

COMMUNICATION: SKATER GRANT FUNDING – Updated July 2024

In May 2022, Tasmania's only (privately owned) ice rink was sold and closed to be repurposed. With the closest ice rink in Melbourne, and a need for regularity to upkeep skills, motivation and stamina on the ice, travelling interstate to ice skate quickly became an expensive and, for many, unmanageable expense.

Ice Sports Tasmania Inc. (IST) therefore created a specific fundraising campaign with multiple initiatives aimed to raise money which can be offered to active ice hockey and figure skaters to enable them to travel interstate to train and/or compete in their chosen disciplines and to assist them to stay connected to their sports. Additionally, IST arranged group trips as a mechanism to offer a sense of continuing connection between the travelling ice sports athletes.

From its inception, the IST Skater Grant fund was solely financed by community donation – driven by fundraising efforts by the IST Committee of Management. Published eligibility criteria provided a framework for fair access to all funds raised for this purpose. This was successfully applied until 30 June 2024, with over \$20k of funding dispersed to the Tasmanian ice sports community, and to both ice hockey and figure skating athletes and officials.

However, since late 2023, IST noted a decrease in the success of its fundraising efforts. This occurred for a range of reasons including increasing costs of living to regular donors (individuals and businesses) and the uncertain future for the sports locally in Tasmania.

In June 2024, the Tasmanian Government announced its Feasibility Study outcomes and active commitment to support a new ice sports facility in Tasmania. At this time, IST applied to the Active Tasmania Small Grants scheme for funding to boost its capacity to continue financial assistance for Tasmanian ice sports athletes and officials who are travelling interstate to train and compete. This funding is not available to recreation skaters (people who do not travel exclusively to participate in ice sports but may visit a rink whilst on holiday or on otherwise planned travel).

On 1 July 2024, Ice Sports Tasmania Inc. signed a Deed with Tasmania Government to receive and distribute funding to the targeted group of athletes and officials until 30 June 2025. The IST Skater Grant eligibility criteria have therefore been updated to ensure they comply with Deed agreement and to assist with allocation of funding.

Updated eligibility criteria for access to the IST Skater Grant funding:

- Applicants must be Supporting Members of IST and demonstrate *both* past membership (ie. active membership at closure of the Glenorchy ice rink) and current, active membership with The Figure Skating Association of Tasmania (FSAT) and/or Ice Hockey Tasmania (IHT). Membership status will be confirmed with FSAT and IHT respectively.
- Each applicant can submit a maximum of one application per calendar month, retrospectively seeking assistance toward interstate accommodation and airfares related to participation or officiation in figure skating or ice hockey (see below 'eligible activities').
- Claims can only be for expenses incurred but the athlete or official (not chaperones of companions) during the nominated month and must be received before midnight on the due date.
- Claims can cover one or multiple activities in the period of the month but must be submitted in the one claim with requested supporting evidence for each trip. For example, if an athlete or official travels twice during one month, and can evidence appropriately, they can combine the two travel dates to reach the maximum claim amount of \$400 per month.

- The total available funding pool is capped each month (as set by IST). Applicants should note funding allocations are dependent on the availability of funds and there is no guarantee of receipt of the \$400.00 regardless of the eligibility or evidence submitted.
- Eligible activities include
 - organised formal training (ie participation in scheduled lesson/s for development or maintenance of explicit figure skating or ice hockey skills),
 - organised formal skill development (i.e course, clinic), scheduled competency/accreditation related activities or participation in an ice sports event as an official (i.e coaching, judge, referee)
 - participating in formal programs (such as camps, clinics or competitions);

and evidence of attendance at these activities must be provided (e.g., receipts, booking schedules, emails from coach, camp/clinic details) within the application process.

- Receipts must bear the ABN of the business, be in the name of the skater, or their guardian and match the travel dates claimed.
- Applications for each calendar month must be submitted by midnight on the last day of that month (e.g., Claims for June travel must be submitted by 30 June).

Process for assessing eligibility:

- Skaters must submit each application to IST via an online form, providing proof of association memberships, receipts for claimed items, and evidence of rink access.
- IST will send an automated written confirmation upon receipt of each application.
- IST will maintain a database of skaters who have submitted claims, verifying current membership with FSAT/IHT as needed directly with the associations.
- IST will assess each application for eligibility outlined above
- Funding allocations will be based on IST's monthly maximum or until funds are depleted.
- IST will send remittance advice to eligible applicants who receive funding and an email notification to those who are unsuccessful/ineligible.
- IST will make all decisions regarding eligibility and approval of applications to the Skater Grants. As required, this will include consultation with FSAT and/or IHT on case-by- case basis to ensure the intent of the Skater Grant Deed are upheld.

Group claims

IST acknowledges that athletes or officials may occasionally travel as a group and share expenses such as ice time, coaching sessions, or accommodation. Applicants are encouraged to contact IST via email to discuss their circumstances and IST will consider these on a case-by-case basis.

Fair Use policy

In line with the grant Deed, this funding is to be utilised by June 30, 2025, with IST ensuring requisite reporting to the Tasmanian Government. IST will determine the maximum monthly amount to reserve for this activity (to ensure the resource is able to be expended fairly over the 12-month period) and will advise FSAT and IHT (the Tasmanian ice sports athletes and officials) when this value has been reached.

Acknowledgement

Ice Sports Tasmania is grateful to be supported by the Tasmanian Government through the Department of State Growth.