

# Sports Industry - Nurturing the workforce

#### Introduction

The workforce of any Industry is critical to its success, and the Sport Industry is no different. However, the breadth of roles (from coaches to referees, players to managers, community volunteers to physios, data analysts to media experts, designers to professional services) and skills (generalist skills e.g. customer service, technical skills e.g. strength & conditioning and data skills e.g. coding) across the Sports Industry workforce is what sets it apart.

For governments to ensure the sustainable growth of the Sport Industry, they should develop detailed plans to attract, retain and develop the Sports workforce across all relevant sub sectors.

#### **Current challenges**

Governments are facing global sport workforce challenges regarding capability, capacity and funding

#### **CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS**

- Hiring: Limited supply of potential employees vs. more traditional career paths due to e.g.
  - lack of visible career pathways
  - negative perception of jobs in Sports Industry
  - > low pay
  - competition for limited talent
- Retention: High turnover of staff and difficulty in retaining talent due to e.g.
  - lack of clarity in career pathways
  - uncompetitive earnings
  - intense nature of working life in subsectors e.g. events

#### **CAPABILITY CONSTRAINTS**

- Technical skills: Lack of specialist skills due to high level of domain expertise required in certain subs-sectors e.g. sport science, media
  - Generalist skills: Gaps in critical generalists skills e.g. customer service, project management, often driven by:
    - diverse range of entry points into sports industry
    - lack of structured education and upskilling programmes
  - Digital skills: Gaps in digital capabilities and understanding of the power of analytics e.g. data analysis, coding, modelling



#### **FUNDING**

 Sports organisations often heavily reliant on government funding for support and volunteers e.g. Federations, clubs & teams

 Limited capital available through investors, through lack of understanding of business case for investment Limited funding for upskilling

Limited capital for hiring



#### **Developing a strategy**

A structured approach to combatting the capacity and capability challenges is required. Detailed strategic initiates should be designed for the local environment, while leveraging international best practice *e.g. education, polices and campaigns* to attract, develop, deploy and retain the workforce. System enablers are also critical to the long-term success of a workforce strategy.

## Vision

Nurturing the Sports workforce to meet current and future needs and providing inclusive access to all

## **Strategic pillars**

### 01

# ATTRACT & IDENTIFY

the right people in the right numbers at the right time

### 02

**DEVELOP** people through capability building, effective programmes and strong career pathways

## 03

**DEPLOY**the workforce
effectively across
the sports
landscape

### 04

RETAIN the sports workforce by improving the

experience, value proposition and recognising success

### **Enablers**

## **05** Partnerships

Identify, fund and manage partners to deliver the workforce strategy

# 08 Licensing & accreditation

Regulation and governance to safeguard employees, coaches & athletes

# 07 Systems & processes

Effective technology platforms, integration of systems, systematic CPD\*

# Monitoring & insight

Continually improving the workforce offering with clear KPIs

## **08** Funding

Sufficient funding, clear investment principles and measures of ROI

## **10** Operating model

Clear roles & responsibilities, strong leadership and effective governance

### **Recommendations for policy-makers**

To kickstart workforce development, certain steps should be undertaken to build a comprehensive picture of the current landscape



When assessing the sports workforce, consider both formal and informal roles and touchpoints e.g. volunteers, unregistered coaches



Consider the balance between nurturing local talent and attracting the best foreign talent and align to national policies



Understand future demand for roles and skills based on projected industry growth and emerging sub-sectors



In an often-fragmented ecosystem, ensure clear accountability for workforce initiatives and education

Connect with youth early to articulate the extensive opportunities of working in

sport and association value propositions
SOURCES: Desk research, expert input, Portas analysis