



APPLICATION FOR NGB CERTIFICATION

Any sport organization seeking the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee's consideration for certification as a National Governing Body must first submit an application to provide the USOPC with a greater understanding of the sport organization itself, its rationale for becoming an NGB, and whether the sport organization is prepared to fulfill the responsibilities of a NGB as set forth in the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act and the USOPC Bylaws.

Please note that this document is for reference only. Applicants must submit completed applications, including all requested documents, through the USOPC's electronic application portal for an application to be considered.

Section 1: Required Documents

All applicants are required to upload the following documentation to the USOPC's electronic application portal:

1. Bylaws
2. Articles of Incorporation
3. Code(s) of Conduct
4. Complaint/Grievance Procedures
5. Most recent IRS Form 990
6. Most recent audited financial statements with management letter
7. Board of Directors roster with names, term dates, positions (e.g., Board Chair, Vice Chair), and director class (e.g., Athlete Representative, Independent Director, Club Representative) for each director
8. List of committees with a description of each committee's function
9. Board meeting agendas and minutes from the past year
10. Staff organizational chart
11. Organizational chart of local members, clubs, state organizations, regional organizations, etc.
 - We do not own or operate organizations. We serve and support the football landscape at large and provide services to members and those organizations enrolled with USAFB. We do not currently have a regional/state or club structure.
12. Criminal Background Check Policy
13. Athlete Safety Policy
14. Strategic plan, or anticipated strategic plan
15. Financial policies and procedures
 - We have processes we follow but are not formally documented in policy format. We are currently documenting these in a policy manual and they will be presented to our board at the latest in December of 2024.
16. Conflict of Interest Policy
17. Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy

Section 2: Organization Overview

18. Why does your organization want to become an NGB and what benefits can your organization bring to the USOPC and athletes by becoming an NGB?
 - USA Football has been operating as a governing body since 2003 since becoming the sole U.S. member of the International Federation of American Football (IFAF) and set out to strategically

structure USA Football accordingly. Since 2015, we have been recognized by the USOPC as the RSO and operating as such. Athlete safety is and always has been at the forefront of anything we do, create or provide to the football marketplace. USA Football is a mature, established organization that offers standards, best practices, and resources to the football marketplace – from grassroots to adult/elite - with the goal of being a full-service governing body to lead, strengthen and grow FootballFor ALL. The sport of football is fragmented and has benefited from USA Football’s collaborative and service-oriented approach to improving and advancing the sport while making it more sustainable through our innovative health and safety, as well as educational resources that most of the youth football have adopted. An example is our best-in-class Coaching Certification program that has certified over 1.1 million coaches since 2014 and continues to grow.

19. What is the mission statement of your organization?

- To lead, strengthen and grow the sport of football.

20. How many members does your organization have?

- 12,000

21. How many full-time staff members does your organization currently employ?

- 67

22. Do you know of any other national sports organizations in the sport for which your organization is seeking NGB certification?

- USA Flag- not a national sports organization but a flag football tournament operator.

23. What are the key challenges your organization faces in becoming an NGB? What are your plans to address these challenges?

- We have been preparing for this opportunity since USA Football was established. Over the last 18 months we have been finalizing and or updating all requirements necessary to be considered for full national governing body certification.

We don’t foresee any significant challenges at this time outside of educating our membership and others impacted by the new requirements. We have always had strong recommendations around having all adults background checked and anyone in direct contact with minors take abuse prevention, but it is not something we have been able to mandate. This will take a lot of education on the why b/c the additional costs added to these individuals and/or organizations.

We fully intend and expect to work with the USOPC and SafeSport to utilize their training and materials to proactively educate the membership at large but will need support in doing so.

SECTION 3:

Section 3: Governance and Compliance

24. Provide a performance overview of your organization’s board and board committees, using the SWOT model (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

- The USAFB Board and its committees are comprised of athletes, business professionals, medical, child development, and football leaders and stakeholders. To date the board has been successful in advising the organization strategically and ensuring fiduciary responsibilities are met.
 - Strengths:
 - Influential, wide range of voices, committed volunteers, diverse group of candidates
 - Weaknesses:
 - Depth of available, qualified volunteers to fill roles in terms of time and or experience needed
 - Opportunities:
 - Evolution of committee needs and responsibilities as well as deeper engagement

- Threats:
 - Commitment to other obligations, engagement, ability to deliver on expectations i.e. fundraising, time, knowledge

25. Describe management’s authority and strategies for meeting the operating needs of the organization.
- USA Football has a structure that lends itself to ensure operational needs are met and consistently evaluated. Our management structure starts with our CEO and COO and includes the functional area department heads of the business including Finance, HR, IT, Education, National Teams/High Performance, Research, Events, Consulting, Membership, Marketing, Grants and Fundraising.

To ensure we are meeting the organization's operational needs, we have a set business cadence driven by our strategic and financial management process. Strategies in place that ensure we meet operational needs include:

- Annual strategic planning and budget process with monthly review and analysis of progress/metrics
- Annual resource planning that compliments the strategic plan
- All initiatives are documented and tracked in a project management system to ensure transparency and accountability across the organization
- Weekly/bi-weekly team meetings
- Quarterly board reports and meetings

26. How do you ensure consistent and open communication between the organization and the athlete community?

- USA Football has a dedicated athlete services team to support and/or answer any questions necessary from our national team athlete constituency. We ensure they know who their point of contact is and how to contact with any questions/concerns/needs, etc.

27. Describe your organization’s engagement with its current and former athletes. For example, does your organization engage with an Athlete Advisory Council or similar athlete-led group, hold town halls, or provide other opportunities for athletes to engage with the organization?

- We currently do not have an AAC. This is scheduled to be created this Summer/Fall. However, we have consistent communication with our athlete through virtual meetings and/or in-person meetings. In addition, we engage athletes in USAFB activities and opportunities to support their position and role with USAFB.

28. How does your organization plan to evaluate the status of 10 Year Athletes when considering athlete representation requirements?

- We plan to account for all athletes who were members of the U.S. National Team and competed in the following events (facilitated or sanctioned by the International Federation of American Football) while over the age of 18. Please note, USAFB calculates its 10-year requirement for both flag and tackle football participants.

- a. IFAF Flag Football World Championships (2014, 2016, 2018, 2021, 2024)
- b. The World Games – Flag (2022)
- c. IFAF Flag Football Continental Championships (2023)
- d. IFAF Men’s Tackle World Championships (2015)
- e. IFAF U20 Men’s Tackle World Championships (2024)
- f. IFAF Women’s Tackle World Championships (2017, 2022)

Following USA Football’s anticipated inclusion in delegation events, athletes participating in further IFAF recognized events and the Olympic Games will be considered pursuant to USOPC expectations.

Section 4: Financial Standards and Reporting Practices

29. Describe your organization’s funding model and primary revenue sources.

- At present our primary revenue source is NFL Foundation grant funding specific to our administration and operations, this equates to under 50% of our current budget. Plus, the NFL Foundation provides \$1.5 million of pass-through fund for our extensive grants program. Our administration and operations grant provides funding to impact the football marketplace in both Tackle and Flag, by implementing health and safety initiatives, providing education, delivering

innovative participation and standard setting programs (such as our Football Development Model and League Excellence Programs), and providing high-performance development programming under our National Team program.

Other funding sources include Advanced Coach Education Offerings, Organizational Sponsorship, Corporate and/or NGO type Grants, Events, Endowment & Organizational Investment Income, Membership and Fundraising/Donations.

30. Does your organization have an accounting system that can assign expenses by project and provide general ledger details?
- We utilize Sage Intacct, which allows us to define and track based off a number of different dimensions. Not only can we assign expenses by project and provide GL details, but those projects can be broken down further into CostCodes or filtered by customers and vendors. Further, as it is imperative for nonprofits, the system tracks revenues by restriction.
31. Describe your organization's reporting mechanisms for keeping the board current on budgetary matters and the financial stability of your organization.
- We meet with our board at least two times per year in formal meeting settings. In addition, we provide our board with quarterly operation reports to keep them informed on metric and financial progress. We also meet with our finance committee virtually to review the financial health of the organization. At times, there may be scheduled conference calls to bring the board and/or executive committee together to discuss an emerging topic/issue/need.

Section 5: Athlete Protection and Rights

32. How does your organization plan to comply with applicable anti-doping rules, policies, and procedures?
- As a member of IFAF, USA Football is bound by IFAF's Clean Sport and Anti-Doping Rules. These policies were adopted on January 1, 2021, and are compliant with the World Anti-Doping Code.
- IFAF Clean Sport - <https://americanfootball.sport/clean-sport/anti-doping-regulations/>
- <https://americanfootball.sport/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2021-IFAF-Anti-Doping-Rules-BG.pdf>

USA Football often works with United States Anti-Doping Agency for educated members of our U.S. National Team annually prior to participating in IFAF competition. This includes a comprehensive review of the Prohibited Substances List and Therapeutic Use Exemption ("TUE") submission.

33. How does your organization plan to comply with applicable US Center for SafeSport requirements and USOPC athlete safety policies?
- We currently follow the SafeSport protocols as listed on our website. The only difference now is that SafeSport does not support us when we report allegations due to not being certified yet.

Section 6: Sport Performance

34. Describe your organization's high performance program and high performance planning process. If you have a high performance plan, please share it here.
- In anticipation of the USOPC high performance process, USA Football drafted its first High Performance Plan (HPP) in 2022. The plan was reviewed and approved by the USA Football Board of Directors in December 2022, then again in December 2023. The HPP is drafted and maintained by the USA Football High Performance staff and overseen by the High Performance Committee. The HPP is reviewed annually by the Committee before being presented to the Board for approval.

USA Football's high performance program is built upon the mission to "develop the world's best athlete support system and performance pathway that will develop and sustain competitive excellence domestically, internationally, and at the Olympic Games" and breaks down USA Football's strategic initiatives across six performance pillars. These pillars share alignment with those of the USOPC; (1)

Athletes, (2) Coaches, (3) Training, (4) Competition, (5) Leadership; and (6) Culture. We aim to revisit the HPP as part of the upcoming 2025-28 Olympic Quadrennial.

35. If you hold a national championship for your sport, please explain the structure and the number of participants.

- USA Football operates “The One”; an annual non-scholastic flag football tournament. The One is the culminating event of the competitive season which including Regional Qualification Tournaments and Sanctioned Tournaments. In 2023, The One was hosted in Charlotte, NC at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. The event garnered participation from over 100 teams at 10u through adult divisions. In July 2024, The One will occur in Los Angeles, CA.

- The One Website - https://usafootball.com/tournaments-events/the-one-flag-championship?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwgdAyBhBQEiwAXhMxtijSorW3CYhmmKkfkAq6Sn_QFfkHIVDMeCkiRmWWLE8QueOp8GXTXR0CvUwQAvD_BwE

36. Do you have a national team? If so, describe your current method for selecting athletes for the national team.

- As a member of IFAF, USA Football is the sole operator of the U.S. National Team. The U.S. National Team competes in IFAF-sanctioned competition for flag and tackle football.

For flag football specifically, USA Football operates adult and junior flag national teams. In 2024, USA Football finalized its team and staff selection procedures for 2024 competition; this included the 2024 IFAF World Flag Championships for the adult national teams and the 2024 Junior International Cup for the 15u/17u Junior National Teams. Consistent with USOPC expectations, USA Football will draft and publish selection procedures for each individual international competition or “delegation event” leading to the 2028 Olympic Games.

37. What activities and programs do you support to help grow and promote your sport?

- In 2024, USA Football launched its National Team Development Program for flag (NTDP). The objective of the NTDP is to develop the next generation of elite flag football athletes and coaches to strengthen the U.S. National Team pipeline for future international competition. Currently, the NTDP includes regional Talent Identification and Development Camps feeding into a national NTDP championship (“USA Football Select Bowl”) showcasing the best flag athletes at the 12u, 14u, 16u, and 20u age groups. The Select Bowl will occur July 9-12, 2024, in Los Angeles. In its initial year, USA Football engaged over 1200 flag football athletes through its NTDP offerings.

Moving into 2025, and beyond, USA Football will expand its NTDP offerings to more locations nationally. In addition, USA Football will leverage the progressive development approach found in the Football Development Model (FDM) to link its curriculum, resources and offerings to its process to identify and develop flag football talent (specifically to 5v5 flag) domestically.

38. What is the name of the organization that is the international federation (IF) of the Olympic and/or Paralympic sport?

- International Federation of American Football (IFAF)

39. Does that IF recognize your organization as the national federation in the U.S. for your sport? If not, please indicate what organization is recognized, if any.

- Yes- We are the sole member in the U.S.

Section 7: Operational Performance

40. Detail your organization’s strategic objectives over the last four years and their achievement status.

- Our core strategic objective from the last four years include:
 - Make football organizations better:
 - Facilitate and grow opportunities for athletes
 - Remove and decrease barriers to participation
 - Foster the sports growth development

- Grow and diversify revenue
 - Achievements:
 - We have experienced a 44% increase in organization enrollments dedicated to implementing the Football Development Model
 - We have experienced a 71% increase in our League Excellence Program eligible organizations
 - We have certified more than 1.1+M coaches, averaging 100K coaches annually
 - We have awarded \$5.5M in grants across the US to football organization
 - We continue to be the leader in International flag football competition
 - We have delivered over 35+ community/grassroots events ranging from clinics to football festivals to inspire participation
 - We have launched a philanthropic strategy to work towards securing additional revenue sources in support of our key initiatives
 - We have launched a grant and kits to encourage the start of female flag football programs which has impacted over 25K athletes
 - We are currently working on co-submitting an emerging application for NCAA to sanction flag football.
41. Do you have a mechanism to provide for anonymous or confidential reporting?
- We use incognito for staff to report anonymously. We also have a help desk ticket system and abuse@usafootball.com email address available for reporting. In addition, see whistleblower policy.
42. Describe common complaint or reporting themes and how your organization has addressed the concerns.
- We have not received many complaints re: our policies. However, we do receive abuse allegations which we follow the SafeSport reporting process.
43. What actions does your organization take to encourage participation and inclusion in your sport for members of diverse and/or underrepresented groups and communities?
- Youth Outreach Programs: USA Football has youth programs, The Blitz Series, that engage with diverse communities and introduce them to the sport. The events are free of charge and can involve free clinics, workshops, or demonstrations in communities as a part of our annual event plan.
 - Diverse Representation: Ensuring diversity among coaches, officials, and administrators sends a powerful message of inclusivity. USA Football ensures that when filling committees, staff roles/vacancies and selecting coaches that individual of various backgrounds, regions and underrepresented groups are included.
 - Financial Assistance: USA Football prides itself on our annual grant program, which provides grants for equipment and resources to support the sustainability of football organizations. The grant program prioritizes organizations from low income and underrepresented areas. USA Football is looking forward to expanding the program in the future to provide athlete scholarships and subsidized memberships to help reduce financial barriers to participation for individuals from low-income backgrounds.
 - Cultural Competence Training: USA Football has a contract with a premier education provider to provide coaches, staff, and volunteers cultural sensitivity and inclusivity training. USA Football fosters an environment where everyone feels respected and valued. We pride ourselves on creating a team where individuals can comfortably express their perspectives without fear of discrimination.
 - Accessible Facilities: USA Football ensures venues and facilities are wheelchair-accessible and accommodating to individuals with disabilities.
 - Language Accessibility: The USA Football coach education team has translated the league operations guide, player progressions guide and practice plans to Spanish. We are exploring options for translation services for additional resources and languages in the future. Additionally, all of the videos in our coach certification courses have closed captioning in to support the hearing and visually impaired.
 - Anti-Discrimination Policies: USA Football has clear policies against discrimination and harassment, along with mechanisms for reporting and addressing complaints. Our goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment for all staff, members, athletes, coaches and volunteers.

- Celebrating Diversity: USA Football’s DEI working group regularly organizes events or initiatives that celebrate the cultural diversity within USA Football and the USA Football membership. Our team strives to provide staff with engaging educational opportunities and to support open dialogue among staff. We acknowledge individual identities within our team and strive to foster empathy and understanding across all of our staff members and departments.
- Feedback Mechanisms: Our internal research team works to gain feedback from members, particularly those from underrepresented groups, to help identify areas for improvement and ensure that initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion are effective.

Other

44. Do you anticipate asking for any exceptions to the NGB Compliance Standards or to any of the athlete representation requirements?
 - Not at the time of application submission.
45. Upload any additional documents you feel are relevant to your application.