



NEWCOMER COACH MENTORSHIP PROJECT FULL REPORT

August 2024

Funded by:





“ I find this program incredibly useful, opening wide doors for entry into the sports industry.”

Mentee, NCMP

“ I worked with a wonderful mentor, it’s impossible to put a price on it.”

Mentee, NCMP

“ My mentor’s deep expertise and supportive guidance have been invaluable, fostering a strong personal connection that motivates me to achieve tangible progress while inspiring me with their passion and dedication.”

Mentee, NCMP

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Executive Summary

This report is about the Newcomer Coaching Mentorship Project (NCMP), a collaborative initiative between the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) and Action for Healthy Communities Society of Alberta (AHC). NCMP aims to support newcomers to Canada trying to integrate into the Canadian sports system through the mentorship project.

The NCMP was piloted over a six-month period, from February to August 2024, in Edmonton, Alberta. The project was based on CAC's Female Coach Mentorship Model and gave the opportunity to six newcomers to Canada and paired them with experienced coaches in their sports. Established Canadian coaches guided mentees through the process of achieving their coaching certifications and acclimating to the Canadian sports environment, culture, legislation, and norms. Six newcomers to Canada were enrolled to the project, however, only four of them graduated. NCMP included comprehensive research, that is presented in a separate document. In this report, we provide information about

the NCMP, its structure, and the evaluation of mentees and mentors' experiences and progression.

The main outcomes of the NCMP were that the mentorship initiative considerably enhanced the participants' comprehension of the Canadian sports scene, refined their coaching skills, and boosted their self-assurance in pursuing coaching roles.

The implications of these discoveries are significant as they emphasize the importance of tailored mentorship projects in addressing the unique challenges faced by newcomer coaches. The report concludes with recommendations for scaling the project and implementing similar initiatives nationwide to promote diversity and inclusion in sports coaching.

Introduction

Background

AHC is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting equity deserving communities, including immigrants and racialized groups. Our mission is to advance inclusivity and equity by addressing the unique needs of these communities through specialized programs, projects, and services. We frequently identify areas where underserved communities face barriers to equitable participation, including sports. By working on addressing these challenges, we aim to create more inclusive and accessible opportunities for newcomer to Canada.

The Newcomer Coaching Mentorship Project (NCMP) was created to address the persistent underrepresentation of racialized newcomers in leadership roles within the Canadian sports coaching system. Before this initiative, attempts have been made to foster diversity and inclusion in sports, yet few directly addressed the unique obstacles faced by newcomers to Canada.

The history of the Canadian sports system reveals a persistent struggle with diversity and inclusion, particularly in coaching and leadership capacities. According to Statistics Canada, 2024 report on racism in sport, nearly 1 in 5 people reported witnessing discrimination in sport. However, they also suggest that around 32% of people never report incidents of discrimination that they experience or witness (Statistics Canada, 2024). Recognizing this gap, AHC has successfully implemented the PASS project (Participating Arts, Sports and Society) aimed at identifying barriers for racialized newcomer youth in sport participation and increasing diversity within the sports community.

These efforts incorporated community consultations, information sessions, workshops, collective action forums and other activities intended to boost awareness and supply resources in engaging to sport to underserves communities. Despite these efforts, newcomers to Canada –especially those from racialized communities- still faced major hurdles. Such barriers were cultural and language discrepancies, unfamiliarity with the Canadian sports framework, and restricted access to professional networks and mentorship prospects. These challenges hindered their ability to integrate and advance in coaching roles effectively.

The necessity for the NCMP project became evident through the findings and recommendations of the PASS Research Report and PASS Impact Report, which highlighted the need to enhance diverse representation within the Canadian sport system (Action for Healthy Communities, 2023; Abdykadyrova, Kono, & Mirzaalian, 2023). To address the gap of the lack of diversity in coaching, the NCMP was designed to deliver focused support through structured mentorship, pairing newcomer coaches with experienced mentors. The goal is to facilitate newcomers understanding of the Canadian sport system, help them navigate the certification process, and build their confidence and competence as coaches. Through these efforts, the project aspired to establish a more inclusive and diverse coaching community in Canada, ultimately enhancing the broader sports ecosystem.

This report delves into the events leading up to the current initiative, evaluates the effectiveness of the mentorship project, and provides recommendations for future efforts to support newcomer coaches in Canada.

Project Overview

The NCMP was initiated in February 2024 in Edmonton as a pilot program designed to bridge the gap between newcomer coaches and the Canadian sports system. The project paired six mentees, all newcomers to Canada, with six experienced local mentors to guide them through the intricacies of obtaining coaching certifications and integrating into the Canadian sports environment. Despite some challenges, including the early exit of two participants, the remaining four mentees successfully completed the program, gaining valuable skills, knowledge, and certifications.

Each mentee and mentor received tailored financial support. That included \$1,000 for mentees towards their coaching certification and a \$500 honorarium, ensuring they had the resources to fully engage with the program. Mentors received \$700. The NCMP was more than just a mentorship initiative; it was a comprehensive effort to empower newcomer coaches

by providing them with the tools, networks, and confidence needed to thrive in the Canadian sports landscape.

Purpose

The NCMP emerged from the recognition that systemic barriers prevent racialized newcomers from entering and advancing within the Canadian sports coaching system. These barriers create significant gaps in opportunities for newcomer coaches, hindering their ability to gain certification, understand the intricacies of the Canadian sports environment, and integrate effectively into coaching roles.

The project was strategically crafted to provide targeted support through structured mentorship, pairing newcomer coaches with experienced professionals who offer valuable insights and guidance. This approach was intended to facilitate a smoother transition into the Canadian sports coaching landscape, ensuring that newcomers receive the support needed to achieve their coaching certifications and gain a deeper understanding of local practices and norms.

Furthermore, the NCMP aimed to generate actionable insights through its research component, focusing on identifying and analyzing the specific barriers faced by newcomers in sports coaching. By documenting these challenges and assessing the effectiveness of mentorship, the project seeks to inform future initiatives and improve the overall integration process for newcomer coaches. In essence, the NCMP was developed not only to support individual coaches but also to address broader systemic issues within the Canadian sports community, with the goal of fostering a more inclusive and diverse coaching environment.

Project Implementation

Project Participants

Recruitment. The recruitment of mentees within the tiers and experienced local mentors were critical initial steps. AHC conducted outreach through the PASS project partners, community organizations and sports networks to identify potential participants. Once selected, both mentors and mentees underwent rigorous training sessions, ensuring that participants were familiar with the project purpose and scope of work and were well-prepared and confident as they entered the project.

Mentees. The NCMP welcomed six dedicated mentees, all first-generation newcomers to Canada, each with a deep passion for advancing in their sports careers. Ranging in age from 15 to 31, these mentees shared a common aspiration: to continue in the sport they love and ultimately step into leadership roles. Their diverse motivations reflect a strong

commitment to their personal and professional growth. For example, a mentee in canoe-kayak, expressed his enthusiasm, saying, *“When my coach said I have an opportunity to join this program, I immediately jumped to it as it is my dream to be a coach.”* This eagerness was mirrored by many others who valued the program’s communication aspect, finding it easy to initiate conversations, relate to their mentors, and seek valuable knowledge.

Mentors. We were fortunate to have four devoted mentors, all of whom are based locally in Edmonton. These mentors are not only deeply passionate about their respective sports but are also committed to nurturing the next generation of coaches. When asked why he chose to become a mentor, Zak, one of our mentors, shared, *“I have always wanted to help coaches reach their top level. I went through this journey myself when I first came to this country, and if I did it, they can too.”*

The mentors in this project approached their roles with a seriousness and dedication that significantly benefited their mentees. They recognized the importance of this work for the broader sports community and understood the barriers newcom-



ers often encounter when trying to advance in their coaching careers. When asked about the significance of a project like this, Zak noted, *“This is the first step in attracting and bringing more newcomer coaches...Without projects like this, it would be difficult to integrate new coaches into the system.”*

Tiers. The NCMP participants were categorized into three different tiers. This structure ensured that mentees were paired with the right mentors, facilitating an effective match and allowing us to track their progress in their athletic and/or coaching journey. Below are the mentee tiers:

Tier 1: Recreational Sport Coaches: Athletes participated in organized sports programming at a recreational level looking to take the next step into coaching leadership roles. These are coaches who provide training and guidance to athletes participating in non-professional, community-based sports activities; focusing on skill development, enjoyment, and participation rather than competitive success.

Tier 2: Coach-intended Athletes: High school or post-secondary athletes, first generations of

newcomers with little to no coaching experience in competitive sports but with an understanding of the sport system. These are individuals who participate in organized sports at a level involving regular training and competition, who are also actively seeking out coaching opportunities in the future.

Tier 3: Established International Coaches/ High-performance Coaches: Individuals who were coaches in their home country at an intermediate or high-level and are certified coaches at Canadian sports system but continue to face barriers. They actively train and lead athletes in organized, high-performance competitions.

Project Model

Adapted Female Coach Mentorship Model. The NCMP was guided by the CAC’s Female Coach Mentorship Model. However, some of the content was modified and adapted by AHC based on the experience of working with newcomers to Canada. These adaptations ensured the materials were more relevant and supportive for newcomer mentees

and mentors. This involved changing the language in the guidebook to be inclusive for any gender and adding in sections catered to newcomers to Canada. We also created guidebook worksheets and agendas for the mentors and mentees to help them progress through the guidebook smoothly and ensure structured meetings. We encouraged mentors to guide their mentees in whatever way they felt most comfortable. These materials were instrumental in providing structured support and guidance while allowing flexibility throughout the mentorship.

One-on-one Mentorship Model. The NCMP utilized a one-on-one mentorship model specifically designed to support and empower newcomer coaches as they navigate the Canadian sports system. This individualized approach allowed for tailored guidance, ensuring that mentees receive personalized support to address their unique challenges and goals. The one-on-one mentorship fosters a strong, trusting relationship between the mentor and mentee, creating a safe space for open communication, skill development, and confidence building.

This model is particularly beneficial for newcomer coaches, as it provides the focused attention and



culturally sensitive support necessary to overcome systemic barriers and effectively integrate into the sports community.

Project Activities

Orientation for Mentors and Mentees. The project began with an orientation conducted by AHC staff, which provided the mentees with a comprehensive understanding of the project's materials and objectives. This initial meeting also served as a valuable opportunity for the mentees to connect with one another, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose as they embarked on their mentorship experience. Orientation for the mentees was conducted before the start of the initiative.

AHC facilitated this training through an in-person meeting at their office. The initial session was vital in ensuring that mentees entered the program with the right mindset, their needs and expectations were addressed, and a solid foundation was laid for their success. We emphasized the importance of providing mentees with a clear understanding of what to expect from the project. During the same time frame, the

project's mentors participated in a virtual orientation due to scheduling constraints. During this meeting, we reviewed the project's purpose, timeline, expectations, strategies for effective mentoring, and the common barriers that newcomers might encounter while integrating into the sports system. We believed it was crucial to meet with the mentors to gain a sense of community, align on program goals, and ensure they were well-equipped to support their mentees throughout the mentorship journey.

The Mentor-Mentee Meetings. The mentor-mentee meeting sessions were carefully structured to foster a strong and productive dyad. These meetings were designed to support both the personal and professional growth of the mentees by providing a platform to delve deeper into the material covered in the guidebook. It was deemed essential for mentees to review the guidebook independently and to engage with their mentors in discussions about the content. This collaborative approach allowed mentees to gain a deeper understanding of the guide, apply the concepts to their own coaching styles, and refine their personal coaching philosophies. The majority of these meetings were conducted bi-weekly online via Google Meet, ensuring consistent and accessible

communication. During these meetings, mentors and mentees reviewed key sections of the mentorship guidebook, which covered a wide range of topics such as developing a coaching philosophy, self and athlete motivation, goal setting, and more. These discussions provided mentees with the opportunity to ask questions about their progress, seek guidance on navigating the coaching system, and explore potential opportunities for growth within their sports.

The structured goal for each mentor-mentee pair was to meet at least 5 to 7 times throughout the project, and all pairs successfully met this target. This consistent interaction was instrumental in building trust, fostering open communication, and ensuring that mentees received the support they needed to advance in their coaching journeys.

Certification

Each of the mentors in the project is National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) certified through the CAC, which was a significant asset throughout the project. Their certification and expertise were particularly valuable in navigating the often

complex process of identifying the appropriate NCCP courses for each mentee. This process was challenging due to the varying platforms and resources available for different sports, where coaching information and certification details can be broad or difficult to navigate.

The mentors provided crucial guidance on locating accurate certification information and shared contacts for additional support when needed. Their experience and knowledge helped mitigate the challenges mentees faced in understanding and progressing through the coaching certification system.



Wrap-Up Event

The NCMP wrap-up event was a success, with all the mentees and all but one mentor in attendance. This event provided a valuable opportunity for networking and discussing potential future opportunities. Mentees and mentors shared their experiences, highlighting the project's significance and their personal growth throughout the mentorship. Additionally, we recorded video testimonials capturing mentees' personal experiences and stories of growth. We even had one of our mentees bring in flowers for their mentor as a sign of appreciation, which added a heartfelt touch to the event.

The event's main purpose was to bring everyone together to reflect on their journeys. Participants discussed potential barriers encountered during the project and brainstormed ideas for overcoming these challenges. We also sought feedback on the projects' execution to identify areas for improvement and enhance the experience for future participants. The wrap-up event concluded with a celebratory atmosphere, featuring food and music, fostering a sense of community and achievement among attendees.



Newcomer Mentorship Program participants and Action for Healthy Communities staff.

Project Evaluation

The NCMP evaluation included two studies:

1. Study of Newcomer Sports Coaches. It was conducted by AuthentiQ Research, a consulting company, to assess the effectiveness of the initiative through studying the challenges and facilitators/enablers for newcomers to be part of the Canadian sports system as coaches.

2. The NCMP Evaluation. It aimed to assess the quality of the pilot. This evaluation was conducted by AHC and AuthentiQ Research.

Study of Newcomer Sports Coaches

Data Collection and Methodology

This research employed qualitative interpretive inquiry based on 11 in-depth semi-structured interviews with the NCMP and other eligible participants of ten different nationalities (from British Virgin Island, Sierra Leone, Morocco, Tunisia, Uganda, Italy, Bosnia,

Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Nepal) that represent six different sports such as basketball, swimming, soccer, snowboarding, gymnastics, and canoe-kayak. To provide a comprehensive finding, we chose to cover wider populations, such as the following three tiers: newcomer high-performance coaches, coach-in-tended athletes, and recreational coaches.

Findings

The Study of Newcomer Sports Coaches focused on exploring key themes essential for understanding newcomer coaches' integration into the Canadian sports system, identifying both challenges and opportunities for improvement. The findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions to enhance diversity, inclusion, and support within the sports community.

Integration Barriers: Participants identified several barriers that impeded their integration into the Canadian sport system. These included organizational politics, which affected career advancement, and challenges in transitioning from certification to employment. Additionally, they encountered difficulties adapting to the diverse coaching styles and approaches unique to Canada, and the influence of leadership backgrounds on coach development and recognition posed fur-

ther obstacles. Social barriers within recreational sports, time constraints, parental attitudes toward sports, language barriers in competitive environments, and the subtleties of Canadian communication were also highlighted as significant challenges.

Coping Strategies: Participants identified unique coaching styles as a key coping strategy for integrating into the sport system. They emphasized that an exceptional work ethic and a commitment to continuous professional development were crucial in overcoming the barriers they faced within the Canadian sport system.

Support System and Facilitators: Interviewees identified various support systems and facilitators were recognized as crucial in aiding integration into the sport system. These included webinars and online learning resources, programs initiated by sport governing bodies, indirect financial support, community-based resources, social and community support networks, and personal athlete integration networks.

Perceived Diversity and Inclusion: Participants expressed concerns about the lack of diversity and

inclusion within higher levels of the Canadian sport system. They highlighted the challenges immigrants face and emphasized the need for greater representation in leadership roles to ensure a more equitable and inclusive environment.

Experienced Discrimination and Bias: Instances of passive-aggressive racism and microaggressions were reported by interviewees, especially within recreational coaching environments. These experiences underscore the need for heightened awareness and proactive measures to address such issues within the sport system.

Suggested Changes: Participants provided several recommendations for enhancing inclusivity and support for newcomer coaches and coach-intended athletes. These suggestions included fostering better two-way communication with leadership, reducing barriers through financial support and educational initiatives, developing targeted programs for newcomer coach-intended athletes, and establishing associations dedicated to supporting their integration and development within the Canadian sport system.

The study results, conducted by AuthentiQ Research, are vital for shaping policies and practices across various levels of sports organizations in Canada, including NSOs, PSOs, and sports clubs, to create a welcoming and equitable environment for all participants, including newcomer sports coaches. This research offers significant insights into the experiences of newcomer coaches within the Canadian sport system, revealing both challenges and opportunities for enhancement. The findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions to promote greater diversity, inclusion, and support within the sports community. These insights are vital for guiding policy and practice across various levels of sport organizations in Canada, with the goal of creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for all participants, including newcomer coaches and coach-intended athletes.

NCMP Evaluation Report

NCMP Evaluation Report aimed to learn if the project met the expected outcomes and if it benefited mentees in their integration into Canadian sport system.

We also wanted to identify ways how Canadian sports system can assist and welcome newcomers to get into coaching.

Data Collection and Methodology

To assess the efficiency of the pilot, both AuthentiQ Research and AHC staff collected data through different methods. In general, we used qualitative research methodology. The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis through coding and categorical aggregation. AuthentiQ Research interviewed two NCMP mentors and four mentees (three coach-intended athletes, and one recreational coach). AHC staff collected data based on observations, pre- and post-project surveys, and in-person conversations at the NCMP orientation event and wrap-up event. Pre-project survey was used to assess participants' initial expectations, commitment levels, and progress throughout the initiative. Nine NCMP participants (mentors and mentees) filled in the survey. Observations during the whole project duration by the project staff through conversations with mentees and mentors and meetings offered additional information and helped confirm results of in-depth interviews. Four mentees

and two mentors filled in the post-project survey. Both pre and post project surveys triangulate data of the in-depth interviews thus increasing reliability and validity of all data collected throughout the project.

Findings

The mentorship project considerably enhanced all participants knowledge of the Canadian sport systems, honing and redefining the skills, boosted the self-confidence in pursuing coaching roles, and continued support from mentors. Both mentors and mentees reported that NCMP was a significant support system to build sense of community, gain different perspectives through coaching, integration of cultural heritage and sports into project, learning coaching skills, and connecting newcomers across sports and backgrounds. There were many significant outcomes of the project:

In-person Experience. The standout feature of the NCMP was its provision of “in-person” mentorship experiences. Both mentors and mentees enjoyed in-person meetings and conversations. Mentees had opportunities to shadow and train directly with their mentors, benefiting from the project’s local focus,

which allowed for easier access to specific sports programs and direct support. A particularly cherished element of the mentorship was the opportunity for in-person interactions. A mentee highlighted this, stating, “For me, it was meeting in real life. I got to attend one of her practices and witness how she runs a session, prepares for it, and explains it to her players.” These face-to-face meetings not only allowed mentees to observe and learn firsthand but also strengthened their connection with their mentors, improving their overall experience in the program.

Sense of Community and Belonging. Participants noted that the NCMP played a crucial role in helping them connect with the experiences of others, fostering a sense of community and solidarity. They shared that learning about the challenges and successes of fellow newcomers helped them realize they were not alone in their journey. This shared understanding and mutual support not only eased feelings of isolation but also provided valuable insights and strategies for navigating the Canadian sports system. The participant credited the program with boosting their confidence and strengthening their resolve to pursue a career in Canada.

Different Perspectives through Coaching. Another finding was the transformative impact of viewing the sport from a coach’s perspective rather than as an athlete’s. This shift in perspective was described as eye-opening, providing a deeper understanding of the administrative and developmental aspects of coaching. The participant remarked that this broader viewpoint not only enhanced their appreciation for the complexities involved in coaching but also underscored the importance of mentorship in navigating these new challenges. Through their involvement in the NCMP, the participants gained valuable insights into team dynamics, training methodologies, and the intricacies of fostering athlete growth—elements that are often overlooked when solely participating as a player.

Integrating Sport and Cultural Heritage. Participants highlighted the presence of culturally diverse mentors as a unique aspect of the NCMP. For example, one mentee shared that the program exceeded her expectations because her mentor, who is Indigenous, skillfully incorporated both sport and Indigenous cultural elements into the mentorship process. This unique approach not only deepened her understand-

ing of coaching but also offered valuable insights into the importance of cultural diversity in sports. The participant appreciated how her mentor's combination of athletic expertise and cultural knowledge created a more holistic and inclusive coaching experience, emphasizing the critical role of representation and cultural competence in mentorship programs.

Learning to Coach Newcomer Children. During the NCMP, AHC hired one of the mentees as a coach for the after-school soccer program. He was paired with a mentor who founded a soccer academy specifically for racialized newcomers to Canada. The mentee expressed satisfaction with the program, as it allowed him to apply his learnings in practice, thereby improving his understanding of coaching techniques for newcomer children. He highlighted gaining insights into both the fundamental and more nuanced aspects of coaching newcomer youth, which were previously unfamiliar to him. Specifically, the mentee noted learning strategies to effectively motivate young athletes, a crucial skill for fostering enthusiasm and commitment among children involved in sports. This new knowledge and hands-on experience were described as pivotal in shaping his coaching approach, emphasizing a blend of patience, creativity, and motivational

techniques tailored to the developmental needs of newcomer youth.

Connecting Newcomers Across Sports and Backgrounds. A mentor expressed their gratitude for the NCMP, noting that the program facilitated valuable connections among newcomers from diverse sports backgrounds and cultural contexts. This aspect was particularly beneficial as it fostered a sense of community and collaboration among participants who might not have otherwise interacted. Mentors shared that these connections enriched their own coaching practices by exposing them to new perspectives and methodologies from other sports and cultures. This participant described how the NCMP provided a platform for sharing experiences and strategies across disciplines, leading to a deeper understanding of coaching principles and methods. This evaluation report affirms the effectiveness of the NCMP. The positive feedback from the pilot program suggests that it can be replicated across Canada to provide opportunities for newcomers from various countries to learn Canadian sport system and train to become coaches in Canada.



Conclusion

The NCMP represents a meaningful step toward supporting newcomers to Canada in coaching. By addressing unique challenges and offering intentional support, the project has contributed to promoting diversity and inclusion within the Canadian sports coaching community. Key actions that led to these outcomes include the initial training provided by AHC, which equipped mentees with essential knowledge and tools for navigating the Canadian sports system. The project also fostered valuable connections between newcomers and experienced local coaches, enabling the sharing of knowledge and the development of vital networks. Additionally, the program's focus on understanding and overcoming systemic barriers, such as credential recognition and cultural differences, has empowered participants to confidently pursue coaching roles in Canada. Continued efforts to expand and enhance initiatives like this will be crucial in advancing a more inclusive and diverse sports system in the country.

Recommendations

To conclude the five-month NCMP, we developed recommendations for stakeholders on how we can continue to encourage and include newcomer coaches based on the evaluation of the project. The project results suggest the following recommendations for the funders, newcomer coaches to Canada, and sports organizations:

For Funders:

The results of the interviews and post-project survey indicated that the NCMP effectively helped participants in several key areas. It fostered a sense of community among them, provided valuable skills and knowledge about the Canadian coaching environment, and facilitated connections between newcomers from various sports and backgrounds. This support played a significant role in assisting them to integrate and navigate the Canadian sport system. Due to the fact that the project exceeded participants' expectations, we recommend the following:

Expansion of the NCMP. The limitation of the NCMP included a five-month timeline, and financial sus-

tainability that could limit coaching certification. The NCMP can be expanded to provide continued support by further funding the development and design of a module, that is implemented through the establishment of specialized projects designed to help newcomers start coaching and thrive in their chosen sports throughout Canada. These projects should provide targeted training, language support, and mentorship to bridge the gap between the newcomers' previous experiences and the Canadian sports context. Additionally, it has been highlighted that the lack of financial opportunities in coaching can disproportionately impact newcomers. Many newcomers face significant financial barriers that hinder their ability to participate in coaching programs, pursue certifications, and sustain a career in sports.

Addressing this issue requires providing scholarships, grants, and other financial aid options specifically targeted at newcomers. This financial support could help alleviate the burden of costs associated with training, certification fees, and ongoing professional development, ensuring that individuals aren't excluded due to economic restraints. It is important to include mandatory training sessions that educate mentor coaches

on cultural sensitivity, bias recognition, and inclusive coaching practices. The module's content should also include facilitation of transition for newcomer coaches from certification to employment. Simplifying and clarifying the employment process post-training, such as NCCP certification offered by the CAC, can ensure newcomers understand the steps required to secure positions within the Canadian sport system. In designing the curriculum or the content of the project, forming partnerships with educational institutions to offer internship or placement programs should be included as this can bridge the gap between certification and employment for newcomer coaches.

Develop the Newcomer Coach Mentorship Guidelines for Mentees and Mentors. To continue the project, the Newcomer Coach Mentorship Guidelines needs to be redefined and developed specific to the needs of newcomers to Canada. For that, there is a need to conduct comprehensive literature review that will follow with specific steps to guide both mentors and mentees to introduce and navigate the Canadian Sport system.

Develop Educational Workshops Series for Newcomers to Canada on easing integration and social

barriers in participating in sports. These informational community engagement activities will not only connect newcomers to sports programs, but also will raise public awareness of the benefits of sports participation, targeting parents of newcomer athletes, can shift perceptions and encourage support. Information sessions on navigating Canadian sport system and cultural communication nuances will help newcomers to understand and adapt to local communication styles, including modules on the feedback culture in Canadian sports, highlighting the expectations and common practices in giving and receiving feedback.

For Newcomer Coaches

Establishment of an Association for Newcomer Coaches to Canada. Study participants proposed the creation of an association specifically dedicated to supporting newcomer athletes aspiring to become coaches. This organization would focus on addressing the unique challenges these athletes face, such as language barriers, cultural adaptation, and access to resources. Additionally, it would serve as a platform to advocate for their needs and ensure their voices are heard within the broader sports community. By fostering a supportive network and

promoting diversity, this association aims to enhance the integration and success of international coach-intended athletes in the Canadian sports system.

For Sports Community

The term sports community means various levels of sports organizations and associations (National Sport Organizations, Provincial or Territorial Sport Organizations, community sports clubs etc.)

Diversifying Leadership Backgrounds. The leadership in Canadian sports does not reflect the diversity of its participants. Data from the NCMP indicates a need for greater diversity in leadership in terms of race and residence status to ensure the inclusion of voices and experiences from Canada's diverse populations. Creating initiatives with a focus on developing leadership skills tailored to the diverse backgrounds of newcomer coaches is required, promoting their recognition and development within the Canadian sport system. Also, diverse leadership backgrounds of newcomer coaches should be recognized and celebrated, integrating their unique experiences into the mainstream coaching philosophy.

Mapping the Pathway for Paid Coaching Positions.

Most coaching positions in Canada are volunteer based, which presents a significant challenge for all potential coaches, including newcomers. This volunteer structure limits the financial sustainability of coaching as a career, making it difficult for coaches to dedicate the necessary time and resources without adequate compensation. As a result, there is a pressing need to create a clear pathway for coaches to transition from volunteer roles to paid positions. Developing a comprehensive map of the sport sector that illustrates where paid coaching positions currently exist, could serve as a viable tool for aspiring coaches. This map would identify opportunities at various levels, helping coaches understand that landscape and plan their career progression.

Drawing on its extensive experience working with immigrant populations, AHC successfully piloted this meaningful initiative, producing actionable steps for stakeholders to support newcomer coaches in integrating into the Canadian sports environment. We believe this pilot will continue to expand across Canada, enriching and diversifying the coaching landscape.



Acknowledgement

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Coaching Association of Canada for their generous support and commitment to the Newcomer Coach Mentorship Program (NCMP). Your generous funding has been instrumental in making this project a reality, allowing us to provide newcomer coaches with the opportunity to build their capacity within the Canadian sport system, gain essential knowledge and skills, and become NCCP-certified coaches. Without your support, our efforts to empower newcomer coaches and promote diversity in sport would not have been possible.

We also extend our sincere thanks to AHC's partners—Edmonton Ski Club, Greater Edmonton Canoe Kayak Club, and BTB Soccer Academy—for their invaluable assistance in connecting us with mentors.

Thank you for believing in our vision to support individuals and communities facing equity challenges to build their capacity and for helping us to make a lasting impact on the community.

Appendix A:

NCMP Mentee Journey

1. Artem

Background: 23-year-old from Ukraine, Tier 1 athlete with a passion for snowboarding. Previously a recreational cyclist.

Mentor: Erica, an instructor at the Edmonton Ski Club, a multi-sport coach for over 10 years, NCCP certified.

Challenges and Adaptations: Difficulty finding sport-specific coaching workshops due to the offseason for snowboarding. Artem completed his multi-sport NCCP certifications and gained experience through shadowing Erica's gymnastics coaching sessions. The remaining funds will be used for snowboarding-specific certifications when available.

Multi-sport + Sport Specific Courses Taken:

1. CAC's Anti-Racism in Coaching
2. CAC's Safe Sport Training
3. NCCP Making Head Way in Sport
4. NCCP Make Ethical Decisions
5. NCCP Planning a Practice
6. NCCP Teaching and Learning
7. Respect in Sport for Leaders
8. Canada Snowboard Comp Introduction Online Pre-Course (Artem plans on taking this course winter 2024, as it is not being offered currently)
9. Canada Snowboard Comp Introduction Course (Artem plans on taking this course winter 2024, as it is not being offered currently)

2. Cindy

Background: 18-year-old from Cameroon via Italy, Tier 2 athlete aspiring to become a certified basketball coach. City champion and recruited to play post-secondary basketball at a CCAA school in Alberta.

Mentor: Lauren, assistant basketball coach at the University of Alberta-Augustana, certified through the Indigenous Coaching Mentorship project, works for the Indigenous Sport Council of Alberta.

Challenges and Adaptations: Balancing multi-sport and sport-specific training. Cindy completed her multi-sport NCCP courses and aims to start her sport-specific training this summer.

Multi-sport + Sport Specific Courses Taken:

10. CAC's Anti-Racism in Coaching
11. CAC's Safe Sport Training
12. NCCP Making Head Way in Sport
13. FUNdamentals (Cindy plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
14. Learn to Train (Cindy plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
15. Train to Train (Cindy plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
16. Train to Compete (Cindy plans on taking this course early next year)

3. Hamis

Background: 31-year-old from Uganda, Tier 2 athlete with experience as a professional soccer player and goalie coach.

Mentor: Kondeh, owner of BTB Soccer in Edmonton, NCCP certified.

Challenges and Adaptations: Integration into the Canadian coaching system and completion of necessary certifications. Hamis completed all required NCCP modules and plans to take his C-Diploma. He previously worked at soccer summer camps for AHC in 2023.

Multi-sport + Sport Specific Courses Taken:

1. CAC's Anti-Racism in Coaching
2. CAC's Safe Sport Training
3. NCCP Making Head Way in sport
4. Respect in Sport
5. FUNdamentals – Grassroots coach education program
6. Learn to Train – Grassroots coach education program
7. Soccer for Life – Grassroots coach education program
8. CONCACAF C-Diploma – National C License (Hamis plans on taking this course fall 2025)

4. Mark

Background: 16-year-old from the Ukraine, Tier 2 sprint kayak athlete, who aspires to become a coach and high-level athlete in the sport.

Mentor: Zak, Director of the St. Albert Canoe and Kayak Club, Level 3 certified coach with over two decades of experience.

Challenges and Adaptations: Language barriers necessitating extended workshop durations. Zak extended the CanoeKids workshop to five days to accommodate Mark's English proficiency. Mark completed all required NCCP level courses.

Multi-sport + Sport Specific Courses Taken:

9. CAC's Anti-Racism in Coaching
10. CAC's Safe Sport Training
11. NCCP Making Head Way in Sport
12. CanoeKids
13. NCCP Making Ethical Decisions (Mark plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
14. NCCP Planning a Practice (Mark plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
15. NCCP Teaching and Learning (Mark plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)
16. NCCP Sport Nutrition (Mark plans on taking these courses during late summer 2024)

Appendix B: Continuations after NCMP

Artem

Edmonton Ski Club – Artem spent a lot of time volunteering at the Ski Club last and earned a level 1 instructor position. He will coach there again this winter season and will be completing his training to become a coach/higher-level instructor.

Cindy

Good Hoops Summer Camps – This will be a paid coaching opportunity working with the youth of the Edmonton community.

Junior Vikes Camps – Cindy is committed to a CCAA women's basketball team, and one of the team's responsibilities is to run the in-school basketball programming. She will have the opportunity to coach the youth and build her practice planning skills.

Hamis

AHC Soccer Camps – Hamis was hired by AHC to coach an after-school boys soccer program. It is a free soccer team for newcomers to Canada.

Mark

Canoe Kayak Club – Mark will be working at the St. Albert Canoe Kayak Club this summer, shadowing his mentor Zak. He will help with youth development and summer camps at the club.

Appendix C: NCMP Participant Discontinuations

Mentee 1

- **Background:** 32-year-old from Jamaica, Tier 2 athlete that was a competitive swimmer back in Jamaica now aspiring to become a swim coach.
- **Mentor:** Vicki, retired marathon swimmer, coach and advocate for athletes with disabilities. Vicki has coached 24 athletes with a disability at a national level, and 4 at an international level.
- **Reason for discontinuing:** The reason remains unknown as AHC has not been able to contact them.

Mentee 2

- **Background:** 18-year-old from the Philippines, Tier 1 athlete who is recreational level badminton player who was aspiring to become a badminton coach.
- **Mentor:** Guerin, assistant coach at Concordia University and M.E. LaZerte High School.
- **Reason for discontinuing:** The mentee was struggling with their time management at the end of their grad year so ultimately came to the decision to discontinue the project.

Works Cited

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Links

Study of Newcomer Sports Coaches

Action for Healthy Communities (2024, August). *Study of Newcomer Coaches*. Edmonton.

The NCMP Evaluation

Action for Healthy Communities (2024, August). *The Newcomer Coach Mentorship Project*. Edmonton.



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