



## **HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT IS GOOD FOR** **CANADA**

The declaration of 2015 as the [Year of Sport](#) in Canada celebrates and recognizes the role sport plays in our Canadian identity. From our local playgrounds, to recreational sport leagues all the way to our inspiring high performance athletes, sport is vital to the cultural fabric of our nation.

High performance sport contributes significantly to this vitality by:

### **INSPIRING:**

- Sport is a developer of role model athletes, healthy individuals and active communities
- Role model athletes inspire us to get active, to give sport a try, to dream big and to pursue excellence
- CBC reports that more than 33.3 million Canadians (or 95% of the population) tuned into its coverage of the Olympics at least in part, between Feb. 6 and 23, 2014

## **THE BENEFITS**

### **STIMULATING PRIDE IN THE NATION:**

- High performance athletes and athletic success make us proud to be Canadian. Canada's successes in sports rank as some of our greatest achievements
- Two of the top five reasons cited by Canadians indicating they were more proud of being Canadian include winning gold for hockey in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games and the overall success of the Canadian team at the 2010 Vancouver Games (JWT research)

### **ENGAGING COMMUNITIES:**

- Canada's success in high performance sport strengthens communities and builds a stronger, more united nation
- Ninety-two percent of Canadians believe that community-based sport can have a positive influence in the lives of youth, and rank it second only to families as a highly positive influence in the lives of young Canadians. (True Sport Report, 2008)

### **CONTRIBUTING TO OUR ECONOMY**

- Canadians who are active in sport are healthier and happier. Being fit means decreased cost to our health care system and increased productivity
- Sport develops skills that individuals can use to become more productive at work. It also builds social cohesion and social capital – keys to development and prosperity. (Conference Board of Canada, 2005)

## THE RESULTS OF OUR INVESTMENT IN HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT

### SINCE ITS CREATION IN 2005 *OWN THE PODIUM* HAS PAID DIVIDENDS:

- Summer Olympic medals increased by 42 % comparing the 2000/2004 Olympic Games to the 2008/2012 Olympic Games.
- Winter Olympic medals have increased by 66% comparing the 1994/1998/2002 Olympic Winter Games to the 2006/2010/2014 Olympic Winter Games.
- Summer Paralympic medals have declined since 2004 due to increased investment by other nations and the relatively shallow pool of athletes in Canada.
- Winter Paralympic medals have increased by 25% comparing the 2002/2006 Paralympic Winter Games with the 2010/2014 Paralympic Winter Games.

### BUT.....WE NEED TO KEEP UP THE SUPPORT TO OUR HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETES

- We continue to compete with other nations who are investing more in medal potential at the Winter and Summer Olympic Games - some have even copied Canada's *Own the Podium* approach.
- We need to identify podium-potential athletes earlier in their development by strengthening the athlete pathway and improve the quantity and quality of athletes.
- We need to provide increased support to coaches, especially those deeper down the athlete development pathway.
- We need to make better use of research and be more innovative in our athlete development.
- Paralympic athletes need our support more than ever to see us compete with nations who have invested much more heavily in Paralympic sports over the past number of years. An investment in a deliberate strategy is needed to increase the pool of Paralympic athletes.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CANDIDATES!

Success in high performance competition unites Canadians, enhances civic and national pride and creates inspiring active role models for our youth. Federal support of high performance sport is crucial to maintain our competitive edge on the international stage.

- Will you support the continued funding of high performance sport?
- Will you support additional investments in areas such as coaching, research and innovation, Paralympic athlete development?

