



ONTARIO TARGETED ATHLETE PROGRAM

2026–2027

Ontario Cycling Targeted Athlete Program

Our Goal

The Ontario Cycling Targeted Athlete Program is designed to support athletes with the potential to progress toward Cycling Canada programs and future international competition in Olympic and Paralympic cycling disciplines.

Our focus is not simply on recognizing the best athletes today. Instead, we want to identify and support athletes who demonstrate the ability, commitment, and potential to continue improving and succeed at higher levels of the sport.

The program also recognizes the important role that coaches, clubs, and teams play in athlete development. Our goal is to provide support that helps athletes thrive within their existing training environment while also providing enhanced services and opportunities to train with Ontario's strongest athletes and in environments that reflect the demands of the sport at international levels.

What is Changing from 2025-26?

The program is evolving to better support athletes during the key developmental years, particularly those between the ages of 14 and 20.

Some important changes include:

- Greater focus on long-term potential, not just results.
- Creation for opportunities for athletes to be identified throughout the season.
- Focus on individualized support based on athlete and coach needs.
- Increased emphasis on support for coach development specifically for developing athletes

Program Structure

The program will include two athlete groups:

Provincial Performance Pool

This group is designed for athletes who are performing at a high level nationally or who demonstrate exceptional potential to compete at the national and international level.

Athletes in this pool may include:

- National Championship medalists
- Athletes representing Team Canada
- Athletes competing at a high national level (U17/U19) & international levels (U23)
- Younger athletes showing outstanding long-term potential

What Support May Be Available?

Support will be tailored to the athlete's needs and developed in consultation with their coach. Athletes will be required to complete an Individual Performance Plan to identify the areas where support can be most effective.

Examples may include:

- Prioritized selection to Academy and OC Training Camps/Projects
- Sport science testing
- Nutrition support
- Mental performance support
- Performance planning
- Training plan review
- Bike fitting
- Competition planning

Not all athletes will receive the same services. Support will be based on what will have the greatest impact on their development. Services may be offered at individual times or be set-up as part of an athlete weekend at the Canadian Sport Institute Ontario

Provincial Development Pool

This pool is designed for athletes who show strong potential for future high-performance success but may still be in the early stages of their development.

Athletes in this pool may include:

- Athletes with consistent performances above their age category (U15/U17)
- Athletes representing Team Ontario or part of Academy programming
- Athletes demonstrating high level of commitment to cycling through structured training, certified coaching, and active racing

What Support May Be Available?

Support may include:

- Prioritized selection (after Performance Pool) to Academy and OC Training Camps/Projects
- Athlete education opportunities
- Coach support for continued NCCP certification completion and PD opportunities
- Athlete access to sport science and testing services (when possible and demonstrated need)
- Coach support towards training planning (peer/coach reviews, physiologist data analysis)

The goal of the Development Pool is to help athletes build the foundation needed for future success and transition into Performance Pool.

How Is This Different from Ontario Cycling Academy Programs?

Ontario Cycling Academy programs are structured, discipline-specific programs with regular training, camps, coach contact, sport science support, and education built into a defined calendar.

The Targeted Athlete Program does not replace an Academy, club, team, private coach, or daily training environment. Rather it helps ensure Targeted Athletes that might not have an Academy for their discipline or who are not able to commit to an Academy program are still able to access sport science support services. It also allows these athletes the opportunity to access additional individualized services that may not be included as part of an Academy's delivery.

Why Have Both Academy and Targeted Athlete Programs?

Identifying a Targeted Athlete Pool is a requirement as part of our partnership with the Canadian Sport Institute. The athlete pools help track progress in evaluating the short and long-term impact of CSIO services and programming. Additionally, not all Academy athletes will be eligible to receive the same access to service as more athletes could be invited into Academy programs regardless if they meet the selection criteria for the Targeted Athlete Program.

How Are Athletes Selected?

The selection committee uses a scorecard to review athletes across three main areas [See Appendix A]. Each area is scored for a maximum total score of 20. The scorecard is intended to create a consistent process while still allowing reviewers to consider the full context of an athlete's development, not only their most recent race results.

1. Performance

How is the athlete currently performing at the provincial, national or international level?

2. Future Potential

How likely is the athlete to continue improving and achieve higher levels of performance in the coming years?

This may include consideration of:

- Rate of improvement (times, results, coach observation)
- Technical skills acquisition and in consideration of physical development
- Coach feedback

3. Development Environment

Does the athlete have access to quality coaching, training opportunities, and support systems that will help them continue progressing?

Application

Athletes interested in applying for the Targeted Athlete Program must complete the online application by October 12, 2026.

[APPLICATION](#)

Applicants Must:

- Be eligible to compete for Canada
- Review the selection criteria in Appendix A before applying
- Be prepared to provide race results, training details, and coach information within the application

Opportunities Throughout the Year

Athletes do not have to wait until the next selection cycle to be identified. Athletes that are not selected are still eligible for camps and projects when space is available. Ontario Cycling will also continue to monitor athlete performances throughout the season and may add athletes to the program based on:

- Provincial/National Racing
- Cycling Canada & Provincial Coach nominations
- Ontario Cycling camp performance
- Testing/assessment events

The Role of Coaches

Coaches play a critical role in athlete development.

As part of the program, Ontario Cycling will work closely with coaches to ensure athletes receive the support that is most beneficial to their individual needs.

Where appropriate, resources may be directed toward coach education and development to help create the best possible environment for athletes to succeed.

Appendix A: Targeted Athlete Program Scoring Guide

Performance and Development Pool minimums vary by age group and include safeguards to ensure athletes meet both performance and development-readiness expectations.

Notes & Considerations:

- All performance results are based on Olympic/Paralympic events [i.e. XCO not XCC]
- Results will take into consideration the size and depth of field [i.e. top 5 when less than 12 competitors]
- Results in road and MTB events will take into consideration finishing time in relation to winner's time with a target of being within 10% of the top placing time

1. Performance Level — 10 Points

Rating	Description	Score
Exceptional	Team Canada representation, international results, or national championship medal performance (U19.U23); clearly competitive at the highest national level.	10
Strong	National or Canada Cup winner or consistently among leading national competitors; demonstrates readiness for higher-level competition. Achieving Cycling Canada track 'A' time standard (U19), 'B' (Elite)	8
Good	Consistent top 5 (MTB/Road) top 3 (BMX Race/Track/BMX Freestyle/Para) at national-level competitions with credible results against strong fields; progressing toward finals, podiums, or higher national ranking. Consistently meeting Cycling Canada track 'B' time standard (U19)	6
Developing	Consistent provincial performer with emerging national competitiveness (i.e. top 8-10); results show the athlete is closing the gap to national standards.	4
Emerging	Developing provincial athlete with limited national evidence to date; results are inconsistent or primarily at the provincial or club level.	0-3

2. Future Potential — 5 Points

Rating	Description	Score
Exceptional	Exceptional upward trajectory with clear evidence of performances/results reflective of Cycling Canada or international potential (i.e. performances reflect higher age/level racing U19 to U23; U17 to U19); rapid improvement in results or times, advanced technical skill acquisition, understanding of how to train as a high performance athletes (off-bike knowledge/skills/habits demonstrated) and endorsement from a national coach.	5
Strong	Strong, sustained progression supported by results, testing, and/or coach observation; technical and tactical development in relation to physical maturation. Performances reflect higher age/level racing (U17 to U19). Evidence of off-bike skills/knowledge/habits. Demonstrated drive and willingness to improve. Endorsement from a national or provincial coach.	4
Moderate	Positive but moderate improvement with some evidence of higher-level potential; technical skills and performance indicators are progressing, though not yet consistently.	3
Limited	Limited or uneven progression; some development is evident, but results, technical acquisition, testing, or coach feedback do not yet show a clear high-performance trajectory.	2
Low	Little current evidence of continued progression toward higher performance; improvement has stalled or key technical, physical, or competitive indicators remain unclear.	0–1

3. Development Environment — 5 Points

Rating	Description	Score
Excellent	Comprehensive development environment: certified/experienced coaching, structured and individualized training plan, evidence of gap analysis and progression monitoring, strong club or team support, active involvement in stage appropriate competition opportunities. Athlete is actively and fully engaging in training and development opportunities that progress them towards national team selection.	5

Strong	Strong environment with most core elements in place: certified/experienced coaching, structured training with access to facilities reflective of the demands of competition, active racing, and involvement in programming and opportunities that align with athlete needs to progress.	4
Adequate	Adequate environment with some important supports available, but gaps exist in coaching access, training planning, competition exposure, monitoring, or family and club resources.	2–3
Weak	Significant environmental gaps that may restrict development, such as inconsistent coaching, limited structured training or racing, weak planning, or insufficient support systems.	0–1

Age-Performance Pool Eligibility

Age Group is based on age in 2026.

Age Group	Minimum Eligibility — Performance Pool	Minimum Eligibility — Development Pool	Requirements / Notes
U15 (2nd year)	Not eligible.	12 / 20 or higher.	Development Pool consideration should require clear evidence of competing above age level, strong future potential, and a supportive development environment.
U17	15 / 20 or higher.	13 / 20 or higher.	Performance Pool: Future Potential ≥ 4 and Development Environment ≥ 3 . Development Pool: no category should be below 2 unless there is a clear plan to address the gap.
U19	16 / 20 or higher.	14 / 20 or higher.	Performance Pool: Performance Level should normally be ≥ 6 , Future Potential ≥ 4 , and no category below 3.
U23	17 / 20 or higher.	Development Pool generally not applicable; may be	Performance Pool: athlete should demonstrate national competitiveness and a clear pathway toward Cycling Canada

		considered by exception at 15 / 20 or higher.	or international-level opportunities.
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