



EQUESTRIAN
CANADA
ÉQUESTRE

POSITION SPECIFICATION

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER**

2026



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01 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT



ABOUT EQUESTRIAN CANADA

Equestrian Canada, known across the sport as EC, is both Canada's amateur athletic association for equestrian sport and its national federation. Founded in 1977 and based in Ottawa, it serves as the national governing body for the sport and a national voice for the wider horse industry. EC delivers its mandate through 11 provincial and territorial member organizations that together reach approximately 90,000 equestrians across the country. Within that community, more than 15,000 hold an EC sport licence to compete, and EC sanctions more than 400 competitions each season. Each season it sanctions more than 400 competitions across the country, and it operates on an annual budget of approximately \$6.7 million. Over the decades, EC has evolved from grassroots origins into a formalized, structured, and professionally governed national organization with currently ~30 employees. It operated as Equine Canada until 2016, when it adopted its current name to clarify its mandate to the horse community and the public.

EC represents and advocates for tens of thousands of sport licence holders and active horses, in and out of competition. Working alongside its Provincial and Territorial Sport Organization partners, together with collaborators, donors, sponsors, and affiliate organizations, EC occupies a pivotal position in the equestrian sector nationwide. In partnership with its community and its volunteers, EC champions best practices, encourages participation, and pursues excellence, all in service of a shared purpose: fostering a lifelong connection between people, horses, and sport.

A NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY AND A MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION

EC holds two roles at once, and the relationship between them shapes nearly everything it does.

As the national governing body for the sport, EC:

- Sets and enforces the rules and sanctions more than 400 competitions each season, from entry level events through to gold and international levels
- Licenses athletes and records horses, including through a national Horse ID program
- Certifies and regulates coaches, through the National Coaching Certification Program, along with officials such as judges and stewards
- Leads safe sport, athlete protection, and national standards and testing
- Directs high performance and the national team pathway

As a membership organization, EC exists to serve its people. Members and licence holders are served through the Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations, known as PTSOs, which are EC's partners in every province and territory. The community EC serves spans competitive and recreational riders, owners, coaches, officials, competition organizers, breeders, and a substantial volunteer base. This dual mandate requires EC to govern and to serve at the same time, balancing national consistency with the varied needs of different regions, disciplines, and member groups.

ABOUT EQUESTRIAN CANADA (CONT.)

THE DISCIPLINES AND THE BREEDS

EC organizes the sport primarily by discipline rather than by breed. It governs the eight international disciplines recognized by the Fédération Équestre Internationale, the world governing body known as the FEI:

- Dressage
- Jumping, also called show jumping
- Eventing
- Para-dressage
- Driving, also called combined driving
- Endurance
- Vaulting

Dressage, jumping, and eventing are the three Olympic equestrian disciplines, contested at the Games since 1912, and para-dressage is the Paralympic discipline. All are confirmed on the program for the Los Angeles 2028 Games. EC also governs a range of non-FEI disciplines that form a significant part of the Canadian landscape, including hunter and jumper, saddle seat, pony club, and certain breed-specific competition.

On the breed and industry side, EC serves as a national voice for the broader horse sector, encompassing not only sport but also recreation and breeding. It represents Canadian breeders and breed registries, promotes Canadian-bred horses, and connects the sport to the wider horse industry. The Canadian community works with the full range of breeds seen in international competition, from warmbloods and

thoroughbreds to ponies, and it also stewards distinctly Canadian bloodlines. The Canadian Horse, recognized as the national horse of Canada by an Act of Parliament in 2002, and the Canadian Sport Horse studbook reflect the country’s own breeding heritage.

EC AND CANADA'S OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SYSTEM

EC is the sole body recognized to represent equestrian sport for Canada, both domestically and internationally.

- Internationally, EC is Canada’s member federation of the FEI and manages the country’s equestrian relationship with the Olympic and Paralympic movements.
- Domestically, EC is a member of the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, the national counterparts to their international bodies. In practice, EC serves as the executive arm of Canada’s Olympic and Paralympic equestrian teams and is responsible for selecting and nominating the athletes who represent Canada.
- The Canadian Equestrian Team competes under EC at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Pan American Games, and World Championships.
- High performance investment flows through this system as well, with Own the Podium prioritizing national funding for Olympic and Paralympic sport, alongside support from the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Committees and the federal government.

ABOUT EQUESTRIAN CANADA (CONT.)

HOW EC IS FUNDED

EC operates on an annual budget of roughly \$6.7 million dollars, drawn from a diversified mix of sources rather than any single one. The principal contributors are:

- Sport licence fees, together with horse recording and passport fees, which form the largest share of self-generated revenue
- Fees remitted by the Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations
- Federal funding through Sport Canada, part of Canadian Heritage, which has supported equestrian sport through its Sport Support Program for more than 25 years
- High performance funding through Own the Podium and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Committees
- Sponsorships, grants, donations, competition levies, merchandise, and events

Approximately one third of the annual budget is directed to high performance and the national team. As is the case for many national sport organizations in Canada, EC operates in a demanding funding environment, with government support that has not kept pace with inflation and high performance funding that shifts between Olympic cycles. Strengthening financial sustainability and diversifying revenue are therefore central to the organization’s forward strategy.

UNDERSTANDING THE SPORT

For those coming from outside equestrian sport, a few features distinguish it from most others and shape how the organization operates.

- It is a partnership between two athletes. Every performance depends on a human athlete and an equine athlete working as one. As a result, the horse’s welfare, health, transport, and care sit at the center of the sport, and athlete wellbeing always means both horse and rider.
- It is the only Olympic sport in which men and women compete as equals, from the grassroots through to the Olympic podium.
- It rewards longevity. Athletes can compete at the highest level across an unusually long span of years, which shapes talent development and the national team pathway.
- It spans the full pathway within a single federation, from a child’s first lesson to the Olympic podium, together with the coaches, officials, and organizers who support every level.
- It is at once a sport, a recreational pursuit, and an industry. EC’s remit touches competition, participation, coaching, breeding, and the wider horse economy.

02 THE ROLE



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for providing visionary, strategic and operational leadership to Equestrian Canada (EC), ensuring the organization fulfills its mission of growing equestrian sport while achieving excellence in high-performance competition, participant development, governance, and financial sustainability.

Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the CEO leads the implementation of the organization's strategic plan and is accountable for organizational performance, stakeholder engagement, national leadership, and the effective stewardship of EC's financial, human and reputational assets.

The CEO serves as the principal ambassador for Equestrian Canada within Canada and internationally, building trusted relationships with athletes, coaches, officials, provincial and territorial sport orga-

nizations, clubs, industry partners, government agencies, sponsors, donors, and international governing bodies.

Equestrian Canada is a fully remote organization. This role can be performed remotely but an Ontario home location is strongly preferred. The role requires regular travel.

STRATEGIC MANDATE

The CEO will lead the transformation of Equestrian Canada into a modern, collaborative and financially sustainable national sport organization positioning it for long-term success to serve and grow the equestrian community in Canada by:

- Developing a sustainable future-focused organization with a strengthened foundation.
- Strengthening collaboration and alignment with provincial and territorial partners.
- Increasing participation across all equestrian disciplines.
- Strengthening athlete pathways from grassroots to international podium performance.
- Creating exceptional value for members.
- Advancing safe sport, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Modernizing governance, operations and digital services.
- Building long-term financial sustainability through diversified revenue.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. LEAD ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Modernize EC by:

- Improving organizational effectiveness leveraging Federal Funding Modernization Program recommendations
- Strengthening the role EC plays across the Canadian equestrian ecosystem looking for opportunities to better align programs and services, leveraging shared resources and reducing unnecessary duplication.
- Simplifying member services and experience driving positive member satisfaction.
- Leveraging digital technologies and improving digital experience.
- Creating a more agile, effective and future ready organization ensuring change is strategically aligned, effectively communicated and embraced.
- Improving operational efficiency ensuring internal processes are effective and relevant.
- Building organizational capability and driving positive employee engagement.

2. GROW PARTICIPATION

Lead a national participation strategy that:

- Increases recreational and competitive participation.
- Attracts youth, newcomers and underrepresented communities.

- Improves participant retention.
- Expands introductory and learn-to-ride programs.
- Strengthens relationships with riding schools and clubs.
- Supports provincial and territorial sport organizations in membership growth.

3. STRENGTHEN HIGH PERFORMANCE

Provide leadership to ensure Canadian athletes achieve sustained international success through:

- Excellence in high-performance programming.
- Enhanced coaching systems.
- Athlete wellness.
- Performance pathway alignment.
- Effective “Own the Podium” collaboration.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Maintain proper books and accounts, including sufficient financial controls and all applicable reporting requirements. Develop a diversified revenue strategy that reduces dependence on traditional funding by:

- Increasing sponsorship revenue.
- Growing philanthropic support.
- Developing commercial partnerships.
- Expanding education and certification revenue.
- Growing events revenue.
- Pursuing innovation grants and strategic funding.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

5. GOVERNANCE EXCELLENCE

Partner with the Board and the President keeping them fully informed of the conditions and operations of the organization and all material concerns ensuring:

- Effective governance practices.
- Transparent decision making.
- Strategic policy development.
- Risk management.
- Compliance with national and international requirements.
- Strong organizational accountability.

6. STAKEHOLDER LEADERSHIP

Build and strengthen trust and confidence across the Canadian equestrian community through:

- Collaborative leadership.
- Open, transparent and consistent communication.
- Active listening.
- Strengthened alignment with provincial and territorial partners developing a more cohesive national approach that leverages shared priorities, resources and opportunities and delivers on commitments.
- Strong relationships with national and international organizations such as Sport Canada, Olympic and Paralympic Partners, Sponsors, FEI.
- Positive government relations.

7. SAFE SPORT AND INTEGRITY

Champion a culture where:

- Participant welfare comes first.
- Safe Sport principles are embedded.
- Ethical leadership is expected.
- Diversity and inclusion are actively promoted.
- Respect, fairness and accountability define the organization.



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE / QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Demonstrated experience leading complex organizations, preferably within sport, nonprofit or national governing body environments
- Experience working with Boards, strategic planning, budgeting and stakeholder relations
- Bachelor's degree or higher in business administration, law, public administration or a related field

SPORTS AND SECTOR KNOWLEDGE:

- Strong understanding of the requirements of a national governing body
- Knowledge of equestrian sport through participation or industry experience
- Established industry relationships within equestrian community ecosystem

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

- Builds, develops and retains high performing talent
- Collaborates well with internal and external stakeholders
- Works effectively with the Board of Directors building a strong and transparent relationship and understands clear accountabilities and distinction between governance and operations
- Ability to translate strategy into measurable short and long term priorities

- Strong communicator both written and oral
- Innovative and creative and open to change
- High ethical standards
- Strong risk management and analytical skills
- Understands how to build and nurture a positive work culture and build high employee engagement

PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to travel on a consistent basis to meetings, competitions or events as required
- Available outside standard business hours to President & staff



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

GROWTH

- Annual membership growth
- Youth participation growth
- Coach and official growth
- Participant retention
- Program participation

FINANCIAL

- Revenue growth
- Sponsorship revenue
- Diversification of income
- Operating surplus/deficit
- Reserve targets achieved

ORGANIZATIONAL

- Employee engagement
- Member satisfaction
- Digital service adoption
- Operational efficiency
- Strategic initiatives completed

HIGH PERFORMANCE

- International medals
- Athlete development outcomes
- Coach development
- Performance pathway effectiveness
- Athlete satisfaction

GOVERNANCE

- Strategic plan milestones achieved
- Board effectiveness
- Audit compliance
- Risk management performance
- Safe Sport compliance



KORN FERRY CONTACTS

For main submissions of interest or feedback, please email the dedicated Korn Ferry / Equestrian Canada inbox at equestriancanada@kornferry.com. This inbox will be checked daily by the Korn Ferry team during the duration of the search. Please submit any applications of interest by October 15, 2026.

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