

## **Cycling Ireland National Team Competition Selection Policy**

### **1. Vision**

This selection policy communicates Cycling Ireland's High Performance Unit (HPU) method to achieve the selection of individuals and teams for National Team representation which reflect the aims of the event in question in support of our greater strategic aim outlined below.

### **2. Aim**

Cycling Ireland has a clear mandate from Sport Ireland to focus our resource on being more competitive at Olympic and Paralympic Games.

*"In conjunction with the Olympic Federation of Ireland and Paralympics Ireland, set stringent qualification targets to ensure all qualifying athletes are competitive across Olympic and Paralympic teams (even if this results in a smaller team for future Games)"*

It's been clearly articulated that resourcing will be more targeted in future cycles.

*"Focused investment in medal potential high performance systems should be reflected in investment decisions across the next two Cycles."*

The aim of this document therefore is to support the Cycling Ireland HPU implement a selection policy that safeguards and promotes the high standards required by our funding partners and our own ambition to send more competitive teams to major events, leading ultimately to Olympic and Paralympic success in the cycles ahead.

### **3. Introduction**

This policy articulates processes for selecting athletes for

- 3.1 Major championships and,
- 3.2 Non-major championships.
- 3.3 Non-Olympic discipline events led by the specific Cycling Ireland Commission.

The major championships events cover European and World Championships for Olympic and Paralympic disciplines at Jnr, U23 or Elite categories as appropriate.

Where Cycling Ireland will compete at other, smaller international events as a National team, the selection policy will differ from major championships selection, and is termed non-major championships selection.

Non-Olympic discipline event selection for European and World Championships may be led by either the relevant Commission or the HPU after taking into consideration the needs of the event (eg a large multi-discipline event will be led by the HPU, but stand-alone event may be led by the Commission upon agreement with the HPU.)

All events supported by this Policy will be published via the Cycling Ireland Website. Cycling Ireland reserves the right to amend this Policy as appropriate and will endeavour to ensure this Policy remains up to date. Each new publication will supersede the preceding version.

In seeking to fulfil their competitive objectives, and with resource limitations in mind, Cycling Ireland will not attend every international event open to National Teams, or necessarily fill all quota places in those that are being attended. (See 4.5 below.)

All processes laid out herein are consolidated by stipulating relevant Selection Aims, and supported by Performance Criteria for each event which will be adjudged by a panel or staff as articulated below.

Selection for any event is not a guarantee that Cycling Ireland, the HPU or CI Commissions will be able to pay or contribute towards attendance at that event.

#### **4. Major Championship Selection**

Selection to represent Ireland at Championships will be based off the desire to fulfil one or more of the following selection aims, which are in line with our objectives pertaining to Sport Ireland's Performance Strategy.

##### **4.1 Selection Aims:**

- 4.1.1 Be medal competitive in Olympic/Paralympic events at European and World Championships or in an discipline that is connected to this event. (eg Points race would be considered 'connected' to Omnium or Madison.)
- 4.1.2 In each Olympic and Paralympic cycle develop a team or individuals in each Olympic/Paralympic discipline that the panel determines can be medal competitive in the current or next cycle;
- 4.1.3 Allow individual athletes or squads we believe have the potential to be podium standard within the cycle, or shortly after, at European and World Championship level, the opportunity to gain beneficial experience and/or score UCI points contributing towards current UCI World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic qualifying rankings.

##### **4.2 Selection Process:**

All athletes wishing to be considered for Championship selection will be invited to complete an expressions of interest document in advance of selection. The timing of this exercise will vary depending on the timeline generated by the entry process required, and/or demand for operating appropriate logistics ahead of the event.

The expression of interest document will be published on the Cycling Ireland website in advance of each major event that a selection panel will be convened (see appendix 1, below). The purpose of this document is to enable all athletes bidding for selection to be afforded an equal opportunity to present all relevant data for the panel to consider. Wherever possible this information will be published on an annual basis and updated as required in the event of UCI calendar changes.

By submitting the expression of interest form the athlete or responsible parent/guardian (if U18 yrs) is declaring they fulfil all relevant eligibility criteria at the time it is submitted (7.0 below) and agree to be bound by the terms of this policy.

Accordingly, after the closing date for expressions of interest, the High Performance Director (HPD) will determine if a preliminary meeting will be convened to appraise the panel of all the information contained within the expressions of interest. This meeting will always be convened if there's more candidate athletes to be considered than places available. This is the 'information gathering meeting'. This will precede the selection panel meeting. The purpose of this is two-fold:

- 4.2.1 To ensure that when the selection panel meeting takes place all information is accurate and complete on the part of each athlete wishing to be considered. The timing of this allows the HP Admin Manager to liaise with any athletes, or make checks after the closing date, so that when the Panel convenes all information is present and correct.
- 4.2.2 To enable the Coach/Lead of each discipline to distribute their recommendations for selection to the Panel ahead of the selection panel meeting.

These are then considered by the selection panel as set out below and discussed at the Selection Panel Meeting.

The Chair will ask the panel at the outset to declare if any conflicts of interest exist, e.g. a panel member coaching a rider being considered for selection. It will be at the chair's discretion to determine if a conflict exists. In the event of a conflict arising the panel member will not have a vote towards selection in that category/discipline, and additional panel member(s) will be invited to reach the quorum.

A quorum is three voting members from the below composition free of any conflicts:

- Chairperson (Usually the HPD, but the HPD may nominate a replacement if unavailable. Non-voting)
- HP Admin Manager (Notetaking, non-voting)
- Head Coach (voting member if no conflicts of interest)
- Coach/Lead of the related discipline(s) being selected (voting member if no conflicts of interest)
- A minimum of one further Cycling Ireland Coach with no conflicts of interest.

We may additionally invite:

- Other High Performance coaches from relevant disciplines within Cycling Ireland's contractors. (Voting member if no conflicts of interest)
- One or more High Performance Management Group representatives (non-voting)
- Independent witnesses (non-voting)

The purpose of having a flexible panel composition throughout the course of a year rather than one fixed group, is to enable the HPD to compose a panel with relevant expertise or insight into the specific discipline, or rider cohort, and to avoid any conflicts of interest within the voting panel.

### **4.3 Communications**

The outcome of the selection panel meeting will be communicated to the candidate athlete (plus parent if under 18yrs old) via e-mail normally within a 24hr period. If a candidate athlete does not hear within the published timeframe, then it is their responsibility to contact [HPAdmin@cyclingireland.ie](mailto:HPAdmin@cyclingireland.ie) in the first instance.

All selections are strictly provisional until any appeals have been concluded. In the event of an appeal being upheld by the Appeals Panel, we will write to inform affected parties and reconvene Selection at the earliest opportunity thereafter.

Candidate athletes are not to publicise their selection or non-selection until Cycling Ireland have announced the Team selection.

#### **4.4 Appeals**

Once the provisional selections have been communicated to the candidate athletes the appeals window commences. The Appeals policy may be found here:

[CyclingIrelandAppealsPolicyFinal31.07.23.pdf](#) Or alternatively via the High Performance section on the Cycling Ireland Website.

Once any appeals process have been concluded, the official UCI entry and associated logistics proceed. All athletes that do not get selected are offered the opportunity to discuss their non-selection with the Coach/discipline lead with the intention of offering constructive feedback regarding areas that could enhance their potential for selection in future.

#### **4.5 Quotas and Event Attendance**

Cycling Ireland team activity will be influenced during the course of the season leading to a major championship or the course of an Olympic/Paralympic Cycle, as progression towards eligibility, quotas or medal competitiveness becomes clear.

Where there may be financial limitations to attending, or no possibility of improving ranking for the purposes of gaining a quota spot or increase quota allocation for an upcoming major championship event, or indeed Olympic or Paralympic Games, Cycling Ireland reserves the right to not pursue event attendance.

The Selection Panel shall be under no obligation to select a representative or select all the representatives to which it is entitled in any Event or discipline where it reasonably believes that:

- It is unlikely to achieve selection aims (4.1 or 5.1).
- Selection based on meeting selection aim 4.2 and 4.3, or 5.2 and 5.3 respectively, would affect meeting the primary aim.
- Selection aims 4.2 and 4.3, or 5.2 and 5.3 (below) can be met in an alternative manner or event opportunity.
- Points articulated in 4.5 'Quotas and Event Attendance'.
- Selection of a rider would contravene the duty of care owed to that rider; and/or
- Selection of a rider would pose an unreasonable risk (as determined by the Selection Panel in its absolute discretion) to a rider, other riders or Cycling Ireland.
- Additionally, Olympic disciplines are the priority driving selection for those events. Non-Olympic disciplines, for example, short track MTB, Team Time Trial or scratch race will only be selected from the cohort selected for the Olympic disciplines. Individuals won't be selected purely to specialise in non-Olympic disciplines.

It is important to recognise that Cycling Ireland needs to maintain it's duty of care for all it's participant athletes and staff on event, as well as it's professional responsibilities and so for this reason we will not subsequently undertake any further correspondence in relation to any such decision. Athletes self-funding is not viewed as an alternative method of achieving selection under these circumstances.

Selection to represent Cycling Ireland at events is not limited to or defined by any individual's presence on a squad or being carded.

## **5 Non-Championships Selection**

Selection for non-championships events entered by Cycling Ireland HPU as a National Team in Olympic/Paralympic disciplines will be led by the Coach or discipline lead in charge. Such events are generally smaller in nature, and much more frequent over the course of the year across all disciplines.

The aim of this process is to create an expedited selection that may have to operate within short time frames and frequently over the course of the year as matters such as quota allocation, rider availability etc unfold.

### **5.2 Selection Aims:**

- 5.2.1** Be podium competitive in the event;
- 5.2.2** Within each Olympic and Paralympic cycle develop a team or individuals in each Olympic/Paralympic discipline that is determined by the discipline lead can be medal competitive in the current or next cycle;
- 5.2.3** Allow individual athletes or squads we believe have the potential to be podium level, the opportunity to gain beneficial experience and/or score UCI points contributing towards current UCI World Championships or Olympic/Paralympic qualifying rankings.

In respect of 5.2.3) above the following considerations apply:

- 5.2.3.a Gaining nation ranking points over the course of a season or build up to qualification for another event.
- 5.2.3.b Rider development opportunity.
- 5.2.3.c Specific athlete suitability for course, stages, or climate or similar consideration.
- 5.2.3.d Rider availability (health, exams, other team commitments).
- 5.2.3.e Gaining experience (with team, or course etc).
- 5.2.3.f Rotating riders in a squad (over the course of a season for example).

With this approach, Cycling Ireland understands the need to navigate rider availability, rider health, other team or education commitments during the course of a season also. (Equally, race organisers may choose to limit our entry based on the number of nation representatives already entered, or the size of the field.)

Recommendations will be made in advance in writing by the Coach to the HPD and Head Coach (HC) outlining their selection recommendations and rationale. Either the HPD or HC will be required to authorise their selections and can challenge the recommendations. The timeline of this process shall be led by the HPU and may be influenced by organisers entry deadlines, athlete availability, CI logistics etc and as such can vary depending on the event.

Wherever possible a cohort under consideration in advance of an event covered by this process will be contacted via e-mail to inform them of the potential for selection and to assess availability and readiness to compete.

Such selections are not covered by an appeals process.

## **6 Performance Criteria**

All selections will be based on any individuals' ability to meet the above selection aims or contribute to a team performance in meeting same in the opinion of the selection panel (Major Championships selection), or staff involved in non-major championship selection, as appropriate.

Expressions of Interest pro-forma will direct specific selection aims from the above listed, and performance criteria, but will *typically include* the following as an example:

- UCI ranking
- Meeting eligibility criteria for the event
- Competition performances – often over the preceding 12 months, or since the last edition of that specific championship. Performances that are relevant to the selection event are viewed with greater priority than those with less relevance. This could mean single day results vs stage racing results, course profile, climate, and level of the competition in road racing for example.
- The ability to race competitively in more than one event, e.g. a Team Pursuit rider that is also an eligible and competitive madison rider, a Road Rider that also TT's.
- The profile of the riders selected to ensure optimal team composition, for example a riders' contribution towards a team performance rather than their own result, or a rider's contribution towards team leadership or positive culture.
- Athlete trajectory; how do training history, age, recent performances, or injury influence selection.
- Athlete availability; are they able to participate in pre-event racing or training if required.
- Be in good standing with Cycling Ireland, sign our athlete agreement, hold a valid passport and racing licence, meet VISA requirements in the destination country etc.
- Demonstrated respect for their potential competitors and team-mates both in person and via mainstream and digital media.

Such is the increasing competitiveness of continental and world championships cycling, an individual submitting an expression of interest for major championships selection will, in most cases, be expected to have competed successfully at international level for that or the preceding season in their discipline(s) or have demonstrated a significant trajectory towards achieving internationally competitive standard.

Unless specifically noted, selection is not linked to winning a certain race or National Championship prior to selection – the stated aims of the selection policy prevail.

Please note, that meeting eligibility criteria (7.0 below) and presenting strong performance credentials is in itself no guarantee of selection. Where we have more candidate athletes than places available it shall be at the judgement of the selection panel to determine selection from this cohort. Non-selection is not a judgement of non-compliance of eligibility or lack of performance criteria, it may be that the panel determine another athlete to present more strongly. On this basis of

judgement and the panel having appraised itself of all the candidate athlete information and reasonably discussed their expression of interest, non-selection under these conditions is not grounds for appeal in line with CI Appeals Policy.

Cycling Ireland welcomes engagement from individuals who aren't carded riders that can evidence their progression towards World class podium standard in their Olympic discipline(s), with a view to exploring their potential development. We regard building this relationship as important in helping us understand your performance level and progress. Specific guidance on appropriate performance standards or experience can be advised on a case-by-case basis as required. Examples may include talent transfer athletes, or existing riders returning from long term injury. If you wish to discuss this further please contact [HPAdmin@cyclingsireland.ie](mailto:HPAdmin@cyclingsireland.ie).

## **7 Eligibility**

Any individual being considered must:

- 7.1 Be in good standing with Cycling Ireland.
- 7.2 Meet the UCI's rules and regulations for representing Ireland.
- 7.3 Meet Government criteria for travel (eg Covid compliant, visas, length of passport validity etc).
- 7.4 Be eligible and available for selection.
- 7.5 Demonstrated respect for their potential competitors and team-mates both in person and via mainstream and digital media.
- 7.6 Signed or be prepared to sign the Cycling Ireland Team Agreement and agrees to be bound by the conduct outlined therein.

Please note Cycling Ireland needs to adhere to UCI regulations in respect of entry criteria for certain events/disciplines, so would ask riders engaging with the HPU or submitting an expression of interest be aware of these regulations. An example of this is a minimum 250 UCI ranking points for most disciplines at a Nations Cup track event, Track World Championships etc.

## **8 Non-Olympic Disciplines Selection**

Where a CI Commission leads on selection for an event or non-Olympic discipline, selection for a European or World Championships should be guided by the following selection aims:

- 8.1 Be podium competitive in the event.
- 8.2 Allow individual athletes or squads we believe have the potential to be podium level in the next 4 years, the opportunity to gain beneficial experience and/or score UCI points contributing towards current/next UCI World Championship quota allocations.

All potential candidate athletes will be required to submit an expression of interest to the Commission lead, in the same manner of the HPU procedure outlined above in 4.2 with the commission leading on the relevant performance criteria or liaising with the HPU accordingly.

Where a non-Olympic discipline is being selected as part of a wider HPU led event, the commission and HPU can agree that the HPU will lead on the selection process as per 4.2. Alternatively, commissions are invited to undertake selection by themselves adhering to this same policy and are bound by the same conditions.

This panel must be Chaired by someone independent of the coaching process for any athletes under consideration. However, taking into account the potential for a smaller cohort of expert panel members, the Chair may possess a casting vote where required.

The panel's nominations, EOI forms, and meeting selections are sent to the HPD or relevant HPU lead within 24hrs of the selection meeting being conducted. Conditions 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 prevail. In the first instance selections are subject to ratification from the HPU. Thereafter, the Commission can inform the candidate athletes of their provisional selection, and the appeals process becomes live. Where the commission has led on event selection, they will continue to undertake accountability in the appeals process also and respond to the Chair of the Appeals Panel accordingly.

It's important for the Commissions to consider how connected their nominations are to supporting the performance aspirations of their discipline and may result in a team size which does not reach capacity, or travel at all if evidence suggests the athletes don't have the capability to meet the selection policy aims in a realistic development time-scale relevant to the discipline.

For non-major championship events, the Commissions can determine how they best support the competitive endeavours and development of the riders in their disciplines. Representative teams can be determined informally by the commissions. Riders could also be representing their own clubs or teams in such circumstances as this, subject to the specific regulations in force for that discipline.

## **Appendix.**

CI Selection Panel will meet for the remainder of 2023 for the following Championship events;

- European Road Championships Drenthe, Ned. 20-24 Sep (Elite, U23, & Jnr). Expressions of interest open w/c 31<sup>st</sup> July. Selection w/c 14<sup>th</sup> August.
- Other events may be added, and policy updated.

Please note the schedule of selection panels is not confirmation of CI attending a specific event or fulfilling it's full quota.

The date of the panels is TBC and will relate most closely to requirements of rider entry and logistics. Most will be 4-6wks in advance of the event, with expressions of interest open a further two weeks prior to this.

Ends. 31.07.23