



ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Application Deadline: August 1st, 2026

Grants Awarded: August 24th, 2026

The Athlete Development Grant Program is designed to support athletes pursuing exceptional training and competitive development opportunities, accelerating their progression toward future high-performance success. Our aim is to have these grants available each year for at least the next three years (2026, 2027 and 2028).

This funding is intended to help athletes access overseas/international travel, training, coaching, competition, and development opportunities that may not otherwise be available due to financial and logistical constraints. Opportunities may occur within Canada, across North America, or internationally.

The program aims to support:

- Access to new or increased volume of high-quality training experiences
- Increased competitive exposure
- Development of horses and horsepower
- Growth of athlete and owner relations
- Progression toward future 4* and 5* competition
- Long-term athlete development leading toward international team aspirations

The High Performance Advisory Group (HPAG) may award grants across the three funding tiers based on application quality and available funding. The objective is to support the greatest number of high-impact athlete-development opportunities while maintaining meaningful investment in the funded proposals.

Application Review and Conflict of Interest

All applications will be reviewed by the Eventing High Performance Advisory Group (HPAG), including athlete representative(s). Applications will be evaluated using the published grant criteria and scoring rubric.

To ensure a fair and transparent process, all HPAG members must declare any real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest related to an applicant or proposed project. Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, coaching relationships,



ownership interests, business partnerships, family relationships, financial interests, or any other circumstance that could reasonably be **perceived** to influence impartial judgment.

HPAG members with a declared conflict of interest will not participate in the discussion, scoring, ranking, or funding recommendation for the affected application and will be recused from that portion of the review process.

Final funding recommendations will be based on application scores, alignment with program objectives, available funding, and the HPAG's collective assessment. All funding decisions are final.

Grant Categories

- Applicants may apply for one of three funding levels or any combination of the tiers.
- The HPAG may award multiple grants at any amount up to the requested tier level

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<i>Major Development Grant</i>	<i>Training Grant</i>	<i>Supplemental Grant</i>
Up to \$15,000	Up to \$7500	Up to \$3000
For significant development plans such as: • International/overseas travel and development opportunities • Competition tours • Multi-week or overseas training with high-performance coach	For focused development opportunities such as: • Training camps • Competition travel • Specialized training opportunities • Coaching support at competitions	For targeted plans such as: • Clinics • Coaching sessions • Training weekends • Bringing experts to a home base • Competition preparation support (<i>facility hires, mental performance coaching</i>) • Owner engagement and experiences



Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be members in good standing with Equestrian Canada
- Have at least a CCI3*-L MER between January 1, 2025 and August 1, 2026
- Demonstrate aspirations toward future high-performance pathways.
- Have a clear development plan for themselves and their horses that has been reviewed in consultation with the Eventing High Performance Technical Advisor, Rebecca Howard.
- Complete the funded proposal between July 2026 and July 2027

Priority will be given to:

- NTP-listed athletes
- Proposals benefiting multiple horses
- Athletes demonstrating program growth, and NTP program participation (Nutrition, HR monitoring, Strength and Conditioning)

Eligible Expenses

Funding may be used for:

- Coaching and training fees*
- Competition entry fees
- Horse transportation
- Athlete travel
- Accommodation
- Stabling
- Facility rental
- Bringing coaches or specialists to train athletes
- Cross-border or international development opportunities

***NOTE:** *Funding is not intended to cover routine annual competition fees or routine training expenses. Allocation of funds to cover lesson/training with your regular coach will only be considered if proposed as intensive training away from your daily training environment.*



Application Requirements

Applicants must submit:

1) Proposal Description

Maximum three pages outlining:

- The opportunity
- Previous successful use of funding, if applicable
- Identify the impact of the funding
- Expected outcomes
- Timeline

2) Development Statement

Describe:

- Current competitive level
- Long-term goals
- How does this opportunity support your progression

3) Horse Information

Include:

- Horses involved
- Current level of each horse
- Future goals for each horse

4) Budget

Detailed budget including:

- Itemized and total project cost
- Funding requested
- Other funding sources
- Owner and personal contribution

5) Support Letter

One letter from a coach, mentor, or performance advisor to include details on:

- Athlete readiness
- Suitability of the opportunity
- Likelihood of measurable development
- Commitment to high-performance progression

6) Recipient Reporting Requirements

Within 60 days of project completion, recipients must submit a one-page report outlining activities completed, outcomes achieved, and lessons learned (areas for improvement) to the Manager, Eventing High Performance, Dr. Emily Gilbert, egilbert@equestrian.ca



Evaluation Rubric (110 Points)

Category	Weight
Development Impact	25
Quality of Opportunity	15
Evidence & Rationale	15
Horse Development/Horsepower Growth	15
Competitive Exposure and Experience	10
Feasibility & Budget	10
Alignment with HP Pathway	10
Program Engagement	5
Application Quality	5

Reviewers will assign a score of 1–5 for each category. Scores will then be weighted according to the category value shown below to produce a total score out of 110.

SCORING GUIDE

Developmental Impact

How much does the opportunity advance the athlete's development and move them toward higher-performance competition? The stronger and more measurable the expected outcomes, the higher the score.

Score	Description
5 – Excellent	Transformational opportunity likely to significantly accelerate progression toward higher-performance competition and long-term goals. Clear, measurable outcomes expected.
4 – Strong	Significant developmental opportunity with substantial benefits and strong potential to improve performance.
3 – Good	Meaningful opportunity with identifiable developmental benefits, though impact may be more incremental.
2 – Fair	Limited developmental benefit or outcomes are not well defined.
1 – Weak	Minimal impact on athlete progression or unclear developmental value.



Quality of Opportunity

The quality and uniqueness of the experience, including access to elite coaching, facilities, expertise, training environments, or learning opportunities that are not normally available.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Provides access to world-class coaching, facilities, expertise, or experiences not normally available to the athlete.
4 - Strong	High-quality opportunity with clear benefits and access to advanced resources or expertise.
3 - Good	Solid opportunity that offers useful development experiences.
2 - Fair	Opportunity provides limited new learning or exposure.
1 - Weak	Little evidence of meaningful developmental value.

Evidence and Rationale

How well the application explains why the opportunity is needed, how it addresses specific development goals, and what evidence supports the expected benefits.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Proposal is exceptionally well supported with clear rationale, objectives, expected outcomes, and evidence that the opportunity addresses identified development needs.
4 - Strong	Strong rationale with clear connection between the opportunity and development goals.
3 - Good	Adequate rationale and explanation of expected benefits.
2 - Fair	Limited supporting evidence or weak connection between opportunity and goals.
1 - Weak	Little justification provided or rationale is unclear.



Horse Development/Horsepower Growth

The extent to which the opportunity improves the development, performance, and future potential of the horse(s), including benefits to current and future competition horses.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Benefits multiple horses and significantly advances current and future horsepower development.
4 - Strong	Provides substantial developmental benefit to one or more horses with clear progression outcomes.
3 - Good	Positive impact on horse development with reasonable progression benefits.
2 - Fair	Limited horse development outcomes.
1 - Weak	Minimal or unclear benefit to horse development.

Competitive Exposure and Experience

How much the opportunity increases exposure to stronger competition, higher-performance environments, international experiences, or more challenging competitive settings.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Provides significant exposure to higher-level competition, international environments, or challenging competitive settings.
4 - Strong	Meaningful increase in competition level or experience.
3 - Good	Moderate increase in competitive opportunities and exposure.
2 - Fair	Limited competitive advancement or exposure.
1 - Weak	Minimal competitive benefit.



Feasibility and Budget

Whether the plan is realistic, achievable, and supported by a clear, accurate budget that demonstrates good value for the investment.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Detailed, realistic, and well-supported budget. Project is highly achievable and demonstrates excellent value for investment.
4 - Strong	Budget and project plan are realistic with only minor assumptions or uncertainties.
3 - Good	Generally feasible with adequate budget information.
2 - Fair	Some concerns regarding budget accuracy, planning, or project delivery.
1 - Weak	Significant concerns regarding feasibility, budget, or likelihood of successful completion.

Alignment with HP Pathway

How closely the opportunity supports progression along the High Performance pathway, including long-term goals such as national team selection and championship-level performance.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Strongly aligned with progression toward future championship-level performance, national team objectives, and long-term high-performance goals.
4 - Strong	Clear alignment with high-performance development objectives.
3 - Good	Reasonable connection to long-term performance goals.
2 - Fair	Limited alignment with the high-performance pathway.
1 - Weak	Little connection to future high-performance objectives.



Program Engagement

The athlete's level of participation in High Performance and National Team Program activities, including education, HR monitoring, strength and conditioning, nutrition, and other development initiatives.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Consistently engaged in NTP and HP programming, including monitoring, education, nutrition, strength and conditioning, and athlete development initiatives.
4 - Strong	Demonstrates regular participation in most available program activities and services.
3 - Good	Participates in some program initiatives and demonstrates willingness to engage.
2 - Fair	Limited participation in available programming.
1 - Weak	Minimal or no demonstrated engagement with HP program initiatives.

Application Quality

The overall quality of the application. Is it clear, complete, professional, well-organized, and persuasive.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Clear, concise, professional, complete, and highly persuasive application.
4 - Strong	Well-prepared application with only minor omissions or weaknesses.
3 - Good	Adequately prepared and understandable application.
2 - Fair	Missing important details or lacking clarity in several areas.
1 - Weak	Poorly organized, incomplete, or difficult to evaluate.