

Athlete Voice Group

Terms of Reference

1. Background

- 1.1. Safe Sport International is an independent, evidence-led global organisation advancing safeguarding in sport through developing standards, connecting the global community, and strengthening organisational safeguards.
- 1.2. The Athlete Voice Group provides expert input strengthening SSI's influencing, standards, events, and knowledge mobilisation work.

2. Purpose of the Athlete Voice Group

- 2.1. To provide a place for individuals dedicated to advocating for safe and inclusive athlete experiences in sport to connect and collectively amplify athlete voices for safe sport.
- 2.2. To offer a safe and caring space for athletes who may have experienced abuse in sport to share insights, experiences where they choose to, and support one another with compassion.
- 2.3. To provide development support and mentorship for members, strengthening their contribution to the Athlete Voice Group and SSI's wider work.

3. Outputs of the Athlete Voice Group

- 3.1. Contribute at least one annual recommendation note, blog or paper on how athlete voices and lived experiences can be incorporated into an aspect of safe sport standards, learning or practice.
- 3.2. Contribute, as a collective Committee output, to at least two SSI events each year, including conferences or Safe Sport Connect events.
- 3.3. Provide support to the development of SSI learning resources, guidance or research.
- 3.4. Provide safe, well-facilitated peer discussion sessions for Group members.
- 3.5. Provide opportunities for collective learning and development for Group members.



4. Constitution

4.1. The SSI Athlete Voice Group is a Working Group of Safe Sport International and is accountable to the CEO and SSI Board of Trustees. Its activities operate within SSI's governance framework, while preserving the athlete-led and lived-experience informed independence of its advice and recommendations.

5. Membership

5.1. Suitability

- i) Experience as an advocate for safe and inclusive athlete experiences in sport and/or a desire to contribute to the Group's purpose and amplify athlete voices.
- ii) Commitment to creating a safe, caring and respectful space for athletes to connect and be heard, without pressure on others to share personal experiences.
- iii) Willingness to work respectfully with athletes from different sports, cultures, regions and lived experiences.
- iv) Capacity to participate in meetings, review materials and support agreed outputs within clear role boundaries.
- v) Commitment to SSI's values of inclusion, equity, independence, person-centred and trauma-informed practice and global collaboration.
- vi) Members must not have been, or currently be, subject to current sanctions for interpersonal harm, or be awaiting the resolution of allegations relating to interpersonal harm.

5.2. Group Size and Representation

- i) The Group should normally include 12-16 members to allow meaningful discussion, trust-building and practical contribution.
- ii) Members should reflect a broad mix of:
 - (1) Experience of advocating for athletes.
 - (2) Sport, geography, culture, gender, disability, age, and race.
 - (3) Experiences of safeguarding systems, including prevention, recognition, reporting, response, remedy and recovery.
- iii) Representation will be reviewed regularly to ensure the Group remains relevant, inclusive and aligned with SSI's global mission.

5.3. Recruitment and Appointment

- i) Advertising and recruitment for new members shall follow the SSI Safer Recruitment Policy.



- ii) Prospective members will be interviewed by the Athlete Voice Group Chair or nominated representative, provide a suitable reference, and agree to the SSI Volunteer Agreement and SSI Code of Conduct.
- iii) Members are appointed by SSI, following recommendation by the Athlete Voice Group Chair and review by CEO.
- iv) Membership is unpaid. Agreed expenses will be reimbursed in line with SSI Expenses Policy and Athlete Voice Engagement and Remuneration Policy.

5.4. Term of Appointment

- i) Letter of appointment to the Group to be issued by the CEO.
- ii) Appointments are for an initial term of two years, renewable on an ongoing basis by mutual agreement.
- iii) SSI may end membership where a member is unable to regularly contribute to the work of the Group, has a material conflict of interest, or acts in a way inconsistent with SSI's values or SSI Code of Conduct.

6. Meetings

6.1. Chairperson

- i) Meetings will be chaired by the Athlete Voice Group Chair or their nominated representative.
- ii) The Athlete Voice Group Chair will be elected by the members of the Group from within the Group. The CEO will co-ordinate this process for the Group.
- iii) The Chair will normally serve an initial term of three years, to be reviewed after 2 years. The Chair may stand for re-election for further term(s).
- iv) Rotation of the Chair role can support shared leadership, continuity and opportunities for wider member participation.
- v) Vice-Chair(s) may be elected from the Committee membership to provide continuity, share the workload, deputise for the Chair when needed, and support succession planning.

6.2. Frequency of Meetings

- i) Meetings shall normally be held six times each year using Teams.
- ii) Meetings will normally be held in English. Reasonable adjustments can be made to meet individual language needs.
- iii) Meeting dates and times will be circulated at the start of each year and will be rotated through time zones as appropriate.
- iv) Agendas will be prepared by the Chair or their nominated representative and circulated not less than 48 hours in advance of meetings.
- v) Additional meetings may be arranged for members to work on specific tasks or projects.



6.3. Record Keeping

- i) Meeting notes that include decisions taken and actions agreed to will be taken by a designated Group member and posted in Teams following meetings.
- ii) Microsoft Copilot may be used to assist in the preparation of meeting notes.

6.4. Decision Making

- i) The decision-making quorum is 1/3 the total number of Group members (rounded up).
- ii) Decisions shall usually be taken by a simple majority vote at online or in-person meetings or by email.
- iii) Members should declare any conflicts of interest at the appropriate time and remove themselves from any decision making on that matter.

6.5. Meeting Attendance and Contribution

- i) Members are expected to attend meetings and contribute to Group activities.
- ii) If a member misses three consecutive meetings without explanation or demonstrates limited engagement with Committee activities, the Chair will discuss with the member whether continued membership remains appropriate.

7. Representation

7.1. The Chair of the Athlete Voice Group or their nominated representative shall represent the Group as a member of the SSI Advisory Council.

8. Resources

8.1. Funding:

- i) Where possible SSI will provide a small annual operating budget to the Group.
- ii) The Athlete Voice Group will manage any budget with oversight from the CEO.
- iii) The CEO will support the Group when seeking external funding for projects or initiatives.

8.2. File Storage:

- i) The Athlete Voice Group will have a dedicated communication and file storage area in SSI Microsoft Teams.
- ii) Current members will be able to access the Athlete Voice Group area in Microsoft Teams using an email address provided by each member.

9. Dissolution

9.1. The SSI Athlete Voice Group may be dissolved by the SSI Trustee Board following discussion with Group members and under any one of the following circumstances:



- i) A decision has been taken at a meeting of the SSI Athlete Voice Group to cease its activities.
- ii) No members come forward to convene the Group.
- iii) The Group has materially failed to operate in accordance with these Terms of Reference.



VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Changes since previous version
June 2024	V1	Initial version created by the Athlete Voice Group, approved by the SSI Trustee Board 12 th August 2024
August 2026	V2	Updates to purpose, outputs, membership, meetings, chair appointment. Reformatting to align with SSI rebranding.