

## Case Study 13

# Experiential Learning Program An AIS HP Coach Development Initiative

A key outcome of the work undertaken with the Women in High Performance Coaching Project (WiHPC) is the introduction of an initiative to support the authentic learning for women coaches undertaking their first or second international tour at a benchmark event.

A key barrier for developing coaches, who identify as a woman, is the lack of opportunity and support to gain experience and build reputational capital at international level competitions. Key challenges for women coaches who are ready to step up to national teams is the ability to:

- **Be selected:** Gain an opportunity to be selected as numbers are limited and prioritised for experienced coaches, particularly if performance outcomes are a priority.
- **Gain experience:** Understand performance expectations at an international event and know their role.
- **Build confidence:** Can make decisions, “hold their space” and contribute to the team.
- **Build reputational capital:** Demonstrate competency with athletes, coaches, and support teams that you can contribute and impact in pressurised situations.

Providing an authentic learning opportunity within an international tour experience enables a coach to learn and develop in situ with a deliberate, reflective learning design. The 6 month program will be conducted with nine women coaches to enable and support learning and development whilst coaching at international events.

### Objective

The purpose of the Coach Experiential Learning Program Grant (the Grant) is to support an organisation’s capability to deliver authentic, experiential learning programs within their working environments to enhance the development experience for women HP coaches.

The Grant forms part of the broader Coach Experiential Learning Program (the program), which is targeted at developing women HP coaches who are ready and seeking to gain international coaching experience. It connects to the WiHPC Project which aims to challenge the underrepresentation of women coaches and enhance their career experiences.

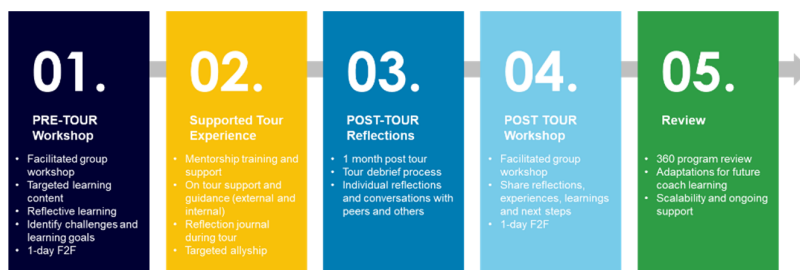
### Description

The program aims to enhance coaches' learning experiences through reflection, building reputational capital, and providing support via allyship and mentorship. It consists of a one-day workshop before the international tour, continuous support during the event, and another one-day workshop after the tour. Coaches will have individual learning plans for their workplace experiences, involving mentors, leaders, support personnel, and peers for pre, during, and post-tour support.



At the end of the Program, participating Coaches will be able to:

- Identify and understand roles and responsibilities whilst on an international tour.
- Identify their bespoke learning needs and develop a learning plan.
- Obtain personal and professional support with identified mentors and allies (on and off tour).
- Understand and develop strategies to enhance reputational capital and build confidence.
- Incorporate reflective practices to deepen understanding and make sense of the learning experience.
- Gain experience coaching at an international event.



## Impacts / Outputs

- Financial support to attend an International Benchmark event.
- Participants will receive guidance through a facilitated workshop before and after their respective tours.
- A structured development plan to support learning goals during the tour.
- Providing resources to enhance personal development, focusing on building confidence in communication and planning skills.



## Recommendations

1. **Conduct a Comprehensive Review:** Perform a thorough evaluation at the end of the 6 month program to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
2. **Emphasise Iterative Enhancement:** Encourage an iterative approach, allowing continuous improvements to the program based on feedback and outcomes.
3. **Expand Program Availability:** Adapt and extend the program to include all coaches entering the Senior National Team landscape during benchmark events, ensuring broader access and impact.

**After the first workshop, coaches were asked to share their thoughts in a few words:**

'I am excited' | 'Ride the rollercoaster' (it's a journey) | 'Enjoy every moment' |  
'Thought provoking and inspiring' | 'Embrace, reflect regularly' |

**ELP Participants, July 2023**

### Links

[AIS opens up world of experience for up-and-coming women coaches | Australian Institute of Sport](#)  
[Grant supports steeplechase coach on world stage | Australian Institute of Sport \(ais.gov.au\)](#)  
[Coach supported by AIS grant leads medley relay team to World Record | Australian Institute of Sport](#)