



# 2025 FINAL REPORT

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**Lindsay Duncan***Rise Up Management Committee Chair*

*Since the spring of 2021 I have led Rise Up – a Canada Artistic Swimming initiative aimed at placing humans at the centre of our decision making and programming and fostering safe, inclusive, and welcoming opportunities for all our participants. I have had the immense privilege of hearing from and collaborating with people connected to our sport from many different vantage points, each willing to share their lived or professional expertise help us achieve the ambitious objectives of Rise Up. I have seen first-hand that our community is passionate and committed to supporting positive artistic swimming experiences for all. Thank you to everyone who has supported this initiative.*

*Although we are wrapping up the Rise Up initiative, I want to be clear that our efforts are far from over. When we first launched Rise Up, we identified a critical need for actions toward safe, inclusive, and welcoming sport to be better aligned with the strategic objectives of the organisation. Through extensive work conducted in 2023, our current [2024-2028 strategic plan](#) now includes safe sport, positive, culture, diversity and inclusion within its key pillars. This is a positive step for Canada Artistic Swimming which will serve as a roadmap in the years to come. With continued engagement and support from our community, are excited about the future of artistic swimming in Canada.*



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# **INTRODUCTION**

Canada Artistic Swimming takes very seriously its responsibility to provide our participants with the tools they need to achieve their dreams within safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments.



## AN AMBITIOUS PLAN

In the spring of 2021, in response to the changing landscape of sport and a call from our community, we initiated Rise Up, a human-centered initiative that would help us live up to our responsibility for safe, inclusive, and welcoming sport.

We committed to reviewing all our practices, creating new standards, embracing change, and engaging in open communication about our efforts and challenges. We established an action plan with key tasks, timelines, and reporting milestones and set to work, engaging collaborators from within and outside the sport to support our efforts.

We have reported on our progress at each of our key milestones in previous [Rise Up reports](#). This document is the final report from the Rise Up initiative. Here, we report on the final steps taken under the Rise Up initiative and discuss how a focus on safe, inclusive, and welcoming sport are now woven more tightly into the fabric of our organisation.

We are proud of the work conducted as a part of Rise Up, but we know that culture change takes time and maintaining a positive culture takes constant work. We are committed to this work and we look forward to engaging with our whole community as we empower a Canadian style of winning and promote [a safe & inclusive sport for all](#).

## 2022 NEXT STEPS

In our 2022 report we identified 7 “next steps” being pursued through the Rise Up initiative. Below, we provide an update on each:

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## 01.

### **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION E-LEARNING MODULE RELEASE TO ALL REGISTRANTS**

- With funding support from World Aquatics and the Canadian Olympic Committee, we worked with INclusion INcorporated and developed an e-learning module focused on diversity in aquatic sports.
- The module was released in June 2023 and has been included as a coach registration and certification requirement for the 2024-2025 season.
- We expected all coaches attending CAS competitions to have completed training by April 2025.



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## 02.

### RELEASE THE NEW CAS BODY POSITIVE GUIDELINE

- In September 2022 we released the CAS Body Positive Guidelines, an educational resources for our community focused on supporting body positive training and competition environments for participants of all ages and competitive levels.
- The [guidelines](#) are available on the CAS website.





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## 03.

### THE INCLUSION INDEX (FORMERLY CALLED BELONGING METRIC) DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND SHARING

- This measure has evolved into our annual community survey which assesses a variety of factors related to culture.
- The community survey is circulated in the Spring, around the time of the Canadian Championships.
- The results from the 2024 survey were shared with the PTSO executive directors in July and with the PTSO presidents in September.
- Results from the 2023 survey helped to inform our new CAS culture initiative: [We All Swim Together](#).



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## 04.

### **REROOT COACH TRAINING OF 20 PROVINCIAL COACH LEADERS AND NATIONAL TEAM COACHES**

- reROOT is an evidence-informed training program for coaches that teaches them about an autonomy-supportive coaching approach.
- The first reROOT training session was held in conjunction with the CAS technical conference in September 2021
- Training of the 20 provincial coach leaders and national team coaches is now complete.



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**05.**

**CONDUCT ANNUAL CULTURE AUDITS AND 360-DEGREE REVIEWS FOR THE NATIONAL TEAMS**

- Leadership personnel have implemented regular culture reviews of our national team athletes and report to the CAS Board regularly.

**06.**

**EXECUTE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**



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## 07.

### **ALIGN THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN WITH OUR NEXT STRATEGIC PLAN**

- Our diversity and inclusion action plan was followed before adopting these initiatives into the new CAS strategic plan.
- The strategic plan was established with extensive community consultation from which it was clear that diversity and inclusion are key priorities for our participants.
- Safe and inclusive sport is a foundation of the 2024-2028 strategic plan.
- Operational plans being executed by our CAS personnel include specific actions towards our strategic goals in this area.



## **AMPLIFYING THE ATHLETE VOICE**

Since our 2022 report, CAS has also taken steps to amplify the athlete voice in our decision-making.

- CAS athletes elected Catherine Barrett (Senior national team athlete 2018-2021), as the athlete council chair. Catherine chairs a council of 6 members who represent and promote the views and interests of the National program and CAS athletes. As the athlete council chair Catherine also sits on several CAS committees to ensure the athlete perspective is included in decision-making.
- In 2023, the CAS By-laws were amended to protect one Board position for an Athlete Representative (an individual who was at any time within the previous eight (8) years, an Athlete on a national team or competing at the international level). For the 2023-2024 season, Marie-Lou Morin (Senior national team athlete 2009-2016) served in this role. The role is currently vacant for the 2024-2025 season.

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## WE ALL SWIM TOGETHER



- Building on the success of **Rise Up**, our new [We All Swim Together](#) initiative continues our commitment to safe and inclusive sport. This program equips athletes, coaches, and clubs with practical tools to foster supportive, respectful environments that encourage healthy interactions, reduce conflicts, and prevent bullying.
- We All Swim Together was informed by data collected from CAS participants and created by experts in safe sport, diversity, and inclusion. We All Swim Together is a grassroots initiative developed in collaboration with the Canadian Olympic Committee, Generation Safe, and INclusion INcorporated.
- This program provides athletes, coaches, and administrators with practical tools to create supportive, respectful environments that encourage healthy peer-to-peer interactions, minimize conflicts, and prevent bullying.



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## **ONGOING FOCUSES AND CHALLENGES**

- Safe and inclusive sport requires relentless commitment and action. We will continue to monitor our culture in the ever-changing landscape of training and competition. We will continue the effective processes and initiatives we have implemented in recent years in addition to being attentive, agile, and responsive to new needs.
- We must continue our focus on culture at all levels of the sport. Our new We All Swim Together initiative provides helpful resources and actionable solutions for use by participants at all levels of our sport.
- Though we have collaborated with many people from our CAS community in recent years, we must continue to increase athlete and alumni engagement. We are proud of our athletes and alumni, and we know they have the passion, skills, and networks to help ensure a bright future for artistic swimming in Canada.
- The financial cost of artistic swimming is a barrier to inclusion and diversity. We are seeking ideas and actions to provide more widespread access to artistic swimming.
- We want to keep our community informed and we will continue to work on communicating frequently and openly about safe, inclusive, and welcoming sport.

# CONCLUSION

We are proud of the work accomplished through the Rise Up initiative and believe that CAS has made many strides in the right direction toward becoming a safer, more inclusive, and more welcoming place for all our participants.

We are tremendously grateful for the passion, engagement, and collaboration offered by so many people over the past four years. There are so many people across the country committed to supporting positive artistic swimming experiences for others – our people are our greatest resource. Thank you to the PTSOs, clubs, officials, coaches, athletes, parents, and volunteers who have inspired us with your actions and supported us in ours.



**THANK YOU**

