

ATHLETE FUNDING

FUNDING CRITERIA FOR JULY 1, 2022, THROUGH MARCH 30, 2023:

Direct Athlete Support (DAS) is financial support for elite athletes in the form of monthly stipends designed to specifically assist athletes in reaching the podium at the next Olympic Games. It requires international success, an approved training plan with set goals, performance reviews, team event(s) or training participation, and a commitment to the training level required to reach the 2026 Winter Olympic Games podium as determined by US Speedskating (USS).

The following criteria was produced through a collaborative process between USS, USS Athlete Representatives, and the USOPC Sport Performance team. Within DAS there are three factors that will determine the type or level of athlete support;

1. Results at the current season's World Championships or the Olympic Games in the Olympic year, unless otherwise stated.
2. Results at ISU World Cup events utilizing World Cup rankings from the most current season.
3. Potential NTP Invitation/participation

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETE STIPEND SUPPORT:

- Athlete must be a member of US Speedskating in good standing by July 1st of each season.
- Athlete must be eligible to and intend to compete for Team USA at the 2026 Olympic Games.
- Athlete must qualify for funding as outlined below in Tiers 1-4 or as an emerging elite athlete.
- Athletes identified as a DAS recipient must submit their annual performance plan to the Program and High-Performance Director for approval by August 1. The plan will receive approval based on the rationale behind how the athlete will achieve their goals for the 2022-23 season, and how the annual plan contributes to achieving the athlete's goals in 2026.
- Athletes identified as Emerging Elite must accept their full-time National Team Program (NTP) invite by the deadline and submit their annual performance plan to the Program and High-Performance Director for approval by August 1. The plan will receive approval based on the rationale behind how the athlete will achieve their goals for the 2022-23 season, and how the annual plan contributes to achieving the athlete's goals in 2026.
- DAS recipient athletes must participate in quarterly meetings with the High-Performance staff (such as Program Director, NTP Head Coach and High-Performance Director) to discuss season goals and progress towards achievement of set goals. These meetings will aid USS in reporting on the progress of the athlete's pathway towards success in 2026.
- Athlete must sign and abide by US Speedskating's Code of Conduct.

DEFINITION OF TIERS 1-4 & Emerging Elite

Identified tiers are predominantly determined by the current season's results; however, an athlete can satisfy certain criteria based on performances from the previous season's World Championships or, during an Olympic year, the Olympic Games. Additionally, in situations of clearly documented injury or extenuating circumstances, USS may use its discretion to apply Tier 4.

For the purposes of these criteria, “Team Member” in reference to an athlete’s involvement with the Long Track team pursuit, a team member is defined as an athlete who actively competes on the ice, in the event that the result is achieved. A substitute/reserve for the team pursuit will not be considered a member of the team as it pertains to this document. For Short Track team relay, a team member is an athlete who helps achieve the result by competing in the semi-final or the final of a relay event that the result was achieved.

Specific to Short Track and the overall classification in the World Cup Rankings in a gender relay team or mixed team relay, an athlete must have been a team member in three of specifically either the gender or mixed relay events at the ISU World Cups.

Specific to Long Track and the team pursuit, an athlete must have been a team member in two of the World Cup events that earned the overall World Cup Standings.

Specific to Mass Start events, a Mass Start placement will be judged strictly on time in the Final and will not be based on any intermediate points earned or final placement.

Specific to Long Track, the Time Chart below shall be used to determine whether an athlete can qualify for DAS based on the proximity of their performance relative to the finishing times at the current season’s World Championships or Olympic Games. The Chart included below will be updated yearly to reflect the changes to finishing times.

TIER 1 QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Long Track

Athletes achieve Tier 1 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Podium (Top 3) finish in an individual distance at the current season’s World Single Distance Championships (WSD) (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Member of a medal winning team (top 3) at the current season’s World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games in the Team Pursuit

Athletes achieve Tier 1 status through any two (2) of the following criteria:

- Two (2) Podium (Top 3) finishes at World Cup events in the same individual distance
- Mass start athlete that achieves two (2) Top 3 finishes at the ISU World Cup events
- Set a recognized World Record at an ISU event during the season in an individual distance or as a member of the Team Pursuit.
- Top 5 finish in an individual distance at the current season’s World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games in the Team Pursuit
- Podium (Top 3) finish in an individual distance at the previous season’s World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Member of a gold medal-winning Team Pursuit team at two (2) ISU World Cup events
- Achieve a time in an individual ISU event within Tier 1 of the Time Chart
- Member of a Team Pursuit Team with a finishing time within Tier 1 of the Time Chart.

Short Track

Athletes achieve Tier 1 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Podium (Top 3) finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Member of a medal winning team (top 3) at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games in the Gender Relay or Mixed Team Relay

Athletes achieve Tier 1 Status through two (2) of the following criteria:

- Top 5 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Podium (Top 3) finish in an individual distance at the previous season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Set a recognized World Record at an ISU event during the season in an individual distance or as a member of the Relay Team.
- Top 3 in the World Cup Classification in an individual distance
- Top 3 in the World Cup Classification in a gender relay team or mixed team relay
- Member of a gold medal-winning Gender Relay Team at two (2) World Cup events
- Member of a gold medal-winning Mixed Team Relay at two (2) World Cup events

TIER 2 QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Long Track

Athletes achieve Tier 2 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Top 8 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Championships (non-Olympic year) or the Olympic Games.
- Member of a Top 4 finishing Team Pursuit team at the current season's World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games.

Athletes achieve Tier 2 Status through two (2) of the following criteria:

- Top 8 finish in an individual distance at the previous season's World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or the Olympic Games
- Top 6 overall classification in the final World Cup Rankings in an individual distance
- Two (2) Top 5 finishes in an individual distance at World Cup events.
- Mass start athlete that achieves two (2) Top 5 finishes in an individual distance at World Cup events.
- Member of a Top 3 finishing Team Pursuit team at two (2) World Cup events
- Member of a Team Pursuit Team that finishes top 4 in the overall World Cup standings.
- Achieve a time in an individual ISU event that is within Tier 2 of the Time Chart
- Member of a Team Pursuit Team with a finishing time within Tier 2 of the Time Chart.

Short Track

Athletes achieve Tier 2 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Top 8 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or the Olympic Games
- Member of a Top 4 finishing gender relay team or mixed team relay at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games

Athletes achieve Tier 2 status through any two (2) of the following criteria:

- Top 12 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Top 8 finish in an individual distance at the previous season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Top 6 in the World Cup Classification in an individual distance
- Member of a Top 4 Gender Relay team or Mixed Team relay in the World Cup Classification
- Member of a Top 3 Gender Relay team at two (2) World Cup events
- Member of a Top 3 Mixed Team Relay at two (2) World Cup events

TIER 3 QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Long Track

Athletes achieve Tier 3 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Achieve the following finishing places in an individual distance at the World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games:
 - Top 16 in the 500m, 1000m, 1500m, 3000m (women), or 5000m (men)
 - Top 12 in the women's 5000m (Top 12 Qualifier to the WSD [reserve added at the WSD don't qualify])
 - Top 12 in the men's 10000m (Top 12 Qualifier to the WSD [reserve added at the WSD don't qualify])
 - Mass Start – (see second layer of tier criteria for tier 3 status)
- Member of a Top 6 finishing Team Pursuit team at the current season's World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games.

Athletes achieve Tier 3 Status through two (2) of the following criteria:

- Achieve the following finishing places in an individual distance at the previous year's World Single Distance Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games:
 - Top 16 in the 500m, 1000m, 1500m
 - Top 16 in the women's 3000m
 - Top 16 in the men's 5000m
 - Top 12 in the women's 5000m (Top 12 Qualifiers to the WSD [reserve added at the WSD don't qualify])
 - Top 12 in the men's 10000m (Top 12 Qualifiers to the WSD [reserve added at the WSD don't qualify])

- Top 12 overall classification in the final World Cup Rankings in an individual distance
- Two (2) Top 10 individuals distance finishes at World Cup events
- Member of a Top 4 finishing Team Pursuit team at two (2) World Cup events
- Member of a Team Pursuit Team that finishes Top 5 in the overall World Cup standings
- Achieve a time in an individual ISU event that is within Tier 3 of the Time Chart
- Member of a Team Pursuit Team with a finishing time within Tier 3 of the Time Chart

Short Track

Athletes achieve Tier 3 status through one (1) of the following criteria:

- Top 16 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Member of a Top 6 finishing gender relay team or mixed relay team at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games

Athletes achieve Tier 3 Status through two (2) of the following criteria:

- Top 20 finish in an individual distance at the current season's World Short Track Championships (non-Olympic year) or Olympic Games
- Top 12 in the World Cup Classification in an individual distance
- Team Member of a Gender or Mixed Team Relay that achieves a time standard of 101.5% of the World Record time.
- Member of a Top 6 Gender Relay team or Mixed Team relay in the World Cup Overall Classification
- Member of a Top 5 Gender Relay team at two (2) World Cup events
- Member of a Top 5 Mixed Team Relay at two (2) World Cup events

USS FUNDING TIER 4

Tier 4 DAS funding is reserved for athletes who are determined to have been prevented from qualifying for Tiers 1-3 due to documented injury or other extenuating circumstances. Upon review of previous performances, athletes who received Tier 1-3 funding during the previous season may receive similar funding (to be determined by USS) if injury or other extenuating circumstances clearly prevented them from performing to the same level during the current season. Additional consideration may be given to athletes competing in Long Track mass start who provided agreed upon team support to a medal-winning teammate. All Tier 4 cases will be determined by USS High Performance staff and the USOPC. An Athlete Representative from the USS Board, or an alternative athlete representative should a conflict of interest arise, will be given an opportunity to provide input on Tier 4 cases.

USS EMERGING ELITE

There will be funding consideration for emerging athletes that accept their full-time NTP invite and relocate to Salt Lake City, Utah to train with the NTP. These athletes typically:

- Must be qualified and invited to train with the NTP and accept their full-time invitation to train in SLC.
- Traditionally be one of the following:
 - ISU Junior aged athletes that had Junior World success and/or are beginning a pathway with an elite performance trajectory.

- ISU Neo-Senior athletes that are identified as having an elite trajectory through objective data.
- Transition athletes that have shown through objective data that they are worthy of support based on their trajectory with international progression.

Emerging elite athletes may be added to the Athlete Stipend program during the season as determined by USS HP staff and the USOPC.

LONG TRACK TIME CHART

The Time Chart uses winning times at the current season's World Single Distance Championship (in non-Olympic years) or Olympic Winter Games (in an Olympic year). Please note, this chart will be updated annually.

Women's Tier						
	<u>500m</u>	<u>1000m</u>	<u>1500m</u>	<u>3000m</u>	<u>5000m</u>	<u>TP</u>
Tier 1 (top 3)	37.21	1:14.61	1:54.82	3:58.64	6:50.09	2:55.94
Tier 2 (top 8)	37.65	1:15.64	1:55.34	4:02.37	7:01.17	2:58.34 (top 5)
Tier 3 (top 16)	38.04	1:16.49	1:58.41	4:08.70	7:06.92 (top 10)	3:01.19 (top 6)

Men's Tier						
	<u>500m</u>	<u>1000m</u>	<u>1500m</u>	<u>5000m</u>	<u>10000m</u>	<u>TP</u>
Tier 1 (top 3)	34.49	1:07.92	1:44.24	6:09.88	12:45.98	3:37.47
Tier 2 (top 8)	34.57	1:08.48	1:45.32	6:16.92	13:01.42	3:40.17 (top 5)
Tier 3 (top 16)	34.92	1:09.47	1:46.56	6:21.80	13:02.43 (top 10)	3:41.89 (top 6)

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING:

To encourage advancement and to receive continued support throughout the quad, athletes will need to demonstrate progression through the tier system. Tiers will be based upon performance at the current season's Olympic Winter Games or the Long Track Single Distance World Championships or the Short Track World Championships.

- An athlete may only receive DAS at the single highest Tier they qualify for.
- An athlete may receive Tier 1 or 2 DAS indefinitely.
- An athlete who achieves Tier 1 status through a team event is awarded Tier 1 status. If the following season they do not achieve Tier 1 they revert to their highest individual standing. Thus, qualification to Tier 1 through a team does not impact their qualification as an individual.
- An athlete may only be carried as an individual or by means of a team member in Tier 3 for a maximum of four (4) years.

TABLE OF ATHLETE STIPEND BASE SUPPORT:

	Distribution	2022-23
Tier 1	9 months	\$2535/m = \$22,815/a
Tier 2	9 months	\$1600/m = \$14,400/a
Tier 3	9 months	\$1000/m = \$9,000/a
Tier 4	tbd	n/a
Emerging Elite	9 months	\$500/m = \$4500/a

While the intent is to maintain the funding levels in the above table, the actual funding amount per tier is subject to USOPC annual support funding approval which should be confirmed by June 30 each year.

A portion of DAS funding for Tier 1-4 athletes is for the purpose of a living stipend to assist with expenses for an athlete residing in Salt Lake City and training full-time within an approved NTP program. The amount of \$300 per month is identified within the stipend funding and may be withheld from an athlete's monthly funding if they are not in Salt Lake City or training within a program approved by the USS High Performance and relevant Program Director.

DISTRIBUTION TO ATHLETE:

DAS recipients identified and allocated on an annual basis upon review of the athlete's annual performance to ensure they are on track with achieving success in 2026. DAS is combined into a single monthly payment paid over a nine-month period from July 1st through March 1st of each season upon continued qualification. Payments should be received by the athlete on the 5th of every month.

If at any time, athletes are not perceived to be committed to a training environment conducive of reaching the 2026 Olympic Winter Games the athlete will be notified by USS HP staff and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss training accountabilities, identify performance benchmarks and establish a reasonable timeline to ensure the athlete remains on track for achieving success at the 2026 Winter Olympic Games. Should the agreed upon benchmarks not be met, within the agreed upon time frame, the athlete will be notified, and Athlete Stipend support may be stopped by USS staff in consultation with the USOPC Winter Sports Team.

Athletes that do not qualify for the World Championships in a non-Olympic season, or the Olympic Winter Games in the Olympic Season may have their payments stopped upon completion of the Team Selection event.