well equipped to perform their role.

- Talk them through the key responsibilities of their role and any general guidelines, expectations or policies the club or SONZ has in place that will apply to them and their role.
- Task your new volunteer with completing the [Foundation](#) and [Development](#) courses to familiarise themselves with the Special Olympics environment.
- Introduce them to other volunteers within your club and any other volunteers/staff members who may be useful contacts.
- Run them through any Health and Safety policies and procedures, including the SONZ Safeguarding Policy.
- Provide role specific training – this could include shadowing the predecessor for some time if possible, or linking them up with a buddy.

Volunteer Recognition

Looking after your volunteers and creating an environment and culture where they feel valued is key. This could include having regular and meaningful ways to thank and celebrate your volunteers – e.g. through your social media channels, newsletters or website; having volunteer of the month or year awards/celebrations; hosting a morning or afternoon to celebrate volunteers etc.

Club Service Awards

Award pins and certificates that recognise 10, 20 and 30 years of consecutive service are available from SONZ. Clubs can request these to acknowledge volunteers who achieve these milestones. SONZ uses the registration information in GMS to confirm volunteers' years of service and eligibility for these awards.

National Awards

SONZ oversees Life Membership and Distinguished Service Awards which are open for nomination only for identified periods of time. These opportunities are communicated directly to Clubs when they are live.

Managing Finances

The size of your club will determine the financial management processes that need to be established and managed. Online accounting software (like Xero) is usually the easiest and simplest way to keep track of your club's accounts, though a manual process may be sufficient for smaller clubs.

To ensure the club's finances are managed responsibly, it can be helpful to have some core standards and commitments in place as appropriate for the size and activity of your club. Examples to consider include;

- A suitably qualified person is recruited to the role of Treasurer
- A budget for the year is determined and agreed, and expenditure is tracked against budget (if deemed appropriate for the size and activity of your club)
- Any funding accountability requirements are understood, adhered to and reconciled as required
- Monthly reports are produced and presented to the next Committee Meeting
- An annual audit or review is completed
- Two signatures are required for all accounts

Fundraising

Having a clear plan around fundraising activity will support the Club to achieve its goals. Key elements to consider in this planning include;

- Decide who will oversee the club's fundraising activity (e.g. fundraising coordinator, fundraising committee etc)
- Determine what purpose the funds are being raised for
- Identify potential sources of funds e.g.
 - traditional fundraising activity (raffles, bake sales, movie nights)
 - grant funding
 - [Tū Manawa Funding](#)
 - sponsorship
- Develop a fundraising plan – what avenues will be pursued for which funds, what are the key dates and deadlines that need to be met, who from the club will lead this activity etc
- Take the time to thank and maintain relationships with any donors, grant funders and sponsors

Grant Funding

Applying for grants may form part of your fundraising plan. Below is some general information and guidance around grant funding applications.

- To guide your planning, develop a funding calendar - outlining who you can apply to, for what, how much, and when.
- With some funders, you can only submit one annual application and for others, there isn't a limit.
- The [Department of Internal Affairs website](#) gives information about gaming machine societies that distribute grants to community groups. Information on other grant opportunities can be found via [Community Matters](#) and [Public Trust](#)
- Funders have different focus areas, priorities, and allowable expense items that you can apply for – ensure your

application is relevant to the funder you're applying to.

- Check that you meet any eligibility criteria e.g. location, non-profit, amount of reserves allowed etc.
- Remember you cannot use grant funding for any spending that has already occurred.
- Keep all of your relevant documentation saved - you'll need this for the accountability stage if your application is successful.

Most funders will require the following information, so it pays to have it collated and ready to go;

- Your Charities Services number (if you are registered). Make sure that the organisation name you use on the application matches what is registered with your charities number. If it doesn't match exactly, some online systems won't accept your application.
- Some funders are now also asking for your NZ Business Number (if you have one)
- Bank account number and account name
- PDF copy of bank deposit slip to attach to your application
- GST number (if registered)
- IRD number
- A list of your board or committee members' names (date this document and keep it updated)
- Quotes dated within three months of the application are provided on the supplier's letterhead, with their contact details.
- Signed resolution from your board or committee detailing who you are applying to, for what and how much.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is when businesses and companies provide funds, resources or services to a club or athlete, in return for commercial rights and or associations with the club or athlete. These may take the form of a logo on a uniform or equipment,

signs at a venue, or free advertising in a newsletter.

Sponsorship links a club with a sponsor in a mutually beneficial relationship that is not just about money. An effective sponsor can add considerable value by, for example, becoming the club's primary promoter. In the long term, this may be of more value than the sponsorship income initially received.

There are a number of different ways in which a commercial partnership can be developed – with different properties, assets or promotional opportunities “exchanged for an agreed value.” Special Olympics on a regional and national level has the ability to deliver a variety of valuable leverage opportunities to a partner, with a brand many will see the value of associating with. It is important to clearly outline and agree what your club will deliver a sponsor, who will cover any costs in delivering the association (e.g. branded banners), where and when the opportunities will be brought to life and who is responsible for managing the agreement and relationship.

There are a number of branding opportunities and considerations clubs should keep in mind when developing and managing commercial partnerships, including but not limited to the following:

- Special Olympics International requirements - SOI have some guidelines and restrictions around the use of sponsor logos on playing uniforms. Clubs should understand and use these [guidelines](#) when updating club uniforms and apparel.
- Permission and sign off of brand inclusion in any collateral or event promotional materials. Seek brand guidelines from sponsor organisations and ensure they are followed.
- Quality presentation of brands – high res files, correct colours, application on backgrounds etc
- Where possible think creatively about where you can give sponsors added value and leverage.

- It's more than just \$\$ and brand placement; invite sponsor representatives to attend events, acknowledge the contribution and support in speeches and any media or PR, take the time to get to know what they personally value and hope to achieve with the partnership.
- Partner with organisations who share your values, understand and support the purpose of Special Olympics.

Helpful Links

- [Regional Sports Trusts can often help provide information around grant funding options within the region and currently have a fun called Tū Manawa which clubs can apply to.](#)
- [Sport NZ – Financial Management for Clubs](#)
- [Aktive – Resource Hub](#)



Health and Safety

Club Responsibilities

Clubs have a duty of care to create and maintain a safe environment for their members, and implement sound health and safety practices. This includes things like understanding and minimising hazards, risk management planning, and reporting mechanisms for accidents and incidents.

Clubs' legal requirements will depend on whether or not they have any paid staff. Even if your club is entirely voluntary, it is still important that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of participants and volunteers.

To ensure health & safety is managed responsibly by the club, having some core standards and commitments in place is advised. Examples to consider include;

- Someone holds responsibility for ensuring that any H&S policy or commitments are implemented and adhered to
- The Club will adhere to all safety related directives from SONZ/SOI e.g. volunteer: athlete ratio
- The Club aims to have first aid equipment and adequately trained volunteers available for competition and training
- Accidents, incidents and near misses occurring will be documented including any follow up actions. This will be regularly viewed by the Committee to inform any risk management strategies required
- Club coaches will ensure that players utilise personal safety equipment, and that general playing equipment is well maintained

- Risk assessment and management planning will be undertaken for all Club events and travel

Helpful Links

- [Sport NZ – Health & Safety for Clubs](#)
- [Health & Safety at Work Act - Volunteers](#)

Risk Assessment & Management

Understanding and taking steps to manage the risks associated with your club activity is a key element of your club's Health and Safety responsibilities. This process involves identifying the risks that are present and outlining any mitigations to eliminate, minimise or isolate these risks.

A Risk Assessment & Management process should be undertaken and form completed for each event your club is hosting.

- [RAMs Template](#)

First Aid

Ideally, a volunteer with a first aid qualification should be present at all club activity (trainings and competition). Coaches should have access to a first aid kit during all activity.

Ratios

Clubs are required to comply with a 1:4 volunteer: athlete support ratio for all Special Olympics events. It is recommended this ratio is adhered to where possible during trainings.

The nature of the activity and clubs' understanding of their athletes may mean that a smaller ratio is committed to. In some instances, for the safety of an athlete themselves and/or those around them, it is appropriate that an athlete has 1:1 support. At national competitions, this level of support is an option for clubs to apply for.

Athlete Information

Clubs should ensure the appropriate volunteers/coaches have a copy of any relevant details from their athletes' medicals and emergency contact details on hand, at training and competition.

Accident Reporting

Clubs should have a process for reporting and recording any incidents or accidents that occur during club activity. This enables the club to ensure appropriate follow-up and support of athletes/volunteers can be undertaken, and to identify if there are any trends or learnings that can be adopted to ensure future incidents can be minimised or avoided.

Clubs do not need to provide completed accident forms to SONZ unless support is required with follow up.

- [Example incident/accident form](#)
- [Example Hazard Register](#)

Safeguarding

The [Special Olympics New Zealand Participant Protection Framework](#) aims to support best practice in safeguarding, and promoting a safe and fun environment for athletes, families and volunteers.

SONZ has two Athlete Safeguarding Leads (ASLs) who lead on the education and support around the Participant Protection Framework and are the 'go-to' for the SONZ community for any safeguarding questions or concerns;

- Josie Fitzsimons
rscdirector@specialolympics.org.nz
- Fran Scholey
ceo@specialolympics.org.nz

Special Olympics clubs are required to have an identified Club Safeguarding Lead (by end of March 2024) who helps to promote a culture of safeguarding and is the key point of contact for any safeguarding concerns in the club community.

Misconduct and Complaints

While parties are always encouraged to resolve matters between themselves, Special Olympics New Zealand's Complaints, Member Discipline & Appeals Policy allows for complaints to be made where this cannot be achieved. The Complaints Process within this policy outlines who various types of complaints should be directed to.

- [SONZ Complaints, Member Discipline & Appeals Policy.](#)



Section 4

Club Events

1. Participation Framework
2. Events Calendar
3. Hosting Events
4. Uniform Guidelines

Participation Framework

The Special Olympics New Zealand Participation Framework outlines the participation opportunities available to our athletes, the tiered competition pathway, and the guidelines and recommendations for each tier.

The Participation Framework will be published by the end of 2023.

Events Calendar

A national calendar of club-hosted events is established annually, to provide competition and qualifying opportunities for athletes. In line with the Participation Framework, there are windows for different types of events to be delivered that align with the national event cycle.

The development of the calendar requires co-ordination between individual clubs, each region as a collective, and SONZ. Commitments are required from all parties to help create an events calendar that maximises participation opportunities that are well attended. SONZ will communicate the process, timeframes and responsibilities in July, for the development of the following year's calendar.

Hosting Events

The [Club Event Management Timeline](#) outlines the actions, responsibilities and timeframes that guide the administrative, communications and programming preparations for an event. It commences approximately three months out from an event and requires strong collaboration between the RSC, Event Manager and SONZ GMS Lead.

The fundamental components of managing an event include;



Date and Venue

Ensure your event is in the Club Events Calendar and your facility is booked. Have a key contact person at the facility to work through logistics and understand where everything will happen on the day, what is provided and what you need to source yourself. You'll need to be clear how many courts/fields/lanes etc you'll have access to.



Event Format

You'll need to be familiar with and make decisions on how your event is being formatted – this includes things like what disciplines/events are offered, the way a tournament is structured (e.g. round robin, singles, pairs) and how the scoring/results work.



Rules and Policies

Official SOI sport rules can be [accessed here](#). In some sports, other policies or rules may also be relevant – e.g. from the relevant national sports body.



Communications

Your Event Invitation should clearly provide all the information that invited clubs need in order to determine and prepare their entries. RSCs will provide an invitation template to Event Managers that outlines all key details that need to be covered (e.g. key contacts, tentative timings, entry deadlines, payment information etc).

GMS and Programming



GMS is the system SONZ uses to create programmes for club events. Event Managers, RSCs and the SONZ GMS Lead each have responsibilities to implement the Club Event Management Timeline and ensure relevant information is received and provided in a timely manner, to enable the production of the programme.

Event formatting and divisioning decisions are based on the information received via entry forms, and SOI guidelines.

Clubs are required to submit all event results to their RSC upon completion of an event. These results are imported into the National Copy of GMS and provide individual athlete qualification data directly to SONZ.



Health and Safety

The Host Club/Event Manager is responsible for ensuring a [Risk Management Plan](#) is prepared and adhered to.



Equipment

Equipment used in club events should be in line with SOI rules. Sometimes local clubs or sports bodies are able to loan sport-specific equipment for an event.



Officials

Officials manage the sports competition and rules (e.g. football referees, swimming technical officials, powerlifting judges etc) You'll need to be familiar with the various roles required to deliver the event and where you can source this expertise.



Volunteers

General volunteer needs will vary across sports/events and include the likes of marshalling, organising lunches, managing award ceremonies, being a runner/providing extra hands etc. Planning should include identifying what roles and how many are required to deliver your event and who these are being filled by.



Catering

You'll need to determine if you're providing lunches for volunteers/athletes or whether teams are expected to bring their own. If you are providing, you'll need to determine who will provide or prepare this catering and communicate to attending clubs the charge per person and how payment is made.

If your club would like to work towards hosting an event but needs support, please get in touch with your RSC.

Introducing a New Sport to your Club

The decision to introduce a new sport at your club may come from a range of factors – for example appetite of current athletes, an intent to attract new athletes, a new volunteer with a particular skillset or a regional sports body in a position to offer resource and drive an opportunity.

In all scenarios, it's important that a number of considerations are worked through to ensure appropriate planning is in place and any growth can happen in a successful and sustainable way;

- Is it a sanctioned Special Olympics sport in New Zealand?
- Do you have the volunteer workforce to manage the administration and logistics of a new, additional sport?
- Is there clear athlete demand or promotional opportunities to connect with potential new athletes?
- Are there competition opportunities for this sport?
- Do you have an appropriately skilled coach?
- Are there training facilities available?
- Can your club realistically finance a new sport and growth in athlete numbers?

Hosting a one-off or series of standalone “have a go” opportunities may be a way to test appetite before committing to a formal introduction of a sport to your club's programme.

Talk to your RSC to work through the planning considerations of introducing a new sport, and to ensure SONZ retains an accurate record of sports offered by each club. They may also be able to utilise their relationship with local secondary schools to help grow interest in a new opportunity.

Uniform Guidelines

SONZ clubs are required to adhere to the Special Olympics Club Uniform Guidelines which are found [here](#).

Clubs should refer to these guidelines when looking to make changes to club uniforms and sports apparel.