



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Women in Sport

Leadership Programme 2025

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In the line with the Sport Ireland Policy on Women in Sport (WIS Policy), Sport Ireland are pleased to announce the launch of a Women in Sport (WIS) Leadership Programme aimed at females from across the sport sector.

Leadership and governance continue as priorities for Sport Ireland and the Government, and we are committed to increasing the number of women in leadership and governance roles. (Objective 2, Sport Ireland WIS Policy). The development of quality leadership courses, tools, and resources is a key action under this objective.

The WIS Leadership programme will commence on Saturday January 25th 2025 and will conclude Wednesday April 2nd (or upon completion of a final individual mentoring session). The programme offers a blended learning experience with in-person and online sessions. It will be delivered in collaboration with Jo Hopkins Consulting, a global team of experts in sport and business, who have been enabling individuals and teams to consistently perform to the very best of their ability, for over 20 years.

This programme is designed for:

Participants who identify as female, working or volunteering in sport, who don't have access to suitable/similar development opportunities, specifically:

- Women employed at any level in a Sport Ireland funded body with the potential/desire to progress to a leadership or more senior leadership role.
- Women volunteering within a Sport Ireland funded body with the potential/desire to progress to a leadership or more senior leadership role, e.g. to Board level.
- Female Board Members of Sport Ireland funded bodies.



Key features of the programme

This programme will enhance your strategic thinking, self-awareness, understanding of good governance and your leadership capabilities.

Introductory One Day Workshop (In Person)

Participants will focus on understanding themselves as a leader, authentic leadership, leadership styles, change management, the importance of personal values and how they can influence behaviour.

7 x 90min Online Zoom Sessions

1. Authentic Leadership - Leadership Journeys & Approaches with Angela Platt
 2. The Principles of Good Governance and Strategic Leadership with John Steele
 3. Leading Change in a Performance Environment with Bridget Jolliffe
 4. Creating the Right Culture & Developing High Performing Teams with Karen Brown
 5. Influencing & Negotiating Skills - Developing Influencing and Negotiating Skills and Gravitas with Harriet Beveridge
 6. The Importance of Good Governance And the Value of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion with Claire Harvey & Anne-Marie Hughes
 7. Understanding Networking & the Creation of your Personal Action Plan with Jo Hopkins & Eliza Downey
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3 x Mentoring Sessions

Mentoring sessions will take place with experienced performance coaches at the start, middle and end of the programme. These sessions will help develop participants personal development plans and establish the next steps on their leadership journey.

Access to the 'One Smart World' platform (4 Dimensions of Intelligence Questionnaire which generates individual thinking styles profile)

The first mentoring session will focus on insights from One Smart World. Coaches will help participants understand their preferred operating style and how this may influence how they work with others and how they adjust when under pressure.

Access to the JHC pre-recorded 'Performance Leadership – Brilliant Basics Programme'

7 optional online modules that complement the learnings covered across the 7 online zoom sessions, topics include;

1. Factors that drive individual and team performance
2. The importance of self-awareness
3. The impact of pressure on behaviour
4. High performing team development
5. Understanding change
6. Skills development and peer coaching
7. Followership

Note: This optional online programme is fully accredited by Ulster University. Participants who complete it, will gain accreditation from Ulster University by completing a short assessment. This accreditation is worth 5 credits that can be put towards a future qualification. Further information will be provided on the induction day.

Programme Schedule

Activity	Date	Time	Location
Week 1: Introduction to Leadership In person Workshop	Sat 25th January	09.30-16.00	Radisson Blu Hotel, Dublin Airport
Week 2: Authentic Leadership Journey Angela Platt	Wed 29th January	19:30-20:00	Online Zoom
Issued Online Profiling Tool for completion before your 1:1 Session			
Select date for your First 1:1 Session	Self-selected	1 hour	Online Zoom
Week 4: Strategic Leadership John Steele	Wed 19th February*	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Week 5: Leading Change in a HP Environment Bridget Jolliffe	Wed 26th Feb	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Week 6: High Performing Teams Karen Brown	Wed 5th March	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Week 7: Influencing, Negotiating Skills & Gravitas Harriet Beveridge	Wed 12th March	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Select date for your Second 1:1 Session			
Second 1:1 Mentoring Session	Self-selected	1 hour	Online Zoom
Week 9: Governance/Ethics/EDI Claire Harvey	Wed 26th March	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Week 10: Understanding Networking & the Creation of Personal Action Plan	Wed 2nd April	19:00-20:30	Online Zoom
Select date for your Third 1:1 Session			
Third 1:1 Mentoring Session	Self-selected		Online Zoom

* Please note this date falls over ROI mid-term break, if you are unable to attend this date, we can arrange a recording of this session to be distributed in special circumstances.



Facilitators, Mentors and Contributors



JO HOPKINS CONSULTING

Jo Hopkins – Lead Facilitator and Project Manager

Jo is the founder of Jo Hopkins Consulting (JHC) and a Global Master Trainer for One Smart World Inc. A former international athlete and coach, a trained counsellor, teacher, consultant and adjunct of Hult Ashridge Executive Education.

Jo's roles, (including her tenure as Performance Mentor for Team GB Performance Services Team, Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020), have honed her skills and processes working with senior leadership teams who are required to deliver under extreme pressure.

With over 20 years of experience developing people, in sport, business, public and voluntary sector, Jo has a trademark for a challenging yet supportive approach which encourages and empowers individuals to take control of your environment and responsibility for your own performance.

Jo established JHC in 2014 with a singular desire to help people succeed. Working only with the very best she ensures that every organisation is assured a tailor-made delivery.

Eliza Downey – Co-Facilitator on the Programme and Mentor

Over the past 16 years, Eliza has worked in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Gaining expertise in the fields of sports development, team development, event management, programme design and delivery and performance coaching and mentoring. Eliza is a former Irish International Rugby and All Ireland winning County Gaelic Football player and has been immersed in the world of sport her entire life.

In her current role and with her experience in freelance Leadership, Performance Mentoring/Coaching and Team Development Consultancy, Eliza has frequently worked with National Governing Bodies within Ireland and the UK, coaching and developing High Performance female athletes, teams and coaches. Eliza supports many in their leadership journey, enabling them to create effective relationships that benefit them and their team in all types of environments. Eliza is currently completing the ILM Level 7 Executive Coaching and Mentoring Certificate.

Karen Brown - Online Workshop Contributor and Mentor

Karen is an Olympic Gold Medal winning coach, a former international hockey player and performance mentor working across 8 Olympic Sports. She also is a performance consultant for organisations such as Arsenal FC, Watford FC, the Premier League and UK Sport.

Harriet Beveridge – Online Workshop Contributor

Harriet started her career as a management consultant with Ernst and Young, specialising in large scale change programmes. She is now a one-to-one and group coach with 15 years' experience working in a range of industries, including banking, law, manufacturing and retail. She has coached at partner and senior manager level and enjoys helping high potential staff accelerate their progression.

Harriet has co-authored two books: 'Will It Make the Boat Go Faster? - Olympic-Winning Strategies for Everyday Success' and 'Top Tips for Talented Working Parents'. She is also a stand-up Comic and was semi-finalist at the 2011 UK Funny Women Award.

Claire Harvey – Online Workshop Contributor

Claire is a Team GB Seated volleyball paralympic athlete. Claire started her career within the criminal justice system, notably as a Prison Governor, managing a resettlement prison and as a riot commander. She went on to work as Young Adult Offender Policy Lead in the Ministry of Justice, making radical and significant improvements to the system. She took on the role as the Equality and Diversity Lead, realising the power that culture plays in behaviours and organisational performance. She reimagined her career and joined the FSA (the UK financial regulator) as Head of Corporate Responsibility and Culture, embedding inclusion and positive culture into the supervisory framework.

Anne Marie Hughes – Online Workshop Contributor

Anne-Marie Hughes joined the IRFU in 2015 as the organisation's Spirit of Rugby Programme Manager, responsible for inclusion, the integrity of the game, safeguarding and developing leadership at all levels of rugby. She was responsible for establishing the IRFU Youth Council and the Spirit of Rugby Programme that aims to ensure the values of the game are embedded across all rugby activities. In 2023, Anne Marie was appointed Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity within the Union.

Bridget Jolliffe – Online Workshop Contributor

Bridget is an Organisation Development Consultant, specialising in organisational behaviour, leadership and team development. With 20 years' experience working across a variety of sectors, both in the UK and internationally, she works with leaders and your teams on transforming your business, using a variety of interventions to improve capability and organisational effectiveness. By combining her knowledge of business, management and the behavioural sciences, Bridget helps leaders optimise personal, team and organisational performance.

Angela Platt – Online Workshop Contributor

Angela Platt is the Irish Football Association's first ever Director of Women's Football following spells as CEO in both Ulster Hockey and the Northern Cricket Union. Angela is also the founding Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Women's Sports Forum – a position she has held for over 15 years.

A former elite athlete, Angela played for the Ireland senior international hockey team and represented the Senior NI Women's Football Team. She competed in hockey, football, athletics and badminton at youth international level.

John Steele – Online Workshop Contributor

John Steele has a unique blend of experience in creating and leading high performing teams, developed as a professional sports coach and chief executive in the private, public, and not for profit sectors.

He served as an army officer, having been trained at the prestigious Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to lead teams in high pressure environments. On leaving the army he worked in the corporate world before becoming a professional rugby player.

The winning of the bid for the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics saw John take up post as CEO of UK Sport, which he led for a six-year period through Beijing and into London. He has had leadership roles in eleven different games including the record-breaking Rio Olympics and Paralympics, and unprecedented games in Tokyo. John succeeded Steve Cram as Chairman of the English Institute of Sport in 2013 and finished his second term in 2021.

Application Process

We welcome applications from females already operating in or wishing to pursue a leadership role within the sport sector. Applicants must be verified and nominated by their National Governing Body, Local Sports Partnership or other funded body of Sport Ireland.

Please only apply if you are committed to attending the full schedule outlined within this brochure, a minimum attendance of 80% is required to successfully complete the programme. To apply, please complete the application form below and email it to odc@sportireland.ie, cc your CEO/Coordinator/most relevant senior leader no later than January 11th 2025. Applications via post will not be accepted.

All applications will be reviewed by Sport Ireland for eligibility and applicants will be notified of their status in writing no later than 17 January 2025.

Questions

Should you have any questions in relation to the programme and the application process, please contact odc@sportireland.ie.



Women in Sport Leadership Programme

Application Form

SECTION 1: Personal Information

Please complete the following information regarding your application electronically.

Applicant's Name:	
Organisation:	Role Title:
Occupation outside of sport if applicable:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	Mobile Number:

SECTION 2: Personal Statement

Please use the space below to complete a personal statement indicating why you believe you should be selected for the Women in Sport Leadership Programme. Please indicate what you hope to achieve from participation on the programme and how it will build management capability within your organisation. (Between 250 - 500 words)

SECTION 3: Approval

All applications must be supported by the CEO in the participant's organisation.

CEO/Coordinator/Most relevant Senior Leader Name:

CEO/Coordinator/Most relevant Senior Leader Role:

CEO/Coordinator/Most relevant Senior Leader Email:

Please outline in detail the leadership opportunities your organisation will provide this applicant upon completion of the programme:

CEO/Coordinator/Most relevant Senior Leader Signature:



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