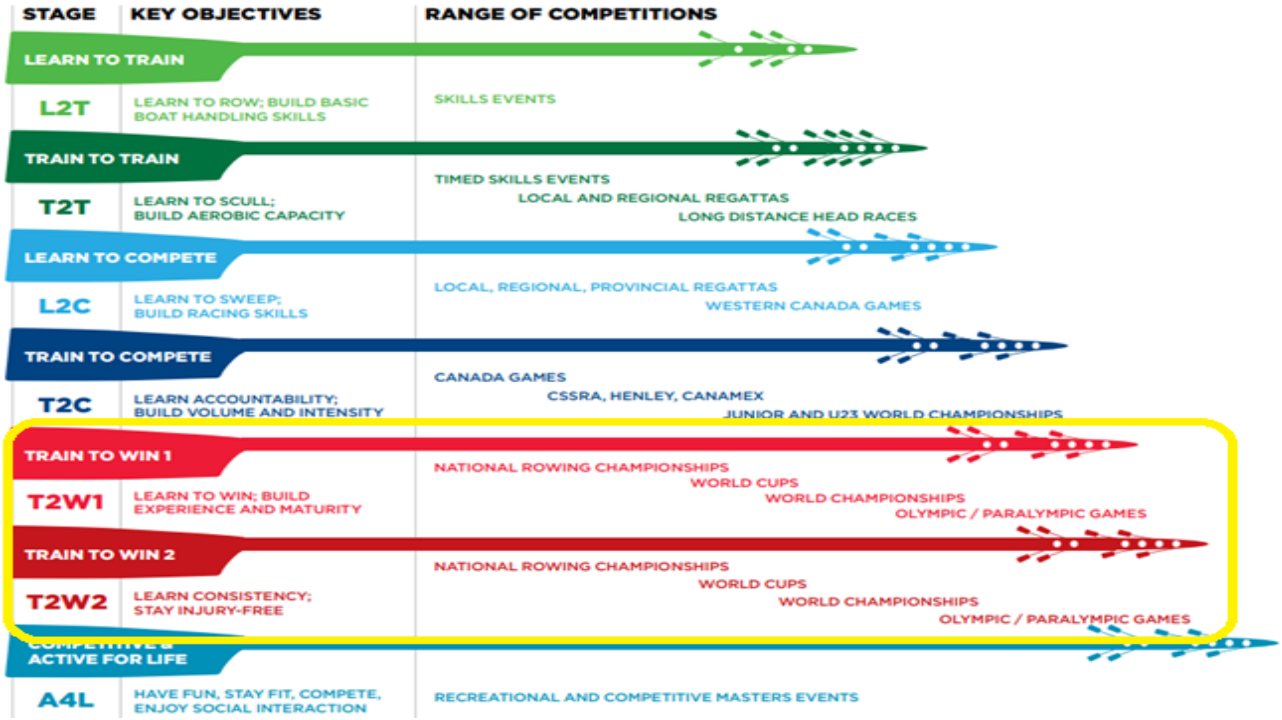
NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE
ATHLETE PATHWAY & STANDARDS
(2026)

Rowing Canada Aviron (RCA) runs a high-performance program whose purpose is to consistently achieve podium performances at international events and ultimately, medals at Olympic and Paralympic Games.

For the flat-water Olympic discipline, RCA runs centralized year-round programming under professional leadership, coaching, sport science and medicine and athlete support programs for our National Training Centre (NTC) athletes. The goal of the National Training Centre – Athlete Pathway and Standards (NTC-APS) is to provide clearer expectations and transparency for athletes entering, exiting, and maintaining position within the NTC.

The NTC has the capacity to provide international calibre programming and support to the best rowers in Canada. NTC programming is delivered through support from Sport Canada, OTP, COC, the COPSIN network and a broader community of national to local support. Our NextGen Pathway programming is led by RCA utilizing the NTC seasonally, with additional support from partnerships with PSO's Universities and Clubs.

From a performance perspective the NTC is oriented towards athletes in the Train to Win 1 and 2 stage of development as defined in the Athlete Development Pathway/LTAD document.



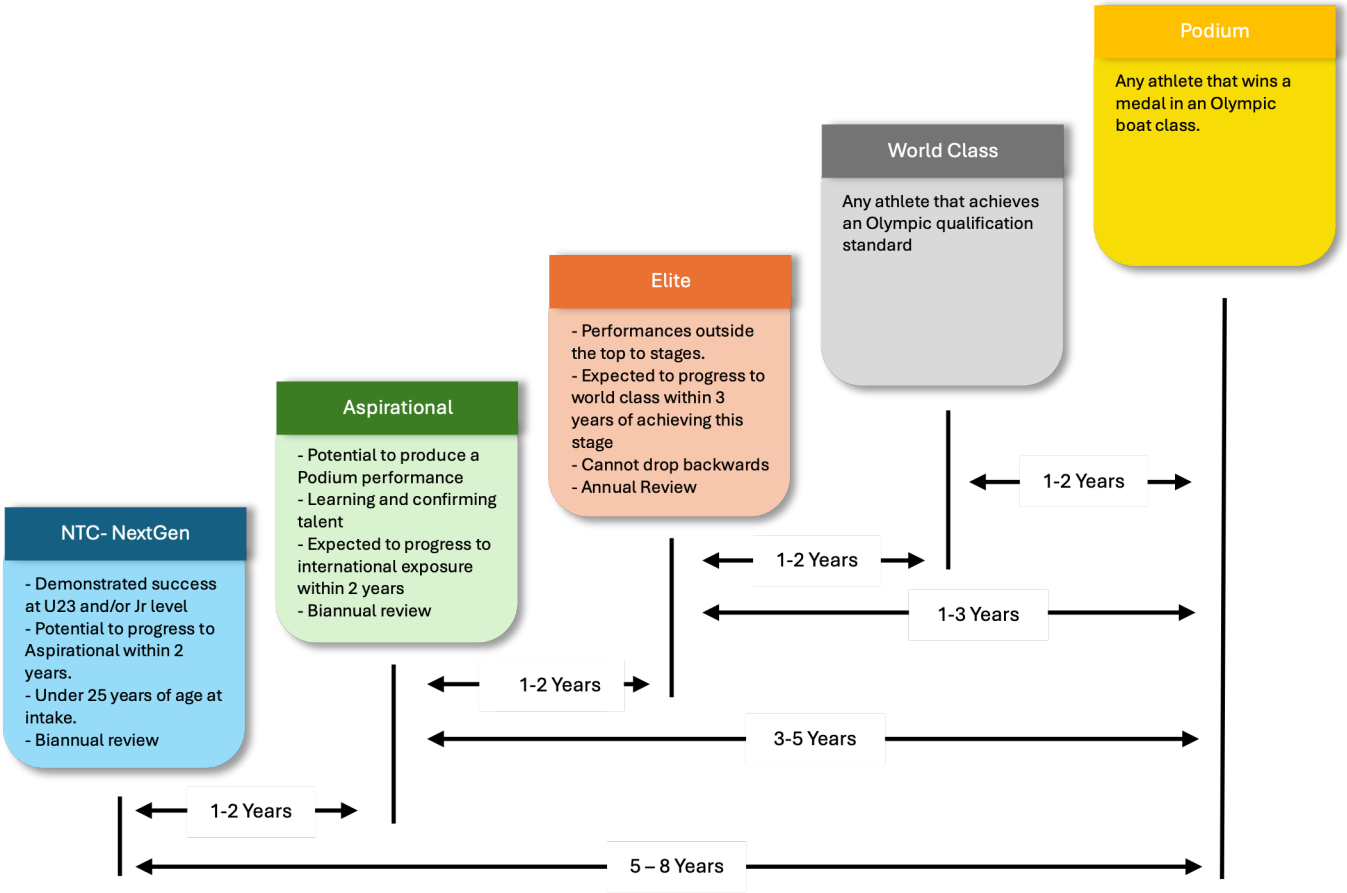
In service of providing clearer expectations and transparency there are key elements that combine and contribute to the success NTC-APS document.

1. Identification of Progressive Stages within the NTC
2. Baseline Erg Standards
3. Assessment framework
4. Review Panel to administer the process.

Assignment of Stages

An Athlete's NTC Stage is assigned on a yearly basis either immediately following the World Rowing Championships/Olympics or an Assessment Camp. Athletes stay within their stage until the completion of the next World Rowing Championships or review by the NTC Panel at the completion of an Assessment Camp.

The following is a general overview of these stages and their associated performance requirements:



Performance Markers are to be met at the SR World Rowing Championships unless otherwise stated.

2026 UPDATE: NTC – NextGen Stage added

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Progression

NTC athletes are expected to show consistent progression and advance through the stages within the NTC framework. Once an athlete reaches a stage, they are not expected to drop back to a lower stage, the exception to this general rule being a Podium athlete who misses a medal at the year's title event (Olympics, Paralympics, or Senior Worlds), but retains the Olympic qualification standard, can return to the World-Class stage.

Any World-Class or Podium athletes who revert to the Elite stage because of a World Championship Result will go through the next scheduled NTC Review process and be assessed for ongoing status within the NTC or exited.

Aspirational, and Elite athletes are expected to progress to the next stage within three consecutive years. Athletes that are not promoted within this timescale, regardless of injuries or other circumstances, should expect to be exited from the NTC. However, at their own discretion, the NTC Panel may choose to retain an athlete if they have good reason to believe that the athlete still has the potential to reach the Podium level.

NTC – NextGen: this stage is meant to capture athletes who are demonstrating performance metrics which puts them on track to achieve "Aspirational" status within 1-2 years. These athletes would be engaged in programming focused on 2032 Olympic performance. Athletes must be under 25 years of age in the calendar year they are being considered for this stage, allowing them time to progress through the above stages in 5-8 years.

For the avoidance of doubt, the comments in this section refer to the maximum time an athlete should expect to remain at any stage before being seriously considered to be exited from the NTC.

The minimum time an athlete remains in the NTC could be as short as the time between consecutive Selection Meetings (approximately six months) but would typically not be less than one year.

Assessment Framework

Further review and assessment of the athlete pool within the NTC will take place in the Spring and Fall, with NTC Assessment Camps being used as the mechanism for athletes at the Elite and Aspirational stages.

	NTC Stages				
NTC ASSESSMENT CAMP	Podium	World-Class	Elite	Aspirational	NTC NextGen
Spring	Athletes selected to a World Cup, World Championships or Olympic Team are Exempt. All other athletes are Required.				
Fall	Exempt	Exempt	Required	Required	Required

Base Standards

RCA believes athletes need to have a base level of physicality (identified by ergometer testing) as well as exceptional skill to meet the performance goals of the program internationally. The following are the identified ergometer standards for NTC consideration.

Women's Standards

LA Cycle

	Minimum Target for NTC-NextGen	Minimum targets for ASPIRATIONAL to PODIUM		
	2024-2028	2024/25	2026	2027/28
2k	6:59.0	6:59.0	6:57.0	6:57.0
6k	22:30.0	22:30.0	22:22.0	22:15.0

Brisbane Cycle

	Minimum Target for NTC-NextGen	Minimum targets for ASPIRATIONAL to PODIUM		
	Fall 2028 onward	2029	2030	2031/32
2k	6:59.0	6:59.0	6:57.0	6:54.0
6k	22:20.0	22:20.0	22:15.0	22:05

Men's Standards

LA Cycle

	Minimum Target for NTC-NextGen	Minimum targets for ASPIRATIONAL to PODIUM		
	2024-2028	2024/25	2026	2027/28
2k	6:10.0	6:06.0	6:03.0	6:01.0
6k	19:50.0	19:35.0	19:27.0	19:20.0

Brisbane Cycle

	Minimum Target for NTC-NextGen	Minimum targets for ASPIRATIONAL to PODIUM		
	Fall 2028 onward	2029	2030	2031/32
2k	6:06.0	6:01.0	5:58.0	5:56.0
6k	19:50.0	19:35.0	19:20.0	19:05.0

Athletes who meet either of the ergometer standards for their respective gender are invited to apply for intake to the NTC through the steps listed below.

Wildcard Considerations

For each intake process, the HPD can bring up to two wildcard athletes per gender for consideration by the panel for intake to the assessment camp. It is the discretion of the HPD as the criteria but should be grounded in exceptional circumstances.

Step 1 Application

On top of the ergometer standards, RCA wants to see on-water performances that demonstrate speed individually or as part of an established crew pointing towards successful results internationally. In applying for consideration, athletes should include a performance history such as:

- Best 2k small boat time (Time trial or other race)
- U23 Worlds Results

- Multisport Games Results (ie Pan Am Games/FISU)
- National Rowing Championship Results
- Open NTC Assessments
- Jr Worlds, University or Club racing results.
- Personal/Seasonal best 2k and 6k erg.

Step 2 NTC Panel Camp Invites

NTC Panel meets twice a year and reviews list of athletes who have applied, including their performance history, and based on their expertise, invites athletes to the NTC Assessment Camp.

Step 3 NTC Assessment Camp

The RCA Lead Coach(es) will structure a camp that will further assess invited athletes fit within the NTC. The camp will include measurable assessments against GMP standards and subjective assessments such as coachability or observation of the athlete within the NTC environment.

The types of assessments could include any of the following:

Integrated NTC training
Ergometer assessments
Lactate testing
Strength and mobility assessments
Matrixing
Time Trials
Team Dynamics
Biomechanical
Personal Interview

Step 4 NTC Roster Update

After the completion of each NTC ASSESSMENT CAMP, the Panel will review the athletes with the following options.

For new athletes the Panel can extend invitation to the NTC or provide guidance to athletes who need more development to be NTC ready.

For existing NTC athletes going through the review process, the Panel can;

a) Support ongoing status within the NTC by assigning Elite, Aspirational, or NTC-NextGen stage, or
b) Assign removal from the NTC, confirming gaps and expectations for future invitations.

The following are factors the NTC review panel may consider when determining options.

a) Athletes' results against GMP standards
b) Athletes' results against previous results (GMP and International).
c) Athletes' results against existing NTC athletes.
d) Athletes' results against other camp athletes.
e) Athletes' years in rowing.
f) Athletes' fit and ability to integrate within the NTC.
g) NTC Capacity and Program Funding

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NTC Panel

The NTC Review Panel consists of the voting members, non-voting members and observers. The voting members are responsible for making decisions within the framework of the NTC-APS. The non-voting members are used to provide expert advice/opinion as requested. The observer's role is to observe and provide feedback to the process and is non-voting.

Voting Members
- HPD (Chair)
- NTC Lead Coach(es)
- NTC Pathway Coaches
- Lead Sport Scientist

Observers
- OTP High Performance Advisor
- Additional designates invited by HPD

Appendix - NTC Stage Levels of Support

NTC Stage	Level of Support
Podium	- NTC Lead Coach - Full access to NTC facilities - Full access to NTC boats and equipment - Priority for camps and competition selection (subject to budget availability) - Prioritized Sport Science (S&C, Physiology, Biomechanics, & Mental Performance) support - Prioritized Medical support - Individualized Dietary support (Subject to budget availability) - Annual performance review
World Class	- NTC Lead Coach - Full access to NTC facilities - Full access to NTC boats and equipment - Secondary for camps and competition selection (subject to budget availability) - Prioritized Sport Science (S&C, Physiology, Biomechanics, & Mental Performance) support - Prioritized Medical support - Individualized Dietary support (Subject to budget availability) - Annual performance review
Elite	- NTC Lead Coach - Full access to NTC facilities - Full access to NTC boats and equipment - Tertiary for camps and competition selection (subject to budget availability) - Secondary Sport Science (S&C, Physiology, Biomechanics, & Mental Performance) support - Secondary Medical support (At discretion of therapy team) - Directed Dietary support (Subject to budget availability) - Annual performance review

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Aspirational	- Partial NTC Lead Coach, Partial Next Gen Coach - Full access to NTC facilities - Full access to NTC boats and equipment - Directed selection for camps and competition (Subject to budget availability) - Group based Physiology and S&C - Biomechanics & Mental Performance support subject to availability - Group Medical support (Increased service at discretion of therapy team) - Group Dietary support (Subject to budget availability) - Semi-annual performance review
NTC - NextGen	- NTC Pathway coach or NextGen Coach - Assigned to identified training location - Directed selection for camps and competition (Subject to budget availability) - Access to Facilities and Equipment - Sport Science and Sport Medicine support subject to budget and availability - Strategic and directed integration with other NTC stages - Semi Annual performance review - Program fee's may be required for certain activities.

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