



WORLD
ATHLETICS

PIONEERING CHANGE

STRATEGIC PLAN | 2024-2027





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

World Athletics is halfway through the 8-year arch from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games to LA28. The last four years have seen many of the building blocks to grow the sport of athletics put in place through the Strategy for Growth plan and the World Plan for Athletics.

However, we have been less bold in the evolution of the core sport product through innovation so that it is future proofed to remain relevant for the next 150 years. With this new strategy, the next four years must be a game changer for the sport of athletics.

We are the number 1 Olympic Sport by audience and reach and our World Championships also see many millions of people around the world watching our athletes. We will build on these big moments by ensuring we have a major athletics global event taking place EVERY year. An event that ends the classic outdoor season with flair, entertainment and purpose that attracts large global audiences.

To keep and grow our audiences in stadiums, on television and through streaming on digital channels we will improve the pace and entertainment value of our major global and Area Championships so time after time we are delivering high-quality events in which our global star athletes want to compete in and our fans choose to attend and watch.

We will also continue to review and, where necessary, evolve our rules to make sure they make our sport simpler, not more complicated.

As the foundation to all sport, World Athletics aims to ensure that the joy and thrill of running, jumping and throwing, in its simplest form, continues to grow strongly in all corners of the globe so we inspire the next generation of athletes, coaches, officials or administrators. These basic skills, developed early, will benefit all sport and will lead to healthier, fitter individuals and communities.

We will attract more people into all levels of athletics because they see it as a viable career choice or vocation. They will learn and train with us and then stay within the sport. We know we have some of the best technical and coaching training modules of any sport. And as the foundation of all sport, it is only understandable that many other sports are interested in those that have come through our training systems. We are happy to share but only after we have exhausted clear pathways to keep the best in our sport.

But it all starts with our events and our competitions. More events that attract more fans and broadcasters mean more money for our athletes, for our Federations and more generally for our sport. This is the focus of our Pioneering Change four-year strategy (2024-2027).

It is all about innovation to grow our global reach and the sport's value in a quantifiable way.



We will focus specifically on:

- / Faster paced and more exciting events for millions of people to watch, in the stadium and at home.
- / More innovation across the board, not just the field of play, but ways to bring athletes and fans closer in and out of competition.
- / More ways in which our athletes can be the stars they deserve to be through existing competition and new events and optimal and targeted use of social media platforms.
- / More inclusive and accessible entry points into our sport as a competitor, a coach, a referee, a volunteer or an administrator.

World Athletics has ambitious plans, a motivated network of over 200 Member Federations and strong foundations delivered over the last eight years to take the sport to an exciting new level.

REVIEW OF STRATEGY FOR GROWTH (2020-2023)

Much has been achieved in the last 4 years, with the 'Strategy for Growth' plan. It was created on the back of four years of high profile, widespread and much needed reform across the sport, with the aim of using the solid and secure reform foundations to enable the sport of athletics to flourish and grow. This it did despite the Covid 19 Global Pandemic which severely impacted our events in 2020 and 2021. The highlights of what was achieved over the last four years are included below.

Innovation Foundations

With fewer events taking place around the world in the first two years of this strategy, this hiatus was not wasted. Our HQ, Area and Federation teams spent that time scoping programmes, strategies and initiatives and developing educational tools, platforms and activities to engage and entertain core stakeholders in the sport.

The development of the World Athletics' Digital Media Hub gave, and continues to give, hundreds of broadcasters, partners and Federations around the world easy access to high-quality content in multiple formats. Our remote mixed zone concept created to cover events during the Covid 19 years, continues today allowing media and Federations unable to travel to all our events the opportunity to request interviews, footage and photography that can be used in many more countries around the world.

The creation of the World Athletics' 10-year Sustainability Strategy, also launched during the global pandemic, was accompanied by online education modules explaining the six core pillars of the strategy so our event and meeting partners and Federations were able to quickly understand the strategy and work on their own plans to create more sustainable events.

From more or less a standing start, a new, more holistic, and fully interactive Kids' Athletics programme was launched with a modular approach to suit different ages and different environments. This was followed by a detailed training course to deliver Kids' Athletics trainers around the world who, through our Member Federations, can continue to train more people to teach Kids' Athletics. Almost half our Member Federations are running Kids' Athletics programmes and 157 Federations have completed the Train the Trainers Course.

In 2023 we launched a new global event, the World Athletics Road Running Championships which brought together in one Championships for the first time, global titles in the road mile, 5km and half marathon. Mass races ran alongside these events creating a festival of running in the Latvian city of Riga. From 2025 the World Athletics Road Running Championships will become an annual event.

We also relentlessly focused on evolving our TV graphics, social media content, fan engagement initiatives all in an effort to drive engagement. The creation of exciting and engaging content (Athletics@Home), our ever creative and resourceful athletes and a global first back garden competition (Ultimate Garden Clash) kept athletics front and centre during a tough time for the world.

Scaling Up

The last four years also saw a step change in the scale of events, skills development, education and athlete prize money.

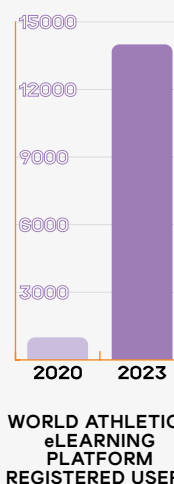
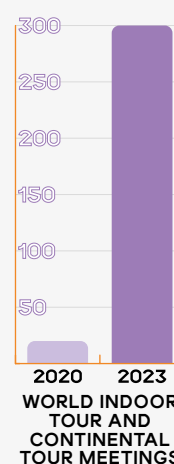
This investment was largely due, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, to our increased revenues from circa US\$50 million per annum to US\$55 million per annum.

Athletes will always be our first priority. The launch of the Continental Tour Gold events and increased investment across all 1-day meetings, although curtailed in the early days of the global pandemic, proved essential as the world slowly moved out of the pandemic at different speeds. Athletes had more opportunities to compete in their own countries and regions helping them train and qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (delayed to 2021). Athletes were also first in line to benefit from the fines imposed on the Russian Athletics' Federation as part of its reinstatement criteria. Funds from these fines were used to increase our World Championships prize money by US\$1 million for the World Athletics Championships Oregon 22 and is now part of the hosting agreement for all future World Championship events. Over the four-year period, more than US\$24 million has been allocated by World Athletics to athletes across its World Championship events.

Our World Indoor Tour and Continental Tour meetings, sanctioned by World Athletics increased from just over 20 events to almost 300 events by the end of 2023. Road Race Label events held in 53 countries in 2023 attracted around 4m participants.

Investment in World Athletics eLearning platform and the development of courses also delivered strong results. In 2020 only two online courses were available to just under 1,000 registered users on the eLearning platform. By the end of 2023, 14 courses were available, all in more than one language and a third of them in seven languages. Registered users rose to 14,000, well over the target goal for the period and significant growth has been seen in the number of applicants registering for referee and coaching courses. Almost all (97%) of Member Federations are registered on the platform and using the eLearning tools. As we continue to expand the tools, courses and languages we expect to see strong growth in the number of individuals using the platform in each country.

During this period the World Plan was developed with input from 85% of our Member Federations and over 25,000 individuals from 175 countries. We launched virtual Member Federation Sessions to share information, consult on decisions, present strategy and directly connect the work at World Athletics' HQ with our Federations. These monthly sessions proved enormously popular and continue today.





Oversight and Reputation

A focus of the last four years has been on oversight and reputation.

Through a Council-sanctioned working group, World Athletics created a comprehensive safeguarding policy and developed practical implementation frameworks, documents, tools, templates and information sessions and workshops to assist Member Federations to meet the mandated targets of having their own safeguarding policy and procedures in place by the end of 2023 and Areas by 2024.

Tools were also developed to assist Member Federations in grant applications and annual reporting, creating a more automated process which was simpler to use and provided more analysis and information for Federations and HQ. A social media tracker programme was created which enables all Areas and Federations to monitor their social media impact which is helping them to make data driven decisions on their communication initiatives. Well attended Governance, Communication and sharing research and insights sessions and workshops were held at all Area Congresses and Member Federation information session programmes were established at our two senior World Athletics Championships in Oregon and Budapest. This is part of a joint initiative to build core skills and capacity in our Area Associations and Member Federations.

In 2023 we also established our innovations team and conducted for the first time deep fan and product research at the World Championships in Budapest. This was just the start but the findings from this event and future events will help us make good and brave decisions based on data.

At the end of 2022 we also received tracking data, from Nielsen which gave us a snapshot of how athletics is positioned around the world and how our fans engage with us. Given the state of athletics as a brand and governing body in 2015 we were particularly delighted with the strong reputation results that both the sport and a governing body received. And because good news should always be shared more than once, the results showed:

- / Athletics is ranked fourth in terms of sports interest globally.**
- / Athletics has the best reputation of all global sports (89% agreed).**
- / World Athletics ranks third in terms of reputation among International Sports Federations with 79% believing we govern our sport well.**
- / The overall perception of World Athletics has improved to a greater extent over the past two years than any other International Sports Federation.**

And last but by no means least 2020 saw World Athletics deliver its first public Annual Report and Accounts (on the 2019 financial year). This and many more initiatives helped to secure and grow the governance and reputation of athletics around the world in a number of external independent assessments.

15 OF 16 STRATEGIC GOALS DELIVERED (2022-23)

MORE FANS

Delivery Goal: We will attract more fans to attend and watch our athletes compete at national, regional and global competitions and develop platforms and initiatives that are flexible and reflect the world we live in today to engage with and inspire our fans.

- ✘ Half a million known fans registered by end of 2023, half the target of 1 million that was set at the beginning of the strategic plan. A new approach and resources were defined in 2021 which resulted in a step change that we are confident will continue through the next four-year strategic plan.
- ✔ Social media followers increased from 2m to 12m following a thorough review and revamp of our platforms and our fans and a laser-like focus on significantly improving the content we create and where we invested additional resources and on which platforms. Annual media reach topped 25bn and athletics again became the No.1 Olympic Sport at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.
- ✔ Audited digital consumption of our World Outdoor Championships rose from ~4m viewer hours in 2019 to over 14m in 2023 (+208% growth).
- ✔ Full stadia was achieved at the Budapest 23 World Athletics Championships – generally referred to as the best World Championships event ever staged.

↑ 208%

AUDITED DIGITAL CONSUMPTION OF OUR WORLD OUTDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS IN VIEWER HOURS UP 208%

MORE PARTICIPATION

Delivery Goal: We will invest in our athletes and the development of our competitions by delivering more events where athletes can earn income and create more opportunities for people to participate in athletics across all levels, in as many countries as we can and in all age groups.

- ✔ World Indoor Tour and Continental Tour 1-day meetings, created and sanctioned by World Athletics, increased from just over 20 to almost 300, including the launch of CTG in 5 of the 6 Areas. Plus 257 Road Race Label events in 53 countries attracting 4M participants in 2023.
- ✔ Around 20,000 athletes competed in 250 top-flight Championships and 1 Day meetings (excl Road) in 2023.
- ✔ Almost half our Member Federations running Kids' Athletics programmes in their country reaching half a million children in 2023 with 157 Federations having completed the train the trainer programme.

MORE PEOPLE

Delivery Goal: We will celebrate, support and develop the people who deliver our sport throughout the world, at every level, providing clear access and pathways for all.

- ✓ Investment in eLearning platform and courses has seen registered users rise from under 1,000 to 14,000. And from 2 online courses in 2020 to 14 courses with a third of them in 7 languages. 97% of Federations registered.
- ✓ Council gender targets met four years early in a groundbreaking election in 2023 that saw World Athletics become the first International Sporting Federation to have equal female and male representation on its decision-making Council.
- ✓ Member Federation skills to drive growth was delivered through the creation of the World Plan, Member Federation Info Sessions, webinars, workshops and presentations.

MORE PARTNERSHIPS

Delivery Goal: We will create more partnerships with commercial and non-commercial organisations that generate financial and activation value and opportunities for our sport, our athletes, our Member Federations and global communities.

- ✓ Commercial partnerships (incl TBS and EBU) increased from 5 to 10, including the introduction of new supplier level.
- ✓ Increased partner activation took place at both the Oregon22 and Budapest23 World Athletics Championships.

OUR VISION

**TO USE THE
POWER AND
ACCESSIBILITY
OF ATHLETICS
AND OUR
ATHLETES
TO CREATE A
HEALTHIER AND
FITTER WORLD**

OUR MISSION

GROW

Grow the sport of athletics and make it relevant in people's lives and in the lives of their communities.

INSPIRE

Create globally appealing and accessible competitions, events, and activities so our talented athletes can entertain and inspire the world.

LEAD

Be the best example of a well-governed sports federation taking brave leadership decisions and valuing partnerships that deliver athletics around the world.



OUR STAKEHOLDERS

In creating this strategic plan we have identified seven priority stakeholder groups, all of whom are fundamental to delivering this ambitious Pioneering Change strategy. With the focus on innovation over the next four years, the key influencers in our sport – those most invested in athletics every single day - become even more important to achieving the ambitious goals we have set.

Athletes

Who are our number one asset and, as such, need to be supported, promoted, protected by clear rules and behaviour, inspired to compete, rewarded and supported with the platforms and tools to engage directly with fans and partners. Creating more competition and earning opportunities for our athletes remains a priority in our desire to make a career in athletics an attractive professional choice.

Member Federations

There may be significant diversity across our 214 Member Federations but everyone one of them has the ability to deliver growth in our sport, either at elite level or community level, so we need to make them the best they can be at whichever focus they are best suited to. The World Plan 2022-2030 lays out clear goals and objectives for Member Federations and Area Associations to stay ambitious and support each other.

Key Influencers

Sitting within our sport are individuals, companies, event organisations and government authorities (local, regional and national) who wield an enormous influence over key elements of the sport. These include athletes, coaches, athletes' representatives, shoe manufacturers, event organisers and hosting bodies as well as national and local authorities who develop and promote grassroots participation in athletics. We need to ensure these groups are aware of their value and influence and understand the collective power and benefits that working together will deliver on their own strategic ambitions as we grow the sport.



Partners

Without whom we would not be able to realise our vision so we must find ways to help them align with our vision, support our strategy and activate extensively, whether they provide funds, supply us with services, broadcast our sport, organise events at any level or partner with us in campaigns.

Media

Who amplify our events, our athletes, our campaigns and the way we run our sport. Critical friends at worst and avid champions of the sport at best, they need to have access to all of us, in good times and bad, to help tell our stories as well as we can.

Fans

Who participate in our sport, who watch our sport, who follow our athletes and who motivate their families, their friends, their communities and their governments to support healthy and fitter lifestyles. We need to mobilise this group, inspire them to participate, excite them to watch and bring them together on platforms and in forums where they feel they belong and choose to connect to our sport.

Our People

Whether in Area Associations, Member Federations, our HQ or the millions of people who enable our sport to take place day in, day out. We need to develop them, encourage and support them and celebrate them. We need to inspire more people into our sport through easy access to education and skills and clear pathways, processes and equality practices.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES GOING FORWARD

Our sport continues to evolve so we must continue to be brave, innovative and transformative in everything we do. This strategy acknowledges six external forces that will continue to impact and change sport during the course of this strategy.

- 1. Shifting generational attitudes** to what, how and where content is consumed. Interest in sports and engagement patterns are changing as a result of global, diverse audiences and new generational trends. Almost three quarters of 13-37 years olds say that they do not need to watch sports live, preferring to watch highlights and clips and over half of the 12-27 year olds (Gen Z) do not like traditional sport or formats. TV consumption continues to decline globally and whilst live sports remains one of the few 'appointment to view' pieces of content, audiences are fragmenting and rights owners have to evolve their media and marketing strategies to offer their content via a range of platforms and in a variety of formats. They also need to ensure access to their sport is easy, cost effective and consistent enough to excite, build and retain audiences.
- 2. Technology is enabling disruption** of sport consumption and participation. The effective use of data in decision making is more important than ever, with 90% of the world's big data having been produced in the last 2 years. This means we have to be exact in the language and the narrative we adopt to attract commercial partners. New experiences, such as virtual environments and AI present opportunities for rights owners to engage audiences. Smart technology and wearables are changing how athletes can monitor and manage their physical and mental health.
- 3. Attitudes to societal issues** are forcing more action on equality from clubs, athletes, broadcasters, partners and governing bodies. Athletes in particular will become more influential on societal issues as a more relatable face of their sport and as platforms enable an ever more democratised share of voice. Women's sport is more important than ever, with interest more evenly split between men's and women's sport, particularly amongst Gen Z and Gen Alpha.
- 4. Physical and mental health is an increasing priority** for all, with the global gym industry worth over \$97bn and growing at 9% year on year, and a better understanding of the complexity of mental health, with 1 in 4 people experiencing an issue with mental health at some point in their lives. At every level of sports, technology is enabling a better understanding of physical and mental health for all, whilst athlete welfare is increasingly under the spotlight, especially around governance and off-field support.
- 5. Climate change and sustainability** are setting expectations of how events are delivered, with consumers expecting more action around how the events they attend and watch impact climate change and ensuring they are designed with sustainability in mind. Linked to physical health, this extends to athlete welfare, with the average athlete now exposed to 20% more 'extremely hot' days than in 1990. World Athletics' athlete surveys show that 77% of our athletes are either extremely concerned or very concerned about Climate Change and 85% believe that the sport has been impacted.
- 6. The evolving sports market** is continuing to create more opportunity for growth. Sports organisations have started to reshape and expand their revenue models, driven by the decline in traditional consumption channels such as broadcast and the emerging opportunities of new assets, such as big data. The ever-increasing globalisation of sport, means that outside investment, such as private equity and sovereign wealth funds, is becoming more prevalent in driving growth.

The evolution of attitudes, consumption behaviour and enabling technology mean rightsholders are subject to unprecedented complexity and external challenge when forging their strategic plans and, importantly, bringing their stakeholders with them on this journey.

World Athletics' ability to foresee and react to change, and embrace these challenges at speed in an ever faster-moving world, is how we will stand out from other Federations and sports.

This means rethinking how we engage with and enlist the key influencers in our sport to join together, and being prudent and targeted in our investments, to enable maximum impact and growth. The destination can be transformative and World Athletics is determined to be different and be a standout leader within our sport. We are willing to be brave and innovative in our efforts to capture an even larger proportion of the overall sports market. However, we need to accept that as a result, the change we want to see will, at times, be uncomfortable even with robust data and supportive partners.



OUR 2024-2027 GOAL

This 4-year strategy will build on the solid footings of the last strategy, maintaining excellence in event delivery and the governance of the sport, whilst pioneering a data-driven programme of change, to future-proof the sport of athletics. This programme of change will centre around the incremental innovation to continuously evolve our sport for all today, whilst also introducing architectural innovation to create new events and evolve our existing athletics formats for tomorrow.

Pioneering change and setting the standard to future-proof the sport of athletics.

We will do this by:

- Investing and innovating in our events and primary activities to create the ultimate platform for athletics.
- Setting the standard in our events, the sports governance and partnerships and commercial programmes to protect and grow the value of athletics.
- Driving the accessibility of the sport of athletics for all to ensure its enduring relevance.
- Ensuring we have the tools and pathways to encourage, support and grow the people who choose to work in athletics.
- Continuing to invest in people and programmes that deliver the best return for growth.
- Streamline or reduce activities, without compromising quality, so we have the time and resources to innovate and make improvements.

We know we will have been successful in this mission if we look back from 2027 to a sport that has quantifiably grown in global reach and in value, with more participation, more people, more fans and more partnerships across all forms of the sport, across the world.

The drive for accessibility and, more importantly, inclusivity, particularly at mass participation level, will be felt by more people than ever participating in and supporting the delivery of athletics at all levels. The innovation of our events will mean that athletics will continue to cut through, creating more fans and maximising participation.

Pioneering change and continuing to set the standard will enable us to grow the global reach and value of athletics and create more partnerships, which benefit the entire athletics ecosystem and future-proof the world of athletics.



DELIVERING INNOVATION

Much of the last four years has been focused on growing the sport of athletics following the reform foundations that were set in the preceding four years. Many people and commentators across our sport have wanted us to move more quickly and innovate in a number of areas. We know this is important and it has always been part of our thinking. However, innovation for the sake of innovation, without the proper analysis, tools, discussions, resources and widespread motivation and capability is a costly and often futile exercise.





Innovation is our most important task ahead. Whilst seeds were sown during the Covid 19 Pandemic, where people had more time and focus to devote to solutions that kept athletics front and centre during those years. Many of these solutions remain in place today and are helping to build a more cohesive sport that supports our stakeholders in a world that continues to change quickly and unpredictably. But there is much more that needs to be done and at pace.

To achieve the innovation we want to achieve, we need to surround ourselves with people who believe in our goals and are willing to join the journey with us, to support us proactively and reactively. As all athletes know only too well, the only sustainable competitive advantage in a competitive and cluttered landscape is to learn faster than your competition and to act on what you have learned in good and bad times.

With the data, analysis, tools and resources in place innovation will be front and centre over the next four years; not indiscriminately but with purpose-driven plans and processes.

Our focus on innovation sits in five core areas which, when brought together, will make the pioneering changes we want to see in athletics in a cohesive, structured and sustainable way to future proof the sport for decades to come. The five core areas will all contribute to the growth and popularity of athletics in a rapidly changing global sports landscape.

The success of the innovation agenda is heavily reliant on bringing our key stakeholders on the journey with us. This is not a solo endeavour, but one that is supported and will be delivered by the sport as a whole.

 COMPETITION	Incremental innovation of existing event formats
	New event origination and delivery
 FANS	Reaching new audiences and targeting those already participating in athletics
	Growing the quantity and quality of direct fan relationships
 BRAND	Realise the equity in the brand and use as an asset
	Licence and extend master brand to build partnerships outside events
 DELIVERY	Alternative delivery models of major events
	Delivery of events via 3rd parties
 COMMERCIAL	Expanded and diversified sponsorship programme
	Activation departments to drive partner value





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND PRIMARY ACTIVITIES (2024-2027)

The strategic priorities of this plan build on the four pillars of the last strategy – More Participation, More People, More Fans, More Partnerships. A fifth pillar – Event Innovation – has been added as a foundation pillar to ensure the organisation, and the sport more widely, remains focused on this area. A cross-functional strategy team has been put in place with clear goals, objectives and outcomes to ensure this remains a focus for World Athletics.

Summary of strategic goals

- * Differentiate and innovate our events and improve the quality of formats, disciplines and rules through the creation of a robust, data driven focus on the athletics product and innovation which we test thoroughly before implementing.
- * Deliver World Class Championship events; end the season with a new or existing global championship event and support one-day meetings, which we both lead or influence, so we can consistently showcase the best athletes and create must watch competition for fans.
- * Create new events and increase the quality of existing regional and global events to create clearer reasons for athletes to compete and fans to engage.
- * Further increase prize money for athletes through our annual existing and new Championship events and deliver partnership opportunities to help elite athletes build professional career pathways and increase revenue.
- * Create more opportunities and reasons for people of all ages to participate in athletics (Kids' Athletics, Masters, Para Athletics, City, Trail and Mountain running etc).
- * Recruit, retain, reward and educate people in our sport and create more ways for them to be part of global athletics regardless of region, age or level.
- * Acknowledge our appreciation and reward the vital contribution of our volunteers by creating a certification programme based on skills.
- * Build a global fanbase of millions of known fans with whom we can communicate on a regular basis.
- * Empower and equip Member Federations and Areas to impactfully contribute to the growth of athletics (KPIs set through World Plan).
- * Increase Business-to-Consumer sponsorship revenue and grow non-event partnership programme opportunities.

We will now go into each goal in more detail.

UNDER 20 WOMEN

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EVENT INNOVATION

We recognise the ongoing evolution of all of our events, from grassroots events to elite competitions, is a key pillar of this strategy. By listening to our athletes, fans, partners and stakeholders around the world and working in cooperation with others keen to innovate in athletics, we will design and deliver new events and innovate our existing events in our global calendar. Some of this is obvious but requires resources and focus. Other aspects of innovation are more complex and require real-time changes which will take longer.

Strategic Goal

- Differentiate events and improve the quality of formats, disciplines and rules through the creation of a robust, data driven focus on the athletics product and innovation.

Outputs

- Review and consolidate all research conducted across the organisation and across the sport in one place to better analyse and utilise research to drive decision making.
- Conduct bespoke audience research at WAS events, 1-day meetings, out of stadium events and the Olympic Games to better understand the changing behaviours of our fans.
- Continue to invest in Impact Assessment Studies across our signature events and share with Member Federations, Local Organising Committees and bidding cities.
- Pilot new formats and discipline innovation in selected existing events.
- Integrate new technology where appropriate to enhance our events and to drive engagement with new audiences.

MORE PARTICIPATION

We will maximise participation at every level of the sport by growing the breadth and depth of opportunity for all, whilst continuing to invest in the development of all athletes.

Strategic Goals

- Deliver World Class Championship events and one day meetings, which we both lead and influence, that showcase the best athletes and create must watch competition for fans.
- Create new events and increase the quality of existing regional and global events to create clearer reasons for athletes to compete and fans to engage.
- Create more opportunities and reasons for people of all ages to participate in athletics.

Outputs

- Recalibrate our global World Athletics Series (WAS) events with research led metrics and end each season with a global championship event.
- Launch a new global championship event to take place in 2026 that is made for television and will appeal to millions of people around the world.
- Set quality standard metrics for 1-day events and Area Championships so improvements can be consistently applied.
- Grow Kids' Athletics around the world in a sustainable format meeting the targets set in the World Plan.
- Continue to include mass events within and around our global World Athletics Championships and encourage participation from all levels and abilities.
- Evolve the gamification & digitization of the sport experience.
- Develop partnerships with a broad range of city, mountain, trail and other event formats.
- Create meaningful partnerships with Masters & Para Athletics bodies.

MORE PEOPLE

We acknowledge the vital importance of the people that deliver athletics at all levels. We will therefore continue to invest in more resources to enable easy access to tailored education, alongside practical experience and shared communities. Our Member Federations and Areas will be key resources to help deliver relevant education tailored to local regions.

Strategic Goals

- Recruit, retain, reward and educate people in our sport and create more ways for them to be part of global athletics regardless of region, age or level.
- Acknowledge our appreciation and reward the vital contribution of our volunteers by creating a certification programme based on skills.

Outputs

- Conduct a skills gap analysis by region of technical officials, referees and coaches by using the information provided in our Member Federation annual reports and cross referencing this to the Global, Area and National level competitions in each Area. Armed with this data, Federations and Areas will be able to focus on gaps, including representation inequalities, rather than increase resources and skills in places where they are already strong.
- Create more courses, in more languages to meet the growing and diverse needs of our global community.
- Develop and market the career opportunities that athletics has to offer.
- Create engaging networks and platforms for our people to share and exchange information and knowledge.
- Review coach and referee qualification certification approach to create faster pathways for discipline expertise and certification.
- Establish a Global Coaching Centre of Coaching Excellence in Budapest, part of the Budapest 23 legacy.
- Develop a volunteer skills programme with recognised certificates in areas related to athletic events.

MORE FANS

More global fans will choose athletics because they know how to follow the sport, will have access to more exclusive content and can engage with athletics and athletes in a way that suits them all year round.

Strategic goal

- We are committed to building a global fanbase of millions of known fans with whom we can communicate on a regular basis.

Outputs

- End each season with a global championship event that will engage millions of fans around the world.
- Create a new global Championship event that will take place every second year, which is made for television and will appeal to millions of people around the world.
- Innovate, evolve and improve current showcase Championship events.
- Implement aggregated data and data infrastructure solutions to enable a more personalized experience for our fans.
- Create digital partnerships and CRM tools to manage a growing network of dedicated fans.
- Redesign the web experience and launch a World Athletics App to meet the demands of mobile fans.
- Augment the broadcast experience with rich data and content and continue to drive story based content across all social platforms.
- Expanded AI capability beyond TV graphics to create more personalised fan engagement and scalable solutions.

MORE PARTNERSHIPS

We will evolve our sponsorship model to enable a broader range of partnerships that are actively delivering measurable value for our partners and the entire athletics ecosystem.

Strategic goals

- Increase B2C sponsorship revenue and grow non-event partnership programme opportunities.
- Further increase prize money for athletes through our annual existing and new Championship events and deliver partnership opportunities to help elite athletes build professional career pathways and increase revenue.

Outputs

- Develop non-event sponsorship opportunities for key programmes such as Kids' Athletics and Athletics for a Better World.
- Develop and establish a global, out-of-stadium running partnership structure and events calendar.
- Review advertising restrictions for athletes in an effort to remove barriers to additional earnings and create new ways that athletes can earn more.
- Identify and facilitate new opportunities to bring fresh funding into the sport to support existing and new one-day meeting formats and platforms, not necessarily owned by World Athletics.

BRILLIANT BASICS

Our ability to focus sharply on the activities that really make a difference in this four year journey will mean putting all our day-to-day activities under the microscope and determining what we should be doing less of and how we can do these activities more efficiently and less resource intensively without compromising the quality of what is necessary that we are immensely proud of.

In addition, underpinning our delivery success are five fundamental areas where we will strive to excel each and every day. These are our brilliant basics and are aligned to The World Plan:

- A global network of trained and motivated people to facilitate and promote athletics around the world.
- Strong and connected Member Federations and Area Associations with the tools and skills to deliver on the ground.
- Best in class Governance at all levels of the sport that governs, protects and safeguards our sport and our people.
- An active and engaged group of partners and key influencers within the sport who mutually benefit from participating in, contributing to and sharing this four-year journey.
- All athletics' events, from global to national, to be leaders in reducing the environmental impact of their events and enhancing their social impact to help build a better world.

	<p>More Participation Maximise participation at every level of the sport and investing in elite athlete development</p>	<p>Innovation</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>Competition Streamlined World Championships proposition and discipline innovation</p>  <p>Fans Designing new products and services to reach new audiences</p>  <p>Brand World Athletics IP extensions outside of event delivery</p>  <p>Delivery 1-day meetings, out of stadium running, Regional Championships</p>  <p>Commercial Reimagined partnerships with athletes, ARs and shoe companies</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"></div> </div>
	<p>More People Continue to invest in more resources to deliver our sport around the world at all levels</p>	
	<p>More Fans More global fans choosing athletics through personalised access to content and athletes</p>	
	<p>More Partnerships Evolve our sponsorship model to enable a broader range of partnerships</p>	

Underpinned by our Brilliant Basics:

Global network of People; Strong and connected Member Federations and Areas; Best in class Governance; Active & engaged key influencers; Leaders in delivering sustainable events

WORLD PLAN

The World Plan was developed in 2021 through a year-long consultation with stakeholders across athletics. Over 85% of our Member Federations completed detailed questionnaires about the state of athletics in their country and their priorities for growth. And, through our Global Conversation campaign, 25,000 individuals from 175 countries, across our sport, from athletes to coaches, fans and recreational runners, gave us feedback and recommendations. This was, without doubt, the largest review ever undertaken as a sport, on our sport.

The result is an eight-year [World Plan](#) that sets clear objectives against the vision to grow the athletics with stated roles, responsibilities and desired metrics for each objective. It builds on World Athletics four pillars for growth - more participation, more people, more fans, and more partners and covers the spectrum of athletics from school and recreational athletics through to elite performers. It is ambitious, setting metrics for the 67 actions against which progress can be benchmarked. It is strategic but not prescriptive, allowing each Federation to set their own prioritisation and timeframe and focus on areas which will deliver meaningful growth in their country. It is designed to help everyone understand the goals and join the journey that is important to them – from HQ to Member Federations and Areas and wider stakeholder groups.

The World Plan addresses both elite programme priorities and the increased interest in health and fitness and recreational running that we have seen over the last few years. It also addresses the greater social responsibility and interest in sustainability, linking to the health, education, diversity, gender, social and sustainability agendas which are becoming increasingly important to communities and governments which, in turn, may help unlock additional investment in our sport. Most of all it is the roadmap we have shared, and continue to share, with all our stakeholders, athletes and fans so they can join us on this eight-year journey.

What is common in all these objectives is they come from deep and wide-ranging insights from organisations and individuals who are passionate about athletics and its future development. These insights call for us to embrace a shift in mindset about many aspects of the sport of athletics. It requires bravery and focus to challenge the status quo, try new things and think differently. It is also understood that not everything that is tried will be universally popular, some initiatives may not work, but it sets our framework and roadmap for everyone in the sport to be ambitious and brave, to share in success and failure and to collaborate on shared goals.

Perception



Whilst 79% of MFs consider governance to be strong in the sport, this decreases to 41% for fans.



87% of respondents agreed that athletics is the most accessible sport, and as such is the best sport to create a healthier and fitter world.



82% of respondents described athletics to be diverse and inclusive.

Participation



47% of respondents said participating in athletics is popular in their country.



A lack of media coverage is perceived to be the biggest single challenge to growing the sport with 24% of respondents saying this.



61% of MFs reported that it was important for Masters Athletics to be better incorporated into the sport.

People



Whilst 64% of professional coaches and volunteers indicated there is a clear development pathway.

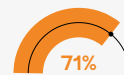


MFs reported that it was not easy to recruit coaches (only 26% said coach recruitment is easy or very easy).

Fans



45% of all respondents said elite level athletics was popular in their country.



Fans enjoy supporting national team athletes and seeing the best athletes competing live with 71% also saying it was important to them that athletes regularly compete in their home nation.

STRATEGIC 4-YEAR GOALS AT A GLANCE

This section brings together all the goals that sit under the 5 pillars. Each one has a set of specific outcomes that will be delivered over the four years. These can be found in section 8 under Strategic Priorities and Primary Activities on page 22.

Summary of strategic goals

- * Differentiate and innovate our events and improve the quality of formats, disciplines and rules through the creation of a robust, data driven focus on the athletics product and innovation which we test thoroughly before implementing.
- * Deliver World Class Championship events; end the season with a new or existing global championship event and support one-day meetings, which we both lead or influence, so we can consistently showcase the best athletes and create must watch competition for fans.
- * Create new events and increase the quality of existing regional and global events to create clearer reasons for athletes to compete and fans to engage.
- * Further increase prize money for athletes through our annual existing and new Championship events and deliver partnership opportunities to help elite athletes build professional career pathways and increase revenue.
- * Create more opportunities and reasons for people of all ages to participate in athletics (Kids' Athletics, Masters, Para Athletics, City, Trail and Mountain running etc).
- * Recruit, retain, reward and educate people in our sport and create more ways for them to be part of global athletics regardless of region, age or level.
- * Acknowledge our appreciation and reward the vital contribution of our volunteers by creating a certification programme based on skills.
- * Build a global fanbase of millions of known fans with whom we can communicate on a regular basis.
- * Empower and equip Member Federations and Areas to impactfully contribute to the growth of athletics (KPIs set through World Plan).
- * Increase Business-to-Consumer sponsorship revenue and grow non-event partnership programme opportunities.

MEASURING SUCCESS

For ambitious goals to be met, it is critical to establish what success looks like. As mentioned earlier in the document we will know we will have been successful when in 2027 we see a sport that has grown through innovation led change, with more participation, more people, more fans and more partnerships across all forms of the sport, across the world. A sport that has even greater global reach and significant value to those who invest in it. Behind these delivery targets sit quarterly and annual performance metrics (KPIs) to effectively and objectively measure and monitor progress.

Evolved sport product creating more engaging WAS Championships

- * Specific metrics set for each WAS event supported by research, impact studies and data collection and analysis.
- * Successfully launch a new global Championship event from 2026 onwards.

More known fans

- * 5.4 million known fans with direct revenue over the four-year period of US\$3m.

More skilled and active people in the sport

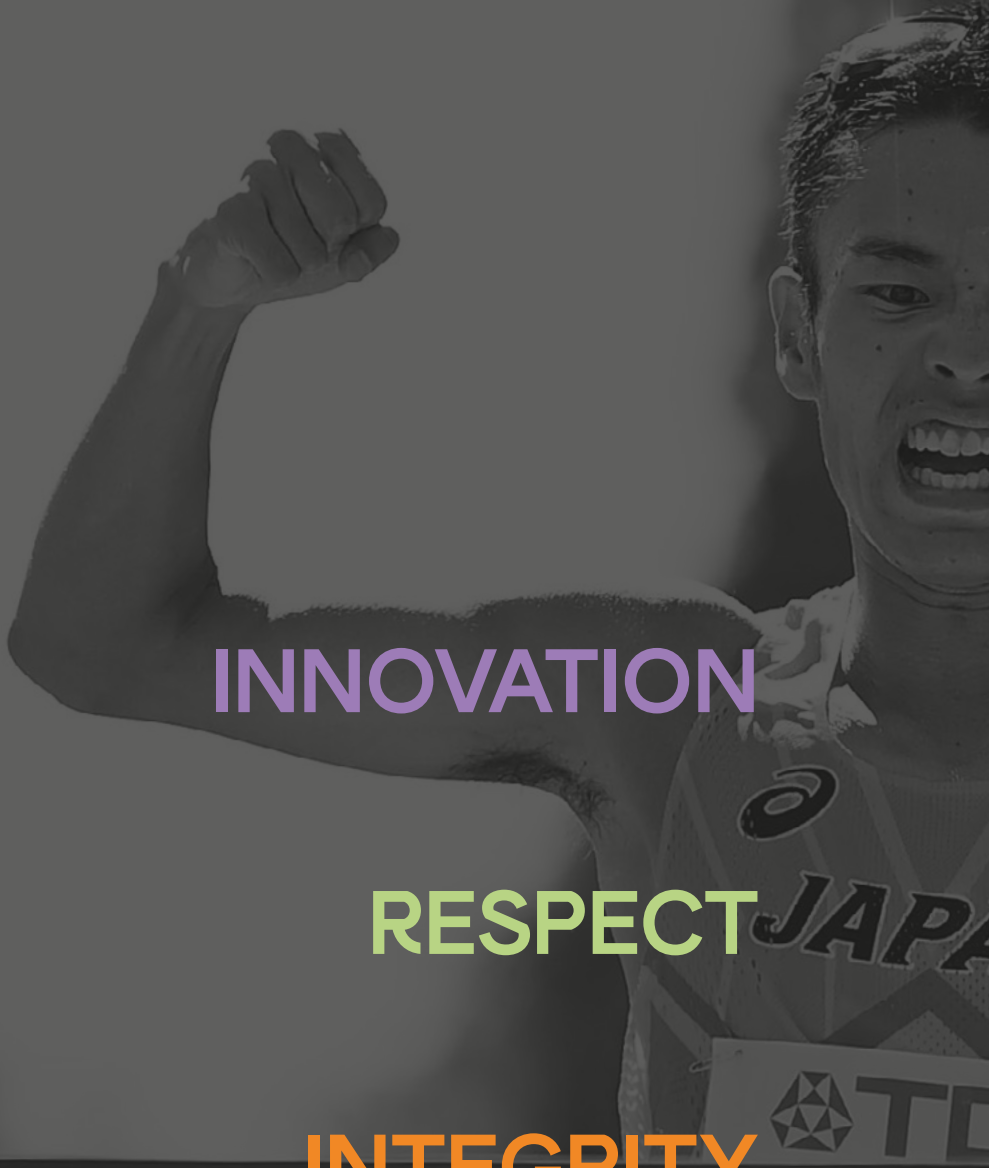
- * Skills gap analysis completed in 2024 with final KPIs set end of 2024.
- * Global network of volunteers established.
- * Global Centre for Coaching Excellence operational.

More participation from elite to grassroots

- * Build an economically viable model for athletes to generate more income and build a professional career as an elite international athlete.
- * 90% of MFs running a Kids' Athletics programme with a specific focus on keeping kids in the sport beyond participation in a single programme or activity.
- * Masters, Off Road & Para Athletics partnerships established.

More productive partnerships

- * Four new Business to Consumer Partnerships by 2027.
- * Metrics set for total activation spend year on year.



INNOVATION

RESPECT

INTEGRITY

LEADERSHIP

COMMITMENT

EXCELLENCE

OUR VALUES

Pioneering change requires a strong set of values across all of World Athletics that deliver the behaviour we need across our sport. Established as part of the Strategy for Growth plan in 2020 we believe these values remain relevant and essential today and over the coming four years.

Inspiring opportunity to create, explore, test out and develop new ideas to capture interest, attention and achieve new positive outcomes.

The way we treat people, from fellow competitors, to colleagues, partners and all those involved in our sport. Ensuring we are always open, honest, considerate and maintain the governing principles of our sport.

Our actions speak louder than our words in our consistent and uncompromising adherence to moral and ethical principles and practices in everything we do.

Our role is not to own or dominate our sport but to provide strong, clear, consistent leadership wherever we operate and at every level.

We are focused, passionate and dedicated to achieving our goals and helping others do the same so we all contribute and achieve.

To always be the best that we can be in our thinking and our execution at all times.

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

World Athletics' normalised annual income is circa US\$55 million per year, derived from three main sources:

/ Our WAS Championships and marketing partner, Dentsu

/ Partners and broadcasters

/ The IOC

This income is not generated consistently across each four-year cycle but instead comes in peaks and troughs (for example, the IOC Olympic Games Broadcast revenue share is paid every four years). Despite this we look to even out our expenditure to match our annual income.

80% of World Athletics' expenditure is directed towards athlete focused spend (through our events, Member Federations and the AIU activity), with the remainder supporting the running of the Monaco-based HQ, governance of the sport and the running of the Athletics Integrity Unit

We are fortunate to have the financial security of long-term partnerships with our marketing partner Dentsu, the many other commercial and broadcast partners and our Diamond League partner, Wanda.

We continue to proactively seek new commercial relationships and revenue streams in order to increase our income base. Over the last four-year strategy we increased our commercial partners from five to 10 and in the first quarter of 2024 we have signed two new partners – Sony and Morinaga. This revenue and others over the next four years allows us to do even more to grow and pioneer change in the sport, both directly and also through our Member Federations.

Whilst the work goes on to generate increased income for the future, the current strategic plan has been budgeted assuming only our existing income levels going forward. As a result, if, and when, additional resources become available, this strategic plan can expand accordingly.

Managing our revenue and expenditure and matching it and our all our resources to activity levels will be a key part of the annual review that World Athletics' Executive Board will lead at the end of each financial year.



CONCLUSION

Athletics is the No.1 Olympic sport AND the most participated sport in the world. We have, without question, the most talented, exciting and relatable sportswomen and men in the world.

We are one of only two truly global sports with funded Federations driving and promoting athletics across over 200 countries around the world. Our Championships regularly showcase medal podium athletes from over 40 countries with our finals featuring athletes from over 70 countries. No other sport is this diverse or globally represented.

It is not surprising that we have strong ambitions. Our sport is made up of athletes, coaches, meeting organisers, Federations and HQ teams that are ambitious, fearless and hard working. This is why we know we can deliver this strategy over the next four years, creating a sport that has even greater global reach and significant value to those who invest in it.

But as every successful track and field athlete will tell you, ambition without clear objectives, goals and an understanding of the journey to successful delivery is a waste of time. This strategy is the roadmap that we hope will encourage the millions of people invested in athletics to understand our ambition and join the journey we are planning to take. We have not created it in isolation. Our key influencers, our athletes, our Member Federations and our HQ team have all contributed, critiqued and, more importantly, agreed to step up and focus on doing less without compromising quality to create room for the innovation and improvements in the core product and related areas that will see athletics soar.

As with all strategic documents, the implementation of this strategy is broken down into goals, actions and activities which we hope will engage everyone who loves our sport.

We have attempted to also bring into sharper focus the World Plan which was launched in 2021 and is the eight-year journey that our Member Federations have developed to grow athletics in over 200 countries around the world.

The last part of our strategic framework is the annual business plan that is developed by World Athletics HQ and approved and monitored by the Executive Board.

The annual business plan breaks down the four-year strategy into agreed and funded activities to achieve this four-year strategy and also defines the priorities for the organisation. Our key priorities for 2024 - the first year of this Pioneering Change strategy - are listed on page 34. We hope you will see how they correspond to the pillars and goals we have set out in this strategy. We will add the priorities for future years each year when our annual business plans are finalised and signed off by the Executive Board.

We have never been more optimistic about the future of our sport or the talents of our athletes, including the young talent emerging through our Federations in all of our Areas. The breadth, talent and quality of our athletes is better than it has ever been, and we are grateful for all the work so many people do in our sport to nurture and develop that talent. Together, with all our stakeholders, we are confident we will excel and shine over the coming four years and deliver the changes we all want to see.



Sebastian Coe
World Athletics President



Jon Ridgeon
World Athletics CEO

WORLD ATHLETICS 2024 KEY PRIORITY AREAS

“ 2024 is going to be the year of change. In a decade from now I want people to look back at 2024 and say the decisions the sport made that year not only future proofed the sport but significantly accelerated its popularity and value. In the same way as people today look back at 2016 and say the Reforms made and voted on in 2016 was the single step change in rebuilding the integrity and credibility of athletics ”

- / Delivering 5 WAS events across 3 Continents and an Olympic Games in Paris where we intend to cement our No. 1 Olympic Sport position.

- / Delivering 1 million known fans. This means increasing our known fans from 500,000 to 1 million by the end of 2024. Investing time and money into making sure we have the platform and the content to engage more with our fans.

- / Developing and launching the new 2026 Global Championship event will be a key deliverable in 2024. Through the detailed research we conducted during the Budapest World Championships with fans (in stadium and at home), broadcasters and our athletes, we have some strong, evidence-based insights and stats that we are using to create this event.

- / Identifying the host for the 2027 World Championships is also a critical decision this year as it is our showcase event ahead of the LA 28 Olympic Games. We are delighted that Beijing has been awarded this event.

- / Innovating the athletics product. There are four key areas of focus – again using the research collected during the Budapest World Championships.
 - ↳ Calendar reconfiguration so we end each season with a showcase World Championship Event
 - ↳ Timetable evolution to increase the pace and excitement of competition
 - ↳ Discipline and sport reform, particularly in the field, to ensure excitement and drama are maximised.
 - ↳ Out of Stadium strategy which is exploring the growth of road and off-road competition which is such an important part of our sport.



