

USA SWIMMING

2015 ELITE ATHLETE GRANT PROGRAM

The Elite Athlete Grant was formerly called the National Team Grant. The name was changed to better reflect eligibility requirements for this program.

PURPOSE

A means of assistance for athletes who: meet criteria for consideration as potential Olympic and Operation Gold team members and medalists; and demonstrate a financial need for funding to assist with the costs of training and positively impact competing at the Operation Gold meet of the following year and Rio in 2016.

ELIGIBILITY PREREQUISITES

1. Performance

Pool Athletes

- a. Time Standard: Athletes must be ranked in the top 32 in an individual Olympic event in the World Rankings published by FINA.org as of September 2, 2014. Relay lead offs, time trials, swim-offs, and intermediate splits will not be included in the rankings; athletes ranked in the top 32 with a relay lead off, time trial, swim-off, or intermediate split will be considered only if a non-relay lead off, time trial, swim-off, or intermediate split time, ranks them in the top 32.
- b. Qualifying period: The Qualifying period is determined by the Athletes Executive Committee and National Team Division staff and is subject to AEC approval yearly based on the International Competition schedule for that year.
- c. Training: Grant is contingent on the athlete actively training and competing. Athletes must submit a Seasonal Plan detailing their goals, their objectives for reaching those goals, a detailed calendar for the season and their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

Open Water Athletes

- a. Time Standard: Because no World Ranking system consistent with pool team World Rankings is available, the time standard will be the top 8 American finishers at the 2014 Open Water National Championships in the 10K event (athletes must finish within 10 minutes of the first place finisher to qualify).
- b. Qualifying period: The Qualifying period is determined by the Athletes Executive Committee and National Team Division staff and is subject to AEC approval yearly based on the International Competition schedule for that year.
- c. Training: Grant is contingent on the athlete actively training and competing. Athletes must submit a Seasonal Plan detailing their goals, their objectives for reaching those goals, a detailed calendar for the season and their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

2. Financial

- a. Athletes who are receiving monthly assistance are not eligible to apply.
- b. Total net income as evidenced by the athlete's 1099 and/or w-2 forms cannot exceed \$50,000 for the previous year. Note that USA Swimming/USOC income including Athlete Stipends, Record Bonuses, Operation Gold Funds, FINA Medal money, Arena Grand Prix prize money, USA Swimming appearance fees, Meet Reimbursement funds, Elite Athlete Grants, and USOC Grants (William E. Simon, Tuition Grants, etc) will be deducted from the athlete's TOTAL income and that is the income utilized for the Elite Athlete Grant calculation.
- c. All athletes must provide a copy of their previous year 1099 and/or w-2 forms (if applicable).

d. Athletes must provide a copy of all forms provided to them (USOC, USA Swimming, all other organizations – including, but not limited to, Sports Organizations).

e. The complete form must be provided for each document.

3. High School/NCAA - reference NCAA RULE 12.1.2.4.7

a. **High School athletes** should check with their local High School Association prior to applying for an Elite Athlete Grant to ensure that they are permitted to accept grants from the US Olympic Committee. See below for athletes intending to compete in the NCAA.

b. **Athletes who intend to compete in the NCAA** must check with the NCAA PRIOR to submitting the Elite Athlete Grant Application to make sure that they are permitted to accept grants and the requirements surrounding the acceptance of a grant. Call the NCAA Eligibility Center at 1-877-262-1492 and inquire regarding NCAA Rule 12.1.2.4.7

c. **NCAA Athletes** must check with their NCAA Compliance Officers or the NCAA PRIOR to submitting the Elite Athlete Grant Application to make sure that they are permitted to accept grants and the requirements surrounding the acceptance of a grant. Inquire regarding NCAA Rule 12.1.2.4.7. This includes athletes who have signed a letter of intent.

POINT DETERMINATION

Each applicant will be assigned a point value based on the formula below. Ranking determined by an athlete's highest ranked Olympic LCM event only.

Pool:

Ranking	Points	Total Income Bracket	Points
1-6	5	\$ 0 - \$ 5,000	10
7-12	4	\$ 5,001 - \$ 10,000	9
13-18	3	\$ 10,001 - \$ 15,000	8
19-24	2	\$ 15,001 - \$ 20,000	7
25-32	1	\$ 20,001 - \$ 25,000	6
		\$ 25,001 - \$ 30,000	5
		\$ 30,001 - \$ 35,000	4
		\$ 35,001 - \$ 40,000	3
		\$ 40,001 - \$ 45,000	2
		\$ 45,001 - \$ 50,000	1

Open Water:

Place	Points	Total Income Bracket	Points
1-2	5	\$ 0 - \$ 5,000	10
3	4	\$ 5,001 - \$ 10,000	9
4	3	\$ 10,001 - \$ 15,000	8
5-6	2	\$ 15,001 - \$ 20,000	7
7-8	1	\$ 20,001 - \$ 25,000	6
		\$ 25,001 - \$ 30,000	5
		\$ 30,001 - \$ 35,000	4
		\$ 35,001 - \$ 40,000	3
		\$ 40,001 - \$ 45,000	2
		\$ 45,001 - \$ 50,000	1

Deductions

a. Athletes who receive full scholarships from NCAA teams for the entire year (spring and fall semesters) will be deducted 2 points from final total.

b. Athletes who receive partial scholarships from NCAA teams will be deducted 1 point from final total.

c. Athletes who receive a scholarship from NCAA teams for part of the year will be deducted 1 point from total. For example, 2013-2014 school year but not 2014-2015 school year.

Examples:

1. Rank 1, financial total \$42,000 = 5 + 2 = 7 total points.
2. Rank 22, financial total \$5,500 = 1 + 9 = 10 total points, partial scholarship – 1 = 9 total points
3. Rank 10, financial total \$27,000 = 4 + 5 = 9 total points, full scholarship – 2 = 7 total points

DETERMINATION OF SHARES

The total number of shares assigned to all of the applicants will be divided into the total number of dollars allocated to this program to determine the value of each share.

Points	Number of shares	Maximum Share Amount
12-15	Three [3]	\$15,000
8-11	Two [2]	\$10,000
4-7	One [1]	\$ 5,000
0-3	Zero [0]	\$ 0

PROCESS

- A. National Team Staff will be responsible for compiling list of eligible athletes based on performance and disbursing applications by January 31, 2015. This list will be forwarded to the AEC.
- B. Application deadline will be February 21, 2015 (Note: laws require that 1099 forms be sent by January 31).
- C. National Team Staff will calculate points per applicant and determine share amounts. This graph will be forwarded to the AEC [without athlete names] for checks and balances.

National Team Staff will work with USOC for disbursement of funds by March 21, 2015.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Who can apply for these funds?*
 - a. You do not have to be a National Team Member to apply for this grant.
 - b. Athletes must be actively training and competing to qualify for a grant.
 - c. Athletes who receive an official application from USA Swimming have met the qualifying criteria for performance and are eligible to apply for this grant if they meet the income requirements.
2. *How are applications evaluated?*
 - a. The Elite Athlete Grants are awarded from a pool of funds that has been designated by the USOC.
 - b. Individual athlete awards are based upon a "shares" system.
 - c. Each athlete's "shares" are determined based on the established criteria indicated in the attached program explanation.
 - d. The final value of each share will be determined based upon the number of eligible applications that are received.
3. *What do I have to submit to apply?*
 - a. Applications must include:
 - i. The attached 2015 Elite Athlete Grant application form.
 - ii. A current w-9 form.
 - iii. A 2015 Athlete Designee Form.
 - iv. A Seasonal Plan.
 - v. All of your 1099 and/or w-2 forms for the previous year.
 1. Note: if you received any funding from USA Swimming you will receive a 1099 from USA Swimming; any funds from the USOC will be reflected on a 1099 from the USOC; if you received funds from any additional organizations your 1099 or w-2 will come from them and must be included.)
 2. Note: federal law requires that 1099 forms be postmarked by January 31, 2015.