

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024



USA
FENCING



USA
PARAFENCING

Dear Fencing Family,

As we stand at the threshold of a new era for USA Fencing, I'm thrilled to share our road map for the journey ahead – a journey that focuses on serving our members, and exponential growth and innovation – cherishing the same spark that led Lee Kiefer OLY to Olympic gold and Eli Dershwitz OLY to the pinnacle of men's saber.

This isn't just a strategic plan; it's our collective dream sketched out on paper – one that's been shaped by voices from across our vibrant community, from our Board of Directors (who own this plan), right to our grassroots members. It's about honoring our heritage and simultaneously leaping toward new heights of success and inclusion.

Think of what we've achieved when we've dared to chase the seemingly impossible. Now, let's dream bigger. This blueprint is an invitation to you all – athletes, coaches, officials, families and fans – to forge a rich future. It's a challenge to push past limits as we grow and thrive together.

We're one USA Fencing, one passionate group of people willing to improve this sport, this NGB, one point at a time.

What will the next chapter hold? That's for our community to decide, and for the world to watch in wonder.

Yours sincerely,
Phil Andrews
CEO, USA Fencing





MISSION

MISSION of USA FENCING

To grow and promote the sport of fencing in the United States, honor its rich traditions, and achieve sustained competitive international excellence.

VISION of USA FENCING

To inspire a lifetime enriched by fencing.

STRATEGIC PLAN

As we navigate a period of change in the sport landscape, we are committed to a strategic path defined by unwavering allegiance to our mission, respect for our history (yet a desire for change), a relentless pursuit of sustained growth, and service excellence on and off of the strip — underpinned by service to our membership.

The 2024-2028 USA Fencing Strategic Plan was developed with extensive input from diverse stakeholder groups across our community, including the first opportunity for our entire membership to contribute. The plan reflects how we jointly see our priority items for the next few years. Together, we have charted a path that resonates with our shared values and vision for our future.

Our strategic plan does not take away from issues that have become a matter of day-to-day excellence for our organization — for example, our delivery of the largest combined Olympic and Paralympic sport series in the world (the NAC series), our commitment to DEIB, our focus on fairness, our attention to member safety, and our renewed dedication to service of the membership (to name but a few).

This plan is intentionally focused on growth, transformation, and excellence to impact our sport through the following priorities:

BRAND AWARENESS & REVENUE GROWTH - Increase visibility to drive brand value, grow revenue in order to support programs and build financial stability.

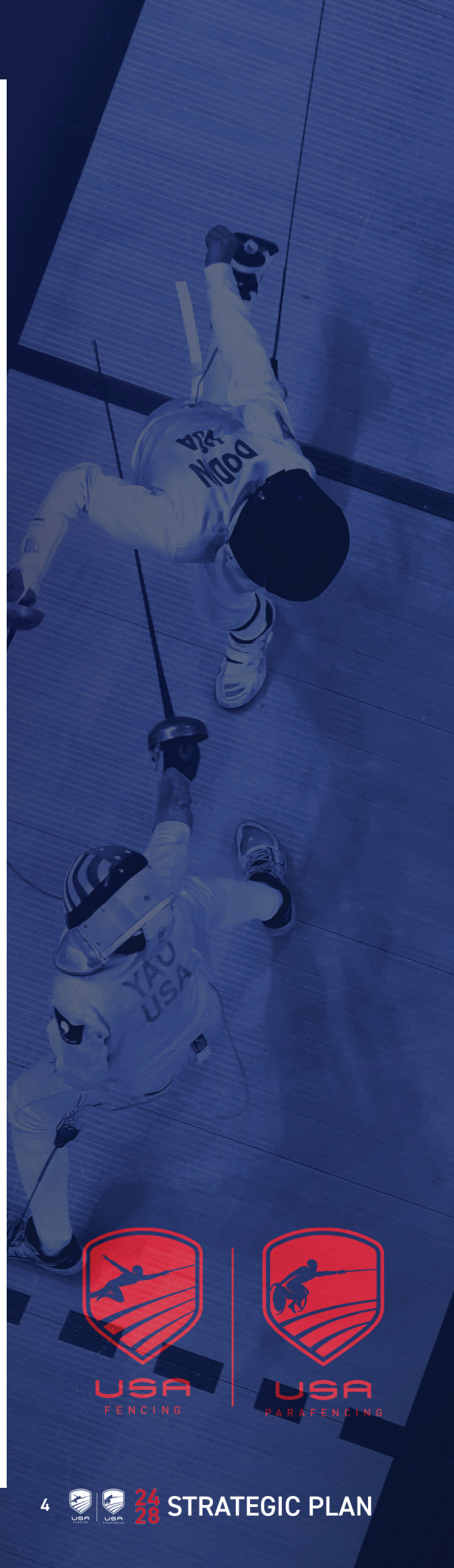
SPORT EXCELLENCE - Advance fencing through competitive excellence on the field of play, delivered through outstanding experiences for athletes, coaches, referees, armorers, families, cadre and spectators.

PARAFENCING ADVANCEMENT - Invest resources and implement best practices to elevate Parafencing and foster belonging across the community.

SPORT GROWTH - Increase participation and impact to drive lifelong engagement through our sport.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS - Improve organizational capabilities to build trust with stakeholders and achieve the mission of USA Fencing.

As a united fencing community, we will embrace these priorities and work tirelessly toward a future where the sport of fencing thrives and inspires, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.



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BRAND AWARENESS & REVENUE GROWTH

Increase visibility to drive brand value, drive new fencers to clubs and grow revenue in order to support programs and build financial stability.

BRAND VALUE - Leverage the power of data to understand the value of our brand and identify, inclusive of the intellectual and leadership skills grown by fencing, to new marketplaces as opportunities to increase and diversify revenue, while ensuring to continue to engage our existing loyal fencing membership.

SPORT AWARENESS - Establish new media platforms to raise awareness in both general and niche media and distribute content widely across channels to enhance national and regional presence, drive revenue and attract potential athletes to clubs, including using alternate and unusual media opportunities.

CREATIVE REVENUE BUILDING - Identify opportunities to diversify revenue streams and increase financial health, with a particular focus on outside or new revenue, not derived from events or membership.

CULTURE OF GIVING - In partnership with the U.S. Fencing Foundation, grow philanthropic support at all donor levels by creating compelling fund options and presenting a coordinated message on the impact of giving.

CULTURE OF SERVICE & BELONGING - By building a culture of service, drive more belonging to the organization and, as a result, increase brand value and member retention during a lifetime of fencing.

Any criteria above are by 2028, unless otherwise stated.



HEADLINES

- USA Fencing raises revenue by 5% or more per year.
- USA Fencing raises the profile of the sport to a Top 8 sport by media value among Olympic and Paralympic sports.

SUPPORTING METRICS

- Increase overall revenue by minimum 5% each year.
- Increase outside revenue to \$750,000 per year.
- Minimum 5% of revenue from new sources.
- Minimum 20% of revenue from sources other than National events and Membership income.
- Increase the number of followers on social media by 100%.
- Increase earned media value of fencing by 100%.
- Grow Membership to 70,000 members / 700 clubs by 2028.

SPORTS EXCELLENCE

Advance fencing through competitive excellence on the field of play delivered through outstanding experiences for athletes, coaches, referees, armorers, families, cadre and spectators.

COMPETITION STRUCTURES - Evaluate athlete rating and tournament structures to reduce complexity in the system and provide greater opportunities to athletes, and enhance our local event offerings and growth.

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT - Restructure the referee development program to attract, develop and grow the pool while ensuring a consistent judging experience for athletes through feedback and performance measurement opportunities for existing officials.

MEMBER PATHWAYS - Identify and implement development and educational pathways for all members (athletes, coaches, armorers, bout committee, sports medicine, referees and other key groups) to support holistic development for fencing, in utilizing our strategic partnerships with the USFCA and other industry partners to provide optional pathways for members, while ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements is completed.

COMPETITIVE EXCELLENCE - Strengthen the high-performance pipeline and deploy resources to increase the number of competitive athletes funded to appropriate events; increase athlete resources and provide a focus specifically on events where the USA has not medaled in a long time.

MEMBERSHIP RETENTION - Explore and define the reasons why USA Fencing athletes, coaches, referees leave the sport using a data-driven approach to identify and resolve retention issues.

Any criteria above are by 2028, unless otherwise stated.



HEADLINES

- Membership retention raises 5%.
- USA is Top 4 nation in medal count across FIE events.
- 30% raise in local event participation, measured by total entries.

SUPPORTING METRICS

- Implementation of a refreshed points, ratings and rankings structure encompassing every level of the sport.
- 30% rise in local event participation, measured by total entries.
- 30% rise in local event sanctioning.
- 5% rise in membership retention.
- USA is a Top 6 ranked team at every age group, every weapon for able-bodied sport.
- USA has a Top 16 ranked individual at every senior world ranking category.
- Increase the number of nationally rated referees by 10%.
- Increase the lesser represented gender of referees to 40%.
- Athlete funding is expanded to 6 athletes per weapon per gender by 2028.
- USA Fencing wins at least one medal per weapon at the World Championships or Olympic Games.



PARAFENCING ADVANCEMENT

Invest resources and implement best practices to elevate para-fencing and foster belonging across the community.

PARAFENCING PARTICIPATION - Increase recruitment of athletes, coaches, classifiers and referees and provide greater access to equipment and facilities to drive participation in para-fencing.

PARAFENCING SYSTEMS - Implement a classification structure (fencing and disability) to establish appropriate governance for the sport.

ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT - Support athlete development by initiating Para-fencing pipeline while providing education to coaches, referees and other members of the cadre.

REPRESENTATION & AWARENESS - Actively promote para-fencing and pursue equitable representation of para-fencing voices to drive awareness across the community.

Any criteria above are by 2028, unless otherwise stated.



HEADLINES

- Para-fencing athlete participation increased by 100%.

SUPPORTING METRICS

- Increase the number of para-fencing athletes by 100%.
- Increase the number of para-fencing referees by 50%.
- Increase the number of para-fencing coaches who have coached an international athlete by 50%.
- Win at least one World Cup, World Championship or Paralympic Games medal.
- Team USA wins at least one team medal in the quadrennial.
- Increase para-fencing representation in decision-making committees (i.e. financial and governance-related committees) to 20%.
- Implementation of a para-fencing rating system and classification structure (fencing and disability).

SPORTS GROWTH

Increase participation and impact to drive lifelong engagement through our sport.

FIGHTING FOR FENCING - Strengthen NCAA relationships and increase collegiate programs, inclusive of club programs, to protect the pipeline and secure the future for our sport.

FOCUSED GROWTH - Grow fencing through opportunities, programs, and resources focused on driving participation for women, post-collegiate athletes, veteran fencing and underserved and diverse communities in order that USA Fencing more broadly reflects the society, including a focus on beginner and introductory coaching and participation programs.

PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY NETWORK - Develop mutually beneficial relationships within our community and with strategic partners to maximize participation, expand athlete resources, and grow expertise within our sport.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT - Provide information and resources to engage parents with our sport and foster sustained participation for their athletes, and provide opportunities for parents' feedback to be meaningfully understood in decision making, particularly as far as decisions that affect the parent, such as scheduling.

EMBRACING VOLUNTEERISM - Through delivering outstanding service to our community, foster a culture of belonging to increase the network of volunteers who are committed to giving back to the sport of fencing.

Any criteria above are by 2028, unless otherwise stated.



TARGET OUTCOMES

HEADLINES

- The NCAA pipeline is strengthened, through additional programs.
- Parent satisfaction and voice increased.
- More than 1,000 people exposed to fencing through outreach activities.

SUPPORTING METRICS

- 5 additional NCAA Programs by 2028, inclusive of at least two HBCUs.
- Demonstration para event at the NCAA Championships.
- Women's NCAA Championship by 2028.
- USA Fencing or NCAA hosted Para College Championship by 2028.
- USA Fencing or NCAA hosted College Division III Championship by 2028.
- Increase % of member numbers for women to 50%.
- Reduce attrition of NCAA college athlete participation by 10%.
- 25% of parents are members of USA Fencing.
- Parent pulse survey measurement of parent satisfaction at 80% or higher.
- Expose more than 1,000 people per year through outreach activities.
- Increase % of POC in USA Fencing membership to reflect societal average.
- Increase % of USA Fencing coach members in the lesser represented gender to 30%.
- Increased satisfaction/engagement scores from member surveys, above 80%.
- 75% or greater of USA Fencing Leadership Academy graduates in committee or board positions.



ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Improve organizational capabilities to foster responsible growth, build trust with stakeholders and achieve the mission of USA Fencing.

CREATIVE COST REDUCTION - Identify and implement innovative solutions to reduce expenses, optimize operations and reallocate resources. Establishing a culture of cost-consciousness throughout the organization by encouraging all employees and Board members to contribute cost-saving ideas and practices. Sustainable cost-reduction measurement will be continuously assessed and adapted to changing market conditions and business needs.

DATA & TECHNOLOGY CAPABILITIES - Leverage technology and integrate analytics and automation across the business, and performance, to support more informed decisions based on data-driven insights.

LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT - Foster open dialogue between leaders, both in the organization and in the community, to effectively implement strategic priorities and operational initiatives while supporting positive change outcomes for our community, using world-leading change management.

MEMBER SAFETY - A continuation of focus on creating a safe and positive environment for members to practice their sport of choice and holding those who do not meet those community standards accountable.

CONTINUED EXCELLENCE - While our plan focuses on what USA Fencing needs to do beyond what it does today, keeping USA Fencing's focus on growth does not harm our ability to deliver our core competencies that exist as of 2023, including Internal Communications, DEIB, Elite High Performance and Membership service.

A CULTURE OF SERVICE - Ensuring that USA Fencing becomes seen as a service organization to its members rather than a governmental organization, winning loyalty via collaboration and performance.

Any criteria above are by 2028, unless otherwise stated.



TARGET OUTCOMES

HEADLINES

- USA Fencing runs at a 4-year surplus.
- USA Fencing consistently delivers 80% or higher member satisfaction.

SUPPORTING METRICS

- Reduced overall expenses by 5% on like-for-like expenses, inflation adjusted.
- Cost budget variances do not exceed 10% per functional area of USA Fencing.
- Reduce the negative reserve balance to zero.
- Data dashboards created and reported in each area of the business.
- Click rates for Data Measurables above 50% of staff/board, 5% of membership.
- Change Management certification earned by 100% of senior leaders (staff and board)
- Average time for response to safety issues under 90 days.
- Less than 10% overturned decisions of USA Fencing panels.
- Response rates to members under 1 working day.

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