

# National Partner Strengthen & Adapt Programme: Year 2 insights



## What is the National Partner Strengthen & Adapt (S&A) programme?

The purpose of the S&A programme is to build the capacity, capability, and resilience of selected national partner organisations and their delivery networks, so that they are best positioned to meet the needs of participants and athletes into the future.

**Total of 34 partners involved across 4 waves**

\* At the time of this report only 11 partners were in a position to present data on their outcomes.

## A principled approach

The programme operates on a set of clearly defined principles and in the spirit of partnership, collaboration, and respect between Sport NZ, High Performance Sport NZ and the participating partners.

**Partner-centric**  
Partners determine themselves where change is needed.

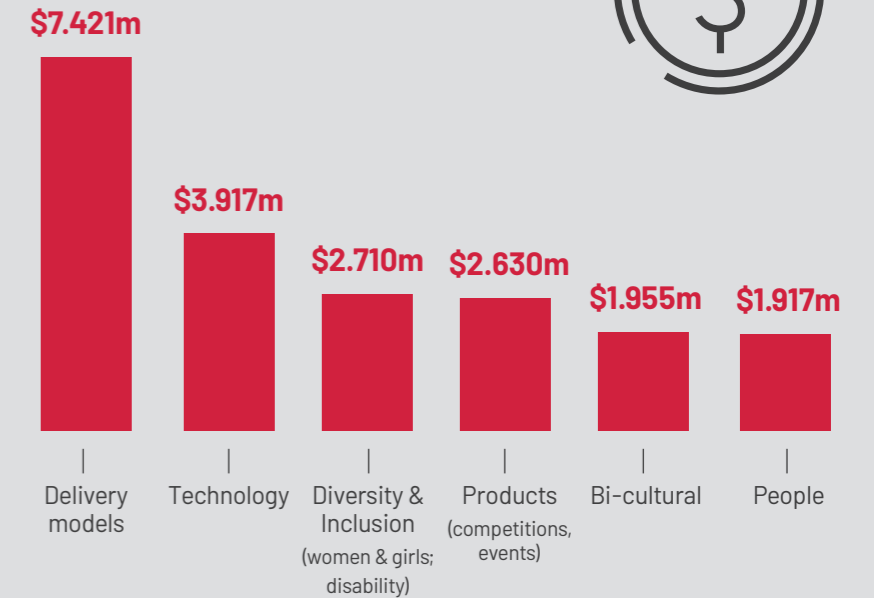
**Beyond business as usual**  
The programme is for transformational, ambitious projects, not routine delivery.

**Walking alongside**  
A flexible and supportive approach enables partners to identify, plan and deliver their change.

**Strengthening and adapting**  
Creating a system more effectively meeting the needs of participants and athletes.

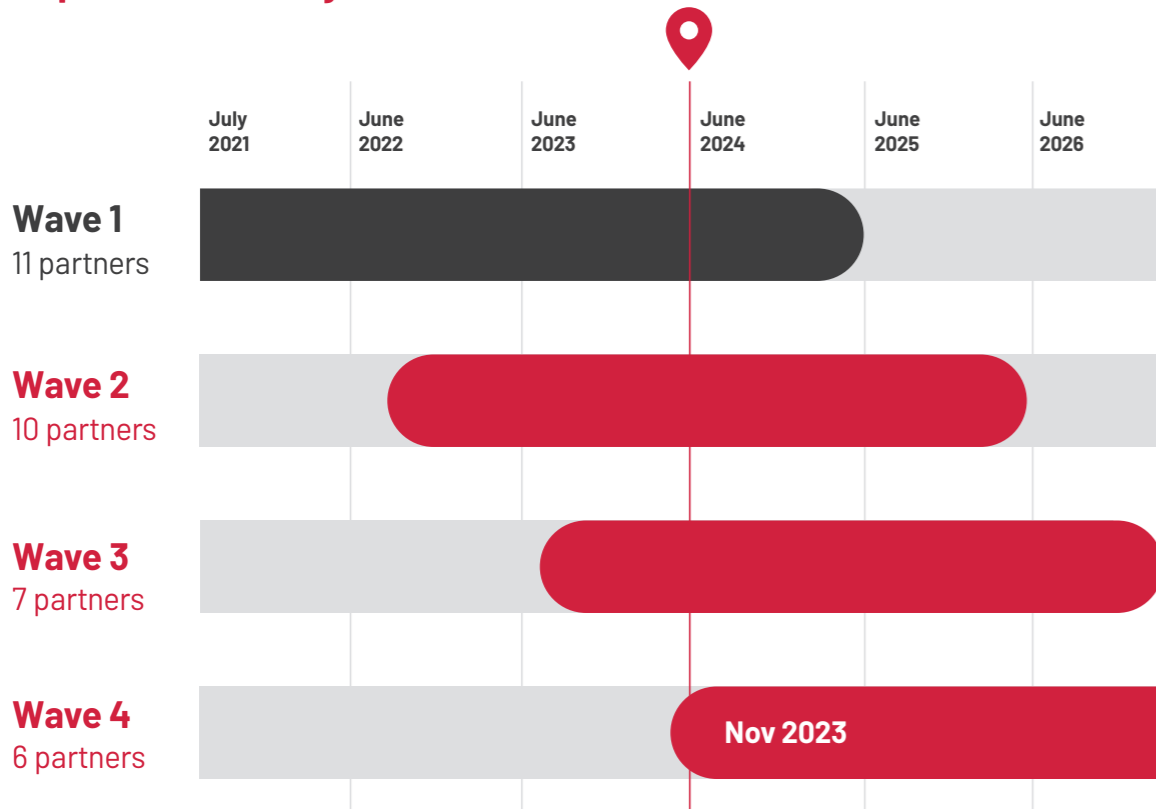
**Future-focused**  
Understanding and planning for the environmental changes ahead.

## Investment across change project areas



## Timing of Waves

### National Partner Strengthen & Adapt Implementation by Wave



## Wave 1: Self-reported progress against short-term outcomes

Input

S&A Programme Short-Term Outcomes (1-3 years)

### National Partner Strengthen and Adapt programme and approach

- Discovery support
- Partnership manager support
- Subject matter expert support
- Communities of Practice
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Funding
- Opportunities for networking and learning

EARLY OUTCOMES



## What impact are we seeing after two years?

- Visibility of outcomes is still emerging given the transformational nature of projects
- Overall project implementation is strong: 43 out of 53 projects are on track.
- Given the scale and complexity of transformational change projects, this result represents good progress.
- Sport NZ's principled approach to implementation is impacting on the timing of short-term outcomes being achieved, but this is the pragmatic reality of transformational change journeys.

## Common challenges to be overcome

- Delays relate to changes in senior leadership, time to set up change projects, and getting the right people on board, particularly in the bi-cultural and technology spaces.
- Partner feedback indicates that the demands of business-as-usual activities, and changes in key personnel, have been particularly felt by smaller organisations.

“ Overall, I think that the flexibility shown by Sport NZ throughout the process on both timing and how the projects actually come together has been incredibly useful and helpful. These projects require an ability to pivot as different things come to the fore and I just wanted to take a moment to show appreciation of that (please don't change this approach - it's really helpful!). ”

Wave 1 Partner

## What have we learnt together? Learnings after two years

### 1.

#### Change management is not fast or easy

Partners are building their change management capability, an S&A outcome in itself, where the strength and agility of our system is improved.

### 2.

#### Critical importance of mindset

The primary influencer in any transformational change project is the leader. They relentlessly see the future success, regardless of how big the current barriers are to the change; are solutions-focused; and able to excite others about the vision for change.

### 3.

#### Networking and community building, better, together

Sport NZ has facilitated the creation of communities of practice, with partners benefiting from new relationships and shared learning. An example is the National Partner Technology Group, co-facilitated by Hockey NZ and Basketball NZ and supported by Sport NZ.

### 4.

#### Dealing with change projects alongside business as usual is not to be underestimated

Change project leaders must have the capacity and capability to lead the project, or not start the project until they are confident they have the time needed.

### 5.

#### Keep your eye on sustainability considerations

Some change projects are for a fixed period, while others have created new structures that require financial sustainability. This is now the focus for some Wave 1 partners as they transition significant transformative projects into their business-as-usual operations. Plan accordingly.

### 6.

#### Measure and respond to progress and impact

Systematic integration of monitoring and evaluation plans into reporting and quarterly partner/Sport NZ discussions is enabling improved tracking and responding to progress. We are getting better, together.

### 7.

#### People changes take time

Partners can often realistically take months to find and onboard the right people to lead, and this need must be realistically planned for in project timelines.

Equally, partner staff turnover and recruitment can slow progress. Partners are encouraged as much as possible to plan for this, with importance placed on ensuring S&A knowledge doesn't just sit with one person.

### 8.

#### Stay open to learning and adapting

The S&A programme and partners have adapted and learned from the initial waves, leading to refinements in delivery, investment capping, discovery phase investment reductions, and more targeted evaluation support.

### 9.

#### Inherent programme value

The S&A programme is noted for its high-trust approach, offering partners significant opportunities for strategic reflection and capability building that extend well beyond immediate change project outcomes.

To learn more about the S&A programme, scan the QR code.

