



Rowing Ireland Strategic Plan 2024 - 2029

Presented to
Clubs of Rowing Ireland
AGM September 2024



What is Rowing Ireland?

The push and pull of Rowing is powerful...

The pull of the water; The push of the challenge;

The pull of the boat; The push for success;

The pull of the oars; The push of the community;

The pull of the crew; The push of the coach;

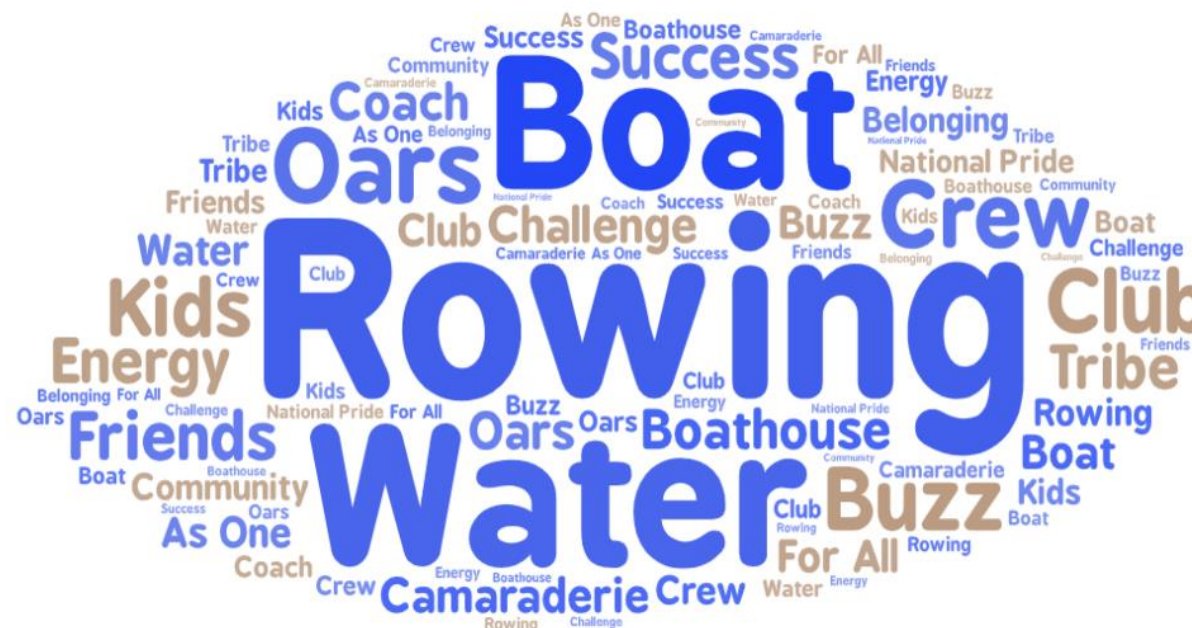
The pull of the boathouse; The push for the club;

The pull of friends; The push for the kids;

The pull of camaraderie; The push of the tribe;

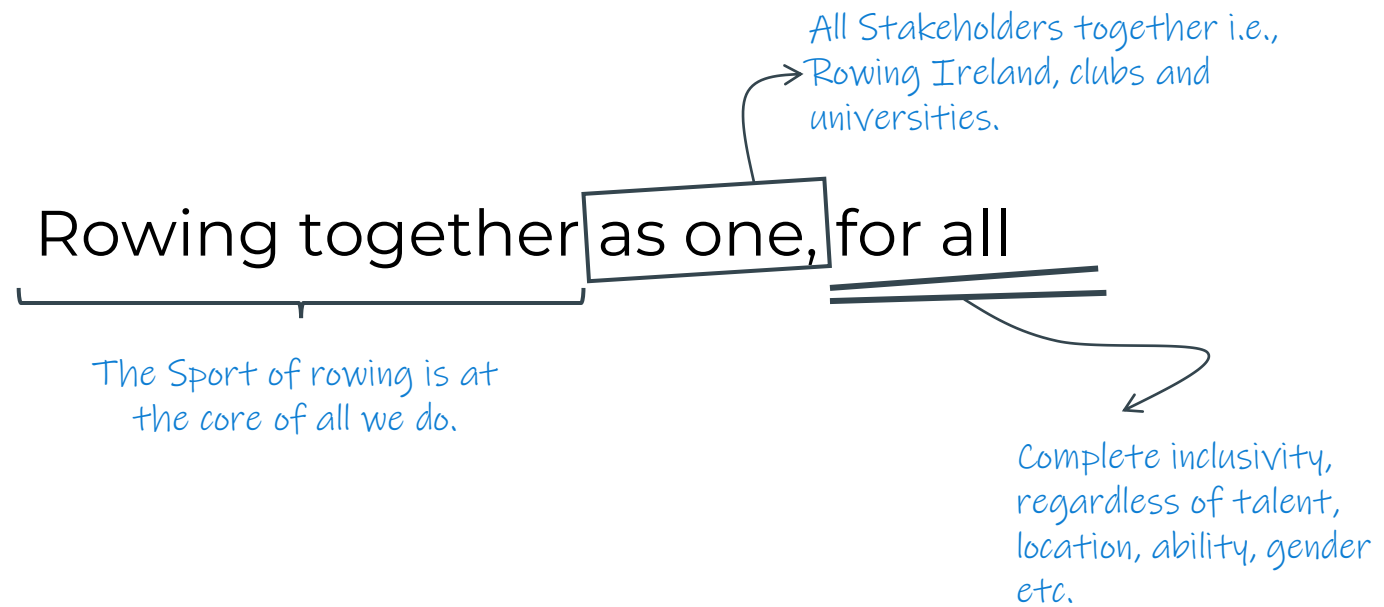
The pull of the buzz; The push of belonging.

The push and pull of Rowing!



Rowing Ireland – Rowing together as one, for all.

Our Purpose



Our Mission

The reason for Rowing Ireland at a surface level

Shows support; main function

Represent the core of the sport

As the National Governing Body, Rowing Ireland supports rowers, clubs, volunteers, and partners, new and established, on and off the water. *Supporting existing rowers, whilst also increasing participation*

Includes Coaching, Officiating and Governing

The diagram illustrates the mission statement of Rowing Ireland. The main text is: "As the National Governing Body, Rowing Ireland supports rowers, clubs, volunteers, and partners, new and established, on and off the water." The words "Rowing Ireland" are enclosed in a black rectangular box. A bracket above "Rowing Ireland" is annotated with "Represent the core of the sport". A bracket below "new and established" is annotated with "Supporting existing rowers, whilst also increasing participation". A bracket below "clubs, volunteers, and partners" is annotated with "Includes Coaching, Officiating and Governing". A bracket above "National Governing Body" is annotated with "The reason for Rowing Ireland at a surface level". A bracket below "on and off the water" is annotated with "Shows support; main function".

Our Vision

A community-based sport, growing and thriving at local and international level



Our Community Values



Inclusive: we welcome everyone regardless of gender, background, age, ability – Rowing is for all



Transparent: we are all open and honest in how we operate



Respectful: we value others and engage with respect with all



Fair: we treat everyone equally



Committed: we are passionate about Rowing and give our all



Striving for Success: we are ambitious to succeed safely on and off the water



Enjoyment/Fun: we enjoy what we do and make sure fun is at the heart of Rowing

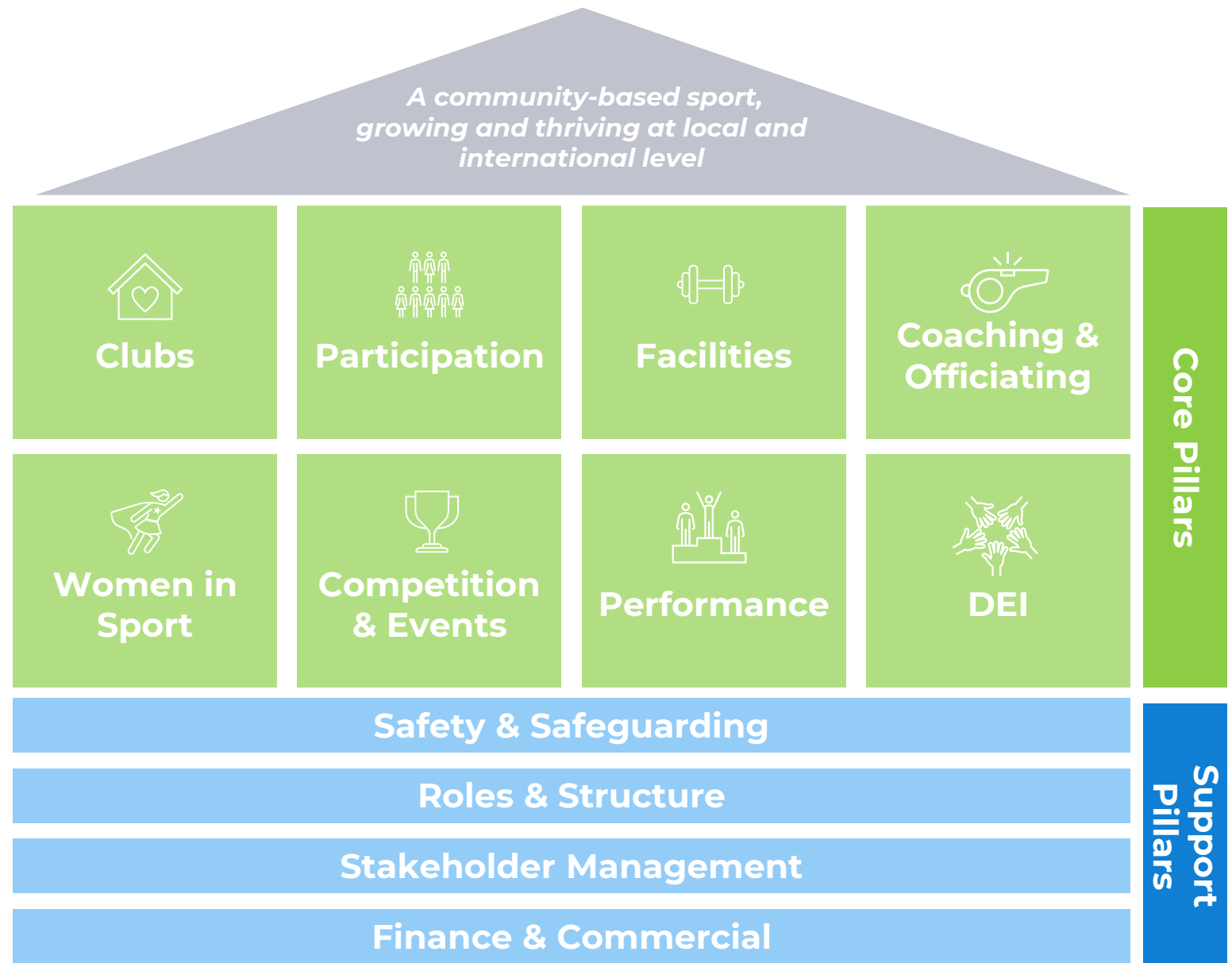
Core and Support Pillars

Rowing Ireland – Rowing together as one, for all.

Core & Supporting Pillars

The **core pillars** set out our strategic focus areas. Several key actions have been identified under each pillar that, if implemented, will ensure delivery of Rowing Ireland's vision.

The **support pillars** detail the initiatives that will enable Rowing Ireland to reach these ambitious goals in an efficient, effective and sustainable way.



Core Pillars

1. Clubs

To foster an environment where strong, sustainable clubs are developing rowers on and off the water

2. Participation

To increase participation levels across all demographics and disciplines

3. Facilities

To provide top class accessible facilities at regional level and support clubs as they develop their facilities

4. Coaching & Officiating

To provide a development pathway for coaches and officials, increasing the quantity and calibre of both



Core Pillars

5. Women in Sport

To increase the number of woman involved in Rowing throughout Ireland (rowers, coaches, officials, administrators, leaders)

6. Competitions & Events

To create an aligned and fit for purpose calendar that supports our participation and performance ambitions

7. Performance

To ensure Rowing is the most successful Olympic Sport in Ireland

8. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

To democratise rowing so that all individuals are granted equal opportunities



Support Pillars

1. Safety & Safeguarding

To prioritise and promote safety & safeguarding across all activities

2. Structure

To implement a fit for purpose Operating & Governance Model that facilitates Rowing Ireland to deliver on its vision

3. Stakeholders

To align and proactively manage, and work in partnership with our key stakeholders

4. Finance & Commercial

To create a robust financial & commercial model that underpins the sport and enables Rowing Ireland to invest in priority areas

Key Actions



Clubs

To foster an environment where strong, sustainable clubs are developing rowers on and off the water

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Ensure every club has a clear vision and development plan	Rowing Ireland to create and support a framework for club vision and development plans and assist clubs in how to complete their plans	Core & Individual Clubs	By 2025
2.	Maintain a value – add approach to club life	Rowing Ireland to provide value add supports, tools, templates, guidelines, etc. to clubs to ensure practical supports are available to all clubs for their needs	Core	Ongoing
3.	Adopt a customer focused approach to clubs	Rowing Ireland to adopt a 'relationship' management approach with clubs and assign a dedicated relationship owner/contact point	Core	By 2024
4.	Club funding model	Rowing Ireland to develop commercial guidance for all clubs to ensure they explore all possible funding options	Core	By 2025
5.	Establish a sustainable model for clubs	Rowing Ireland to define what a well-established, sustainable club looks like (growth, facilities, people resources etc.) and encourage clubs to work towards building their long-term sustainability	Core	By 2025
6.	Develop a retention policy for clubs	Develop a retention policy at club level to support clubs in transition rowers through the participation pathway and encourage lifelong involvement in Rowing	Core	By 2026
7.	Support expansion of coastal rowing	Rowing Ireland to support clubs to develop coastal rowing development plans and to explore locations and resources necessary to expand coastal rowing options for suitable clubs	Core	By 2025



Participation

To increase participation levels across all demographics and disciplines

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Increase the number of people involved in Get Going, Get Rowing programmes by 50%	Continue and expand the Get Going, Get Rowing programmes and grow the number of participants on these programmes	Core	By 2029
2.	Increase the number of registered people involved in casual rowing (by 10% annually)	Encourage all clubs to promote recreational rowing for casual users and develop Rowing Ireland programmes targeting casual rowers	Core	Ongoing
3.	Develop indoor and e-rowing programmes	Invest in indoor rowing across clubs, universities and community centres, making rowing more accessible and introduce e-rowing programmes	Core	By 2029
4.	Create a rowing for fitness programme for the general public	Develop and launch a Rowing for Fitness programme with suitable support resources available online to the general public	Core	By 2029
5.	Develop targeted participation growth programmes	Develop a suite of participation growth programmes targeting key areas including: - Schools - Coastal - Masters - Adult - Youths - Women	Core	Ongoing
6.	Grow the number of participants involved in our Regattas and Events	Develop a plan to increase the number of participants involved in Rowing Ireland and Club Regattas and Events	Core	Ongoing

Facilities

To provide top class accessible facilities at regional level and support clubs as they develop their facilities

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Each club to establish a facilities / development plan	Rowing Ireland to provide a template for clubs to ensure all clubs have a facilities masterplan	Core	By 2025
2.	Explore the potential of regional rowing centres of excellence	Make Cork, Blessington, and Lough Rinn regional hubs/centres of excellence for Rowing Ireland. Each should include ○ A 2km course ○ Gangway ○ Changing facilities ○ Storage (for boats, oars, & equipment) ○ Parking facilities ○ Gym/ S&C Facilities	Core	By 2028
3.	Increase the number of clubs availing of grant funding	Rowing Ireland to support clubs in accessing grant funding available through national, regional and local schemes	Core	Ongoing
4.	Coastal facility	Explore the potential for Ireland to host a major international coastal event with suitable infrastructure at a chosen venue	Core	By 2027
5.	Maintenance programme	Create sufficient investment funding to support ongoing maintenance and upkeep of facilities and equipment	Core	Ongoing



Coaching & Officiating

To provide a development pathway for coaches and officials, increasing the quantity and calibre of both

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Evolve our development pathway for coaches	Develop a clear pathway for coaches to have a lifelong relationship with Rowing Ireland and introduce CPD elements for 'maintaining' qualifications for existing coaches	Core	By 2025
2.	Expand our coach education programmes to increase the number and standard of coaching at all levels of rowing	Extend and expand the range of coach education programmes available through our hybrid learning approach	Core	Ongoing
3.	Explore part time and full-time options for coaches	Explore how we can encourage and support the professionalization of coaching in clubs and increase the number of part/full-time coaches in our system	Core	Ongoing
4.	Launch a HP coach mentoring programme	Introduce a HP coach mentoring programme to assist in the development of HP coaches within the Irish system	HP	By 2025
5.	Develop an event officials pathway	Develop an event officials pathway to support and encourage volunteers to get involved in event officiating at club, regional, national and international level	Core	By 2026
6.	Introduce an Officiating excellence programme	Design and launch an Officiating Excellence programme to support Officials to raise standards and to support Officials with potential to be appointed to regional & international events	Core	By 2026
7.	Create a youth in coaching programme for future coaches	Work with clubs and schools to develop specific programme to encourage young coaches and their development	Core	By 2026



Women in Sport

To increase the number of woman involved in Rowing throughout Ireland (rowers, coaches, officials, administrators, leaders)

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Develop a female leadership programme for Women in Sport	Work with Sport Ireland's WIS lead to develop a female leadership programme, specific to women in rowing	Core	By 2025
2.	Create Women in Sport Future Leaders Programme for youth members	Work with clubs to develop a programme specific to young girls in rowing, and their development	Core	By 2026
3.	Continue to champion female athletes in the sport, as a priority	Raise the profile of high performing female athletes	Core	Ongoing
4.	Increase number of women involved in rowing	Place an intentional emphasis on women in rowing – across all roles – with a positive bias towards supporting and encouraging women to take on roles within Rowing	Core	Ongoing



Competition & Events

To create an aligned and fit for purpose calendar that supports our participation and performance ambitions

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Review the calendar year to reflect participation and high-performance athletes' alignment	Complete a strategic review of the calendar year and make appropriate amendments	Core	By 2024
2.	Establish 'non negotiables' in the calendar and create a modern and fit for purpose calendar that is well communicated to all stakeholders	Create and promote a calendar that all stakeholders are aligned to	Core	By 2025
3.	Ensure the calendar is agreed upon by the board, steering committees and clubs	Present the calendar to all key stakeholders, receiving input and feedback	Board	By 2025
4.	Raise the standards of events	Ensure we continually improve the standards of events at club, regional, and national level to provide high quality events for all participants – recreational and performance rowers	Core	Ongoing
5.	Ensure our competition and event portfolio caters for all	Develop a balanced portfolio of competition and events that includes Recreational, High Performance, Indoor, Coastal, Club, Mass Participation & Fun	Core	Ongoing



Performance

To ensure Rowing is the most successful Olympic Sport in Ireland

Vision

To be one of the top rowing nations in the world and Irelands leading Olympic sport.

Mission

Win Medals At Olympic/Paralympic games across all categories
Win Medals at Major Rowing championships in Olympic/Paralympic boat classes
Attract, retain and Support more HP athletes and coaches
Develop and nurture positive roles models for society

Objectives

Ensure the Sustainability of the Rowing Ireland HP Programme
Continually Improve International performances across all Olympic/Paralympic Categories
Increase the number of Irish High Performance Rowing Coaches



Performance

To ensure Rowing is the most successful Olympic and paralympic Sport in Ireland

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Align all of Ireland HP rowing	System development: Create a compelling and coherent plan for the LA cycle that links in the rowing community and key performance support partners so that there is a highly effective and sustainable network of HP clubs, coaches and practitioners working together to support the ambitions of the HP programme	HP	By 2025
2.	Improve club HP performance programmes	➔ Performance Culture: Create a performance-based culture across our club based HP programmes at national and regional level so that the daily training environments are supporting an increase in the number of podium potential athletes and improving their performance progression	Core & Regions	Ongoing
3.	Improve international success across all categories (PARA, Coastal included)	➔ International Performance: Agree on a set of ambitious and tangible medal and performance targets for LA cycle, so that there is a clear focus and purpose to prioritising, decision making and resourcing the HP programmes	HP	Ongoing
4.	Invest in targeted initiatives to enhance our performance system	➔ Performance Management: Collaborate with key internal and external stakeholders to create initiatives that are designed to positively support the ambitions of the HP programme including team management practices, athlete welfare and wellbeing monitoring, competition calendar, carding etc.	HP	By 2026
5.	Increase and retain podium potential athletes and coaches	Provide high quality, tailored training programmes, aligned information on methodology & technical model, support programmes for HP university and club programmes	HP	Ongoing
6.	Ensure the HP programme enables and supports the commercialisation of RI	➔ Highlight its value for athletes and coaches, making it attractive to sponsors through strategic media engagement and commercial partnerships. This is in line with SI strategy of self sustaining NGB's	HP/Core	By 2026
7.	Improve club HP performance programmes	➔ Performance culture: Create a performance based culture across our club based HP programmes at national and regional level so that the daily training environments are supporting an increase in the number of podium athletes and improving their performance progression	RI Executive and regions	Ongoing
8.	Ensure the HP programme enables and supports commercialisation of Rowing Ireland	➔ Commercialisation: Develop synergy with the RI HP programme to highlight its value for athletes and coaches, making it attractive to sponsors through strategic media engagement and commercial partnerships. In line with Sport Ireland strategy of self sustaining NGB's	HP	By 2026
9.	Regional HP sessions	➔ Conduct regular regional HP sessions including trials and coaching of composite crews	HP	By 2025



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

To democratise rowing so that all individuals are granted equal opportunities

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	For Paralympic athletes to be equal to Olympic athletes in all aspects of rowing	Ensuring para-rowers are equal in time on the water, support, promotion and resources	HP	By 2026
2.	Explore and reduce the notion of elitism in the sport	Actively address and continue to reduce the elitist opinion that is held about rowing; Making rowing accessible to wider communities	Core	Ongoing
3.	Ensure every club has a SIDO	Ensure every club appoints a Sport Inclusion Development Officer to drive initiatives to increase accessibility for all	Core	By 2028
4.	Conduct research into DE&I	Commission research into DE&I within Rowing to understand the current environment and identify areas for action and improvement	Core	By 2027
5.	Provide DE&I tools and resources	Provide a range of tools, templates, and resources for clubs to access to support their awareness, knowledge and capability to increase their DE&I initiatives	Core	By 2028



Safety & Safeguarding

To prioritise and promote safety and safeguarding across all activities

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Develop safety modules for each club to conduct	Work with key stakeholders to develop a safety module that is delivered in all clubs across Ireland	Core	By 2027
2.	Commit to prioritising and promoting safety at all Rowing Ireland events	Create guidance, promote and communicate safety measures	Core	Ongoing
3.	Ensure safety is prioritised at club level	Encourage all clubs to champion safety and have a charter in place for safe rowing	Core	Ongoing



Role & Structure

To implement a fit for purpose Operating & Governance Model that facilitates Rowing Ireland to deliver on its vision

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Review the resource plan for Rowing Ireland (staff, committees, and volunteers)	→ Conduct internal review of resources and allocation of same to align to strategic plan across all areas	Core	By 2025
2.	Review the governance model and organizational structure	→ Review of governance within Rowing Ireland and develop recommendations for reform as necessary to enhance our governance model	Core	By 2025
3.	Develop annual Board work plan	→ Create and review an annual Board workplan aligned to the strategic plan	Board	Ongoing
4.	Establish standardized reporting structures for committees	→ Create templates for committees including target outcomes and KPIs to report to ensure greater levels of focus for the work of the committees	Core	By 2024
5.	Detail a rationale for each committee in operations	→ Review committees at Rowing Ireland and develop a list of required standing committees to support the strategic plan	Board	By 2024



Stakeholder Management

To align and proactively manage, and work in partnership with our key stakeholders

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Manage stakeholders proactively through stakeholder map	Identify key stakeholders: • Sport Ireland • Sport NI • LSPs • Local Authorities • Clubs/Universities • World Rowing Establish objectives for each key stakeholder and approach for engaging with them.	Core	Ongoing
2.	Increase level of influence on international stage	Identify potential roles for Rowing Ireland representatives on the international stage including (e.g. roles on World Rowing Board & Committees)	Board	By 2026
3.	Develop a communications strategy for stakeholder engagement	Develop defined interaction points and processes for relevant stakeholders (staff, committees, Board, volunteers etc.) to ensure greater alignment, and visibility of activity throughout the year	Core	By 2025



Finance & Commercial

To create a robust financial and commercial model that underpins the sport and enables Rowing Ireland to invest in priority areas

Goal		Action	Ownership	Timeline
1.	Increase level of self-generated funding	Develop a plan to increase commercial revenue through Rowing Ireland programmes, sponsorship and commercial activity	Core	By 2028
2.	Develop club sustainability model	Create templates for club financial models to assist clubs in the development of a more sustainable model for funding	Core	By 2027
3.	Deliver a commercial plan	Develop and deliver a commercial plan that increases self-generated revenue through commercial partnerships and sponsorship	Core	By 2027
4.	Ensure there is a robust financial planning and budgeting processes in place at Rowing Ireland and provincial level	Review and improve financial planning and budgeting processes to ensure robust systems and processes are in place at national and provincial level	Core	Ongoing
5.	Create a Reserve Policy	Create a reserve fund in line with best practice as per Carmichael Report (section 4)	Board	2024
6.	Establish Finance Committee.	Develop and present paper to establish a finance committee	Board	2024

Together with our clubs and stakeholders, we will drive the future of rowing, turning the ambitions of this strategic plan into shared success.