
USA Fencing 2021-2024 Strategic Plan



USA
FENCING



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.

Our Shared Vision and Core Values

VISION

*TO INSPIRE A LIFETIME ENRICHED BY
FENCING*

CORE VALUES

- *Excellence*
- *Respect*
- *Teamwork*
- *Inclusion*
- *Passion*

Business Objectives Overview

Current Objectives 2017-2020

1. Grow and Promote the Sport of Fencing
2. Improve Sports Performance
3. Generate Sustainable Revenue from Internal and External Sources
4. Optimize Qualification and Tournament Process
5. Optimize Leadership/Operational Effectiveness
6. Achieve /Maintain Financial Solvency, Stability & Sustainability
7. Transform Culture of Fencing Leadership and Governance
8. Refine Organizational Structure of Fencing in the US

Proposed Objectives 2021-2024

1. Grow the Sport of Fencing
2. Sustain a High Level of Sports Performance
3. Foster a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Culture that Reflects DEI and our Core Values
4. Advance Athlete and Membership Wellness
5. Aggressively Market and Promote the Sport of Fencing
6. Optimize Leadership/Operational Effectiveness

Rationale and Summary of Changes

Critical Landscape Drivers

1. Congressional, USOPC, CSS, requirements exponentially growing with significant consequences:
 - Audits, Increased compliance requirements
2. Professional, standard certifications more in demand; a must for maintaining quality as we scale
3. Ensure USA Fencing stability allowing aspirational growth

No Changes

- Mission
- Vision
- Core Values

Changes

Objectives:

- consolidated 3, 4, 5
- added Wellness Objective

Priority Initiatives 2021-2024

- Athlete Education and Support Structure
- Coaching Development/Education
- Referee Development/Education
- Marketing: Internal and External
 - Diversify revenue
 - Membership growth – clubs, individuals, collegiate growth
- Succession Strategy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts
- Organizational Enhancement
 - Regional representation/Club support

Objective 1: Grow the Sport of Fencing

Initiatives

- Athlete Education and Support Structure
- Coaching Development/Education
- Referee Development/Education
- Marketing: Internal and External
 - Diversify revenue
 - Membership growth – clubs, individuals, collegiate growth
- Organizational Structure
 - Regional representation/club support

Metrics

- Optimize tournament experience and qualification process for all athletes
- Expand DEI and marketing efforts to include efforts to grow underrepresented groups and Parafencing program
- Set and achieve annual development goals for coaches, referees, armorers and other officials
- Lead the sport of fencing in exploring innovative technology options
- Provide additional support at the regional, division and club level to enhance growth
- Expand collegiate initiatives

Objective 2: Sustain a High Level of Sports Performance

Initiatives

- Athlete Education and Support Structure
- Coaching Development/Education
- Referee Development/Education
- Succession Strategy

Metrics

- Set and achieve qualification and medal goals for each year/quad
- Obtain appropriate tier level within USOPC system securing optimal funds from USOPC
- Review and refresh goals for hosting international events in the US with 10 year plan
- Development and succession planning for national coaches and international level referees
- Set and achieve goals for US members in key International positions; include succession plan for key positions

Objective 3: Foster a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Culture that Reflects Our Core Values

Initiatives

- Athlete Education and Support Structure
- Coaching Development/Education
- Referee Development/Education
- Succession Strategy
- Organizational Structure

Metrics

- Identify and secure consultant to assist with DEI efforts
- Finalize DEI Resource Team to work directly with Board and staff to create leading program considering the following:
 - Provide continued communication on education resources and best practices towards building a ethnically diverse membership
 - Explore DEI education and potential membership requirements
 - Support membership groups to build community for underrepresented populations
 - Establish new athlete recruitment initiatives
- Include core values across all platforms and program elements
- Clear standards and expectations on ethics and behavior across all constituent groups
- Recognition programs for athletes and members embodying core values

Objective 4: Advance Athlete and Membership Wellness

Initiatives

- Athlete Support Structure
- Incorporate wellness into all educational programs

Metrics

- Athlete and Member SafeSport program that exceeds compliance and audit requirements and recommendations
- Clean Sport (anti-doping) education to athletes and members at all levels
- Create strong DEI initiatives
- Implement American Development Model across all areas of organization
- Ensure mental health education and support options are included across all education platforms
- Yearly review of injury and other health/wellness issues with plan to reduce risks
- Develop a comprehensive national team athlete support services program to include athlete resources, funding, retirement transition and recognition

Objective 5: Aggressively Market and Promote the Sport of Fencing

Initiatives

- Marketing: Internal and External
 - Diversify revenue
 - Membership growth – clubs, individuals, collegiate growth
- Organizational Structure
 - Regional Focus
 - Club support

Metrics

- Set and hit annual targets and established profit margins for:
 - Sponsorship
 - Donor
 - Licensing
 - Club and membership growth
 - Tournament revenue – all levels
 - Education revenue
- Provide clubs and divisions with updated marketing tools on an annual basis
- Achieve media exposure and social media impact goals at all levels
- Create and implement a yearly storytelling plan
- Explore opportunities to partner with national and/or regional organizations to expand reach of sport
- Achieve IT goals to enhance operations and gather additional data

Objective 6: Optimize Leadership/Operational Effectiveness

Initiatives

- Organizational structure
 - Regional involvement
 - Club support
- Succession Strategy

Metrics

- Clear operating principles, guidelines and bylaws for all constituent groups including board and staff
 - Ability to obtain agreement between leaders on key issues
- Successfully meet or exceed all compliance and certification standards
- Maintain financial stability and sustainability
 - Effective budget process to include targets for financial reserve and multi-year budget plan
 - Perform and pass rigorous high-quality financial audit
 - Assessment tool for new costs/initiatives, aligned with priorities
- Implement risk management plan for organization at all levels
- Enhance relationship with US Fencing Foundation
- Strengthen region, division and club support
- Create robust athlete, volunteer and staff engagement plans to include onboarding, leadership and professional development and succession planning

Coaching Development/Education

- Unified Association for Coaches (including connection to NCAA coaching association coaches)
- Establish a Coaching Commission or Council (education, certification and continuing education)
- Succession Strategy
- SafeSport evolution and continual communications
- Staff positions filled

Referee Development/Education

- Better alignment between the operations of the National Office and the Commission
- Bring professional staff members to assist with the Referee community
- Video Instruction for consistency across the country
- Athlete representation on the Commission (Directive of USAF and USOC, 33%)
- Succession Strategy
- Renewal Strategy
- SafeSport evolution and continual communications

Marketing Strategy

- Packaging the assets we have
- Identifying Target Audience for those assets
- Taking media presence to next level (Build on visibility of what we already have)
- Story telling (good at this internally/inbound, need to shift to include external/outbound)
- Target Marketing vs. Blanket Marketing
- Data Gathering and Use (demographic, etc.)
- Localize Communications and Marketing
- Enhancing Self Marketing of the Athletes (part of the athlete story telling)
- Alignment with National Marketing
- Leverage 4Front where applicable

Athlete Support Structure

- Athlete Services Point of Contact/Lead
- Top 12 Strategy (elite Athletes)
- Health and Wellness beyond SafeSport
- Mental Health
- Communication: More awareness to what is available for each level of Athletes
 - From Elite to Club
 - Consider Athlete Ombudsman position

Succession Planning

- Coaches
 - Referees
 - Athletes
 - Board and Officers
 - Regional and Divisional
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- Succession planning around: coordination, pipeline, nomination/succession processes, etc.
 - Need a unified approach that each area can leverage for consistency where applicable

Organizational Enhancement

- Divisional and Club Integration
- SafeSport Communications
- Coaching and Referee Development/Education
- Regional Tournament Marketing, club engagement
- Data Collection Strategy
- Annual Forum/Convention for Coaches, Refs, Athletes, Clubs

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Enabling tasks will be further developed with support from consultant, Board of Directors, staff and DEI Resource Team
- Potential enablers include:
 - Provide continued communication on education resources and best practices towards building a ethnically diversified membership
 - Explore DEI education and potential membership requirements
 - Support membership groups to build community for underrepresented populations