



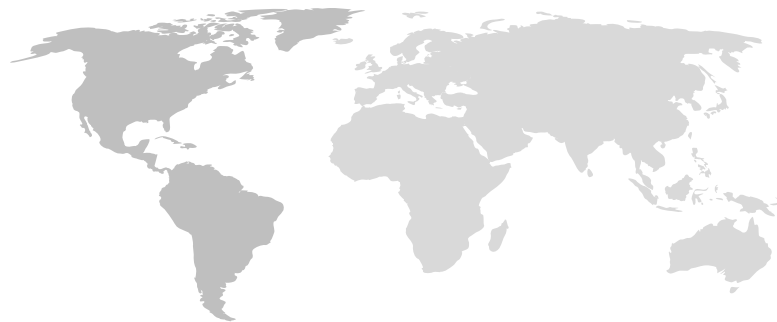
World Aquatics Water Polo Scholarships Programme

Guidelines for Host Water Polo Clubs

2025-2026



About the Programme



The World Aquatics Scholarships Programme was launched in 2014 with the purpose of providing financial and technical assistance to athletes with internationally recognised sporting achievements, but without favourable or sufficient conditions to train locally.

The current programme supports a diverse range of aquatic sports, including swimming, open water swimming, diving, artistic swimming, and water polo.

For the first time in 2024, Water Polo scholarships were included in the programme, allowing talented players to join prestigious European clubs.

As part of the inaugural year for water polo scholarships, six athletes were placed in three top-tier European first division clubs: ANC Glyfada (Greece), CN Catalunya (Spain), and CN Rubí (Spain).

This initiative not only strengthens team skillsets but also celebrates diversity, encourages the exchange of playing techniques, and fosters a genuinely inclusive global water polo community. For players, it represents an exciting opportunity to engage in high-level competition, develop professionally, and experience international growth.

After a successful first year of the pilot programme, World Aquatics is increasing scholarship opportunities and is again offering clubs with the unique chance to welcome foreign talented water polo players to their teams for one season.

European World Aquatics Members are encouraged to apply with their first and/or second division clubs.

Deadline for application: 23 March, 2025

General considerations for Host Water Polo Clubs

General considerations

HOSTING OPPORTUNITY

European water polo clubs have the opportunity to host scholarship players for one season, according to their National Water Polo calendar

TARGET

First and/or second division clubs recognized for their strong reputation and ethical standards

QUOTA

Each water polo club may host one (1) or two (2) scholarship holders, depending on availability, regardless of their playing position

APPLICATION

Clubs are invited to submit a full application following the established timelines.
Deadline for applications: 23 March 2025

SELECTION

World Aquatics will assess the applications and select the water polo clubs based on their ability to offer optimal training and competition conditions to the scholarship holders

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Provided to the selected water polo clubs as per the contractual agreement with World Aquatics. The scholarship is structured as a reimbursement scheme, paid in three instalments

PLACEMENT

The allocation of scholarship holders to the different clubs will be determined by World Aquatics. Clubs are permitted to conduct assessments to evaluate the athletes' skills, physical fitness and overall suitability before accepting them onto the team

MONITORING

The selected water polo clubs will regularly report the athletes' progress and achievements to World Aquatics

Application process

*Key aspects clubs need to consider
before applying for the programme*

Requirements for interested Clubs

Water polo clubs applying to the programme must meet all the following conditions:

- 1** | The club is based in Europe and plays in first or second division national competitions
- 2** | The club holds a recommendation letter from the National Federation they are affiliated with
- 3** | The club is recognized for their strong reputation and ethical standards
- 4** | The water polo coaches must have an intermediate level of English proficiency
- 5** | The water polo team has access to good training facilities, including an appropriate gym and fitness area
- 6** | The team trains at least seven times per week, including one game
- 7** | The club is familiar with National/European regulations and has the capacity to register foreign players on the team roster
- 8** | The club has a thorough understanding of the visa application process for international players, as well as the requirements and conditions for residency permits, and is able to provide well-rounded assistance
- 9** | The club is in good financial standing and holds a bank account in its name
- 10** | The club has a designated person fluent in English who can provide administrative support

Application process

APPLICATIONS

European water polo clubs may apply with their first or second division clubs by the **23 March 2025** through the following online application form: <https://forms.office.com/e/cFcNFnd2EC>

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Please send the following mandatory documents to melissa.caballero@worldaquatics.com

- ✓ **Recommendation letter** from the National Federation with which the club is affiliated
- ✓ **Monthly budget proposal:** a comprehensive monthly budget proposal must be submitted as part of the application using the World Aquatics template. The budget proposal shall include all costs associated with the mandatory services to be provided to the scholarship holder (as listed in slide 9)
- ✓ **Presentation of the club's staff members and facilities,** including a detailed description of the staff members and facilities, along with photos
- ✓ **Certificate of the club's good financial standing,** issued by certified auditors or a financial institution
- ✓ **Bank account details:** the bank account must be under the club's name

SELECTION

World Aquatics will assess the applications and select the Water Polo clubs based on their ability to offer optimal training and competition conditions to the scholarship holders

Responsibilities

*Key aspects clubs need to consider
if they are selected for the programme*

Mandatory services for scholarship recipients

To accommodate scholarship holders, the clubs must provide the following mandatory services to the athletes:

- 1** | Assistance in obtaining an entry visa and the necessary permits to stay in the country for the duration of the scholarship
- 2** | A round-trip ticket from the athlete's home country to the club's location at the beginning and at the end of the scholarship (in Economy class), as well as the airport transfers. The cost of the ticket will be reimbursed by World Aquatics
- 3** | Full board accommodation (or accommodation and meal allowance)
- 4** | A specialized coach or coaching team (the Head Coach and/or the Assistant Coach must have an intermediate level of English proficiency)
- 5** | Access to appropriate training facilities, including gym and fitness area. Transportation to the facilities.
- 6** | Regular training sessions as determined by the club (at least 7 practices per week, including one game)
- 7** | Registration in the team roster in accordance with National/European regulations (practice and competition team) and participation at national club competitions. The athlete may participate at 3 National Team events during the season, which are covered by his/her World Aquatics Member.
- 8** | Dedicated medical assistance and regular scientific control
- 9** | Health, accident and travel insurance (the travel insurance should provide coverage during the athlete's participation at national club competitions)
- 10** | Administrative support and a designated point of contact (the contact person must be fluent in English)

Water Polo clubs are encouraged to offer a language course to the scholarship holders to facilitate their integration into the country and with their teammates

Responsibilities of the Clubs in the Programme

VISA AND PERMITS

- Assist the athletes during the visa application process
- Provide the athletes with the necessary permits to stay in the country for the entire duration of the scholarship

IMPORTANT: the visa application expenses are covered by the athlete's World Aquatics Member

TRAVEL PLANS

- Arrange a round-trip flight ticket from the athlete's home country to the club's location at the beginning and at the end of the scholarship
- Arrange the local airport transfers

IMPORTANT: World Aquatics covers the cost of the flight ticket in economy class

COMPETITION REGISTRATION

- Register the athletes in the team roster in accordance with National/European regulations
- Coordinate the athletes' participation at national club competitions

IMPORTANT: World Aquatics provides up to 1000 USD/year to the club to support the athlete's participation in national club competitions

NATIONAL TEAM EVENTS

- During their scholarship, athletes may participate at a maximum of three (3) competitions with their National Teams
- At the start of the season, World Aquatics Members must inform the clubs about their National calendar, ensuring they are informed about scheduled National Team events

IMPORTANT: the athlete's World Aquatics Member is responsible for the necessary arrangements and must cover any expenses related to the athlete's travel and participation at National Team events.

World Aquatics' responsibilities

World Aquatics will provide the following financial support to the clubs:

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Up to 2'000 USD/month per athlete to cover the following expenses related to the scholarship:

- Full board accommodation expenses (or accommodation and meal allowance)
- Transportation and access to training facilities
- Training and participation at competitions
- Health, accident and travel insurance
- Language course

FLIGHT TICKETS

Reimbursement of the athlete's round trip flight ticket (from his/her home country to the club's location in economy fare)

COMPETITION

Up to 1'000 USD/year per athlete to support his/her participation in national club competitions

Athletes' profile

Athletes' profile

World Aquatics Members may apply with female or male Water Polo players, irrespective of their playing position

ATHLETES' ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. AGE LIMITS

Applicants must be 18 years to 27 years old by the start of the scholarship

2. UNFAVOURABLE CONDITIONS

The athlete has limited exposure to a high-level competition environment and training conditions

3. ATHLETIC BACKGROUND

The applicant must have played Water Polo for a minimum of 8 consecutive years and must have represented his/her country internationally*

4. ACADEMIC PROFILE

The applicant has graduated from High School and has an intermediate level of English proficiency

5. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Applicants do not benefit from alternative financial sources (e.g. Olympic Solidarity/University Scholarship, Governmental support)

6. COMPLIANCE

The applicant must comply with World Aquatics regulations, including Sport Nationality rules (Competition regulations), with the club's Code of Conduct and with the Olympic Charter

The athlete will participate at the **World Cup 2026** or at the upcoming **Continental Championships**

FUTURE PLANS

*PARTICIPATION AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

European athletes may apply if they participated at the **2024 Men's/Women's European Water Polo Championships**, provided that their teams were not placed within the top 14 positions

Non-European athletes may apply if they participated at the **Olympic Games – Paris 2024 and/or World Aquatics Championships – Doha 2024**, provided that their teams were not placed within the top 8 positions

Athletes from **non-European countries** who did not participate at **Olympic Games – Paris 2024 and/or the World Aquatics Championships – Doha 2024** may apply if they have attended the **World Aquatics World Cup 2025 and/or a Continental Championship held since 2023**.

TARGET

Next steps

Timeline

Steps	Deadline	Action	Comments
Step 1	23 March 2025	Submitting an application to World Aquatics	European clubs submit a complete application with all the required documents to World Aquatics
Step 2	31 March 2025	First selection point: World Aquatics pre-select the clubs	World Aquatics makes a preliminary selection and notifies the clubs about their application status. Clubs may be requested to provide complementary documents and/or information to World Aquatics
Step 3	7 April 2025	Second selection point: technical check	Clubs submit any complementary documents and/or information to World Aquatics
Step 4	14 April 2025	Third selection point: final confirmation	World Aquatics confirms the selection of the clubs. Non-selected clubs may be waitlisted
Step 5	15 May 2025	Signature of the collaboration agreements	World Aquatics signs a contract with the clubs selected for the programme
Step 6	1 June 2025	Scholarship confirmations	World Aquatics confirms the Water Polo Scholarship holders to the clubs selected for the programme
Step 7	15 June 2025	Preliminary meetings	A meeting is organised by World Aquatics to introduce the athlete and the club
Step 8	15 July 2025	Visa application process to be initiated by the athletes & accommodation arrangements to be finalised by the club	Scholarship holders must start the visa application immediately after the scholarship is awarded. The clubs provide guidance and all the necessary visa application documents to the athletes
Step 9	August 2025	Travel arrangements	Once the visa has been issued, the clubs provide a round-trip flight ticket to the athletes and organise the airport transfers
Step 10	1 September 2025	Arrival to the club and registration	Clubs register the athletes in the team roster in accordance with National/European regulations

Informational session



World Aquatics will organize an online informational session (in English) to explain the application process and answer all the questions:

13 March at 1 pm (CET)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85162587775?pwd=cnw3T9ROtEYoVFmzWOF3ayEOwONYby.1>

Zoom meeting ID: 851 6258 7775/Passcode: 645953



For additional information or questions please contact:

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