



KURT FEARNLEY SCHOLARSHIPS 2025-2026

1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Commonwealth Games Australia (CGA), the Carbine Club of NSW (CCNSW) and the NSW Institute of Sport (NSWIS) have again joined forces to create an individual athlete scholarship program for NSW future talent para-sport athletes for the period leading to the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games (G2026) in July 2026.

Named for one of Australia's most accomplished Paralympic and Commonwealth Games athletes, Kurt Fearnley Scholarships (KFS) support athletes to gain membership of a sport's high performance program post scholarship, ultimately "fast tracking" their development to achieve success at G2026 or subsequent Commonwealth Games. Pre-elite para-athletes are also eligible to apply where it can be demonstrated a KFS can supplement high-performance support already received.

During the lead up to G2026, there will be a single intake for the KFS program, being from March 2025 to July 2026 (full scholarships).

KFS support will be individualised to the athlete and can include financial assistance, individual athlete performance planning, training assistance, competition opportunities at the domestic/international levels, customised sport equipment and where necessary classification confirmation.

For each intake, KFS will support up to five (5) talented NSW para-athletes who currently receive no or limited support and show outstanding potential for future success in identified G2026 para-sport events in the sports of athletics, basketball, cycling track, bowls, powerlifting, and swimming.

Scholarships are by application (see electronic application form). Applications require endorsement from the relevant CGA G2026 program sport member – National Sports Organisation (NSO) – who will prioritise multiple applications. Scholarships will be approved via a Panel made up of representatives of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), Paralympics Australia (PA) and CGA, based on selection guidelines (below) and will be monitored through NSWIS to maximise performance impact.

CGA, CCNSW and NSWIS have committed their support to KFS until 2026.

2. ATHLETE BENEFITS

KFS recipients will be provided with:

- i. Financial support up to \$5000 (plus GST) per intake based on Individual Athlete Performance Plans and athlete requirements;
- ii. NSWIS service support up to \$1000 (value in kind) including assistance with individual athlete performance planning;
- iii. Monitoring and access to agreed NSWIS facilities at supervised times; and
- iv. Engagement and mentoring opportunities with Kurt Fearnley.

KFS recipients can access these benefits within the defined intake period.



3. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

An athlete must have the endorsement of their relevant NSO and meet the following criteria:

- i. Reside within NSW.
- ii. Compete in 2026 Commonwealth Games para-sport event.
- iii. Preferably nationally categorised as an Emerging, Developing or Podium Potential athlete.
- iv. Be registered and affiliated with the recognised state body of their chosen sport in NSW; and
- v. Be eligible for Commonwealth Games selection for Australia.

4. SELECTION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines will be used to assess each application:

- i. Athlete past performance and achievements from targeted competitions. Targeted competitions may include benchmark events, National Championships or sports specific targeted event recognised by the AIS.
- ii. Athletes current forecast performance projection; and
- iii. The athlete's personal behaviour alignment in pursuit of high-performance outcomes.

As total funding is limited, applications will be prioritised on a top-down approach aligned with CGA's G2026 performance goals, these being to be the No. 1 nation in gold medals, overall medals, medallists and sports to medal.

5. EXPECTATIONS

KFS recipients are expected to:

- i. Be selected in their sport's high-performance program the following or subsequent year;
- ii. Be committed and prepared to work toward representing their sport at a Commonwealth Games;
- iii. Be committed to a holistic approach to their development as an athlete;
- iv. Not use performance enhancing drugs;
- v. Behave in a professional and dignified manner when representing their sport;
- vi. Comply with the training requirements of their sport and NSWIS as prescribed by nominated coaching staff;
- vii. Provide progress and performance updates following key competitions;
- viii. As a minimum, regularly update availability for planned training through NSWIS Athlete Management System (AMS); and

Be available to assist CGA, CCNSW and NSWIS with promotional activities regarding the scholarship.

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