NWANA Strategic Plan 2027–2030

Implementation Plan for the National Nordic Walking Development Program in North America

How This Plan Is Organized

The National Program 2027–2030 defines what NWANA creates. This plan defines how NWANA implements it: it follows the same ten directions, in the same order as the National Program, and for each direction it records the goals, the stage result, the responsible role, the decision to be taken, and the implementation conditions. The first stage, 2027–2028, is set out in stages of 6, 12 and 24 months. The second stage, 2029–2030, is defined by scaling conditions based on the results of the first stage. The plan is implemented as financing is raised: NWANA launches the funded part of the program, and for each direction it is visible what work begins at what volume of resources. Rates, prices of individual works and calculated indicators are contained in the program's financial model.

Direction 1. Sport

The operating part of the system today is the virtual Open Series 2026, with rankings within the series. Officials training, athlete licensing and sanctioning of external competitions are at different stages of development.

Launching Series 2027 requires Board decisions on the format of the series, including Masters, the commercial terms and the series tariffs. These decisions open the launch of the series and the partnership and commercial lines connected with it. Responsible role: the President prepares the decisions, the Board adopts them, the office executes.

Officials training: the question of the training pathway for Beginner-level officials is with the Board. After its decision, NWANA builds the officials training program, prepares the first cohort for partners' first in-person competitions and provides officials first for its own events.

The path to championships: including Nordic Walking in partners' existing competitions produces in-person sanctioned events; on that foundation, United States championships are built, then the North American championship. The formats of inclusion and work with competition organizers are kept in the working materials of the sport direction.

AI judging is a separate project within this direction, with its own stages and decisions. The task of the system: to recognize from video the technique elements and rule violations recorded in NWANA's rules and technical dossier. The stages proceed in this order: defining the violations and technique elements the system must recognize, and collecting video recordings with expert annotation; creating a research prototype; testing the prototype on separate recordings against accuracy criteria agreed in advance; at sufficient accuracy, an in-person pilot in parallel with officials at a sanctioned competition, where officials give the official scores. Each stage is financed and decided separately. Project status: not started, no resources allocated.

6 months. Result: Series 2027 runs to its calendar, results are published; officials training is built along the pathway approved by the Board. Responsible role: the office runs the series, the Sport & Events committee builds officials training. Resources: office time; for AI judging, at this stage the assignment for the project's first stage is formed: the list of violations and the collection of video with expert annotation.

12 months. Result: the first cohort of officials is trained along the approved pathway; the first in-person competitions with partners have been held or agreed. Responsible role: the Sport & Events committee, the office. Decision: the competition schedule based on partners' replies. Resources: field visits under the financial model.

24 months. Result: the officials corps covers NWANA's own events; the calendar of national and continental competitions includes the United States and North American championships; AI judging develops as a separate project through its own stages and decisions. Responsible role: the Board, on the submission of the Sport & Events committee.

Direction 2. Education

Beginner: completion of the video production of the existing course. The cost of completion and the choice of contractor are determined by the financial model and contractor quotations; the decision on the contractor is approved by the President. Completion of the course is a separate result. The certificate of completion is issued after two examinations and gives the instructor the right to begin sessions for beginners and accumulate teaching experience. Licensing is launched in its own parts: evaluation of candidates' practical work, licensing decisions and the national registry of licensed instructors. The registry opens as a public instrument for verifying qualifications when the whole chain is working.

6 months. Result: the Beginner contractor is selected, production is under way. Responsible role: the Education & Certification committee, the office. Decision: the contractor. Resources: the funded part of the stage.

12 months. Result: the parts of licensing are launched as they become ready: evaluation of candidates' practical work and the national registry. Responsible role: the Education & Certification committee. Resources: the stage tranches.

24 months. Result: Beginner video production is completed, the course is operating in the Academy; the licensing chain is assembled in full: the certificate with two examinations, teaching practice for beginners, evaluation of the candidate's practical work and the license; the national registry of licensed instructors is operating. Responsible role: the Education & Certification committee.

Direction 3. Training Centers

The sports complex: the requirements are approved by a separate document (stadium, classrooms, laboratory, non-stadium trails, supporting infrastructure). Order: evaluation of suitable sites against the requirements; a concept for a specific site; calculation of the launch cost and the annual operating cost for that site; a budget decision after the evaluation. Geography is open; the President sets the direction of the site search. Until the evaluation is complete, the cost and timing of the complex stay outside NWANA's financial obligations.

6 months. Result: site evaluation for the complex has begun, if the President has set the search direction. Responsible role: the President, the CEO, the office. Decision: the direction of the site search.

12 months. Result: the evaluation of options and the concept for the selected site are ready for the complex. Responsible role: the CEO, the office.

24 months. Result: a budget decision for the complex has been taken based on the evaluation, or the evaluation continues. Responsible role: the Board, on the submission of the President.

Direction 4. Regional Development

Field visits: the federation's field team conducts practical training of the partner's specialists and support for the program launch under the standard field-visit package. The visit standard is fixed after the first visit, so that the next region repeats the work following a ready model. The full cost of a visit and its composition are calculated in the financial model. Visits are financed from the funded part of the stage or by the partner side under an agreement.

Launches: NWANA launches its own and joint programs and supports independent organizations under the universal partnership model.

6 months. Result: the first field visits are completed, the visit standard is fixed. Responsible role: the office, the model's regional coordinators. Decision: the schedule of the first visits. Resources: the funded part of the stage.

12 months. Result: program launches proceed through the model's stages in regions with confirmed partners. Responsible role: the model's regional coordinators, the office. Resources: the stage tranches.

24 months. Result: regional launches are repeated under the visit standard in new states; for each launch, results are recorded for evaluating the forms of presence. Responsible role: the model's regional coordinators, the office.

Direction 5. Organizational Development

NWANA develops its own structure as the network grows: the office conducts the national work, the committees are responsible for the program directions, and the forms of presence in the regions are chosen under the universal partnership model. After the first launches, NWANA evaluates the forms (own subdivisions, affiliation, contractual partners, independent organizations) by actual results and decides which forms to develop further.

6 months. Result: the forms of presence are applied in the first launches; the criteria for evaluating them by actual results are defined. Responsible role: the President, the office.

12 months. Result: an interim evaluation of the forms of presence based on the first launches has been carried out. Responsible role: the President, the office.

24 months. Result: the forms of presence are evaluated on the facts, and a decision is taken on the proportions of the forms for the second stage. Responsible role: the President and the Board.

Direction 6. Institutional Recognition

NWANA presents its operating programs in the catalogs, registries and standards of national organizations in the profile of each program direction, where it meets the criteria on the basis of existing facts. Specific submissions, their data and conditions are kept in the direction's working materials. The strategic milestones record the results for which NWANA is responsible; the decisions of catalogs and organizations are taken by those organizations themselves.

Participation data, including participation of athletes over 50 from the virtual series and partners' competitions, form the base for proposals to sports systems and programs for older adults.

6 months. Result: submission packages for catalogs and registries across the program directions are prepared and submitted. Responsible role: the office. Decision: the President approves the composition of the submissions. Resources: office time.

12 months. Result: work on the filed submissions continues in line with organizations' replies; new submissions are prepared as operating programs that meet catalog criteria emerge. Responsible role: the office.

24 months. Result: the participation database is assembled and used in the recognition work; submissions are updated based on programs' actual results. Responsible role: the office.

Direction 7. Science and Health

Evidence-based recognition is built through a designed study with a university evaluation partner, so that NWANA is ready for the next round of the federal review of evidence-based programs.

Research: in joint projects NWANA takes part in developing the protocol, prepares the participants and controls Nordic Walking technique throughout the study, as established in section 8 of the Program. The research partners are responsible for methodology, analysis and interpretation. NWANA also reviews how published studies describe technique, participant preparation and its

control.

6 months. Result: the design of the first study with a university partner is defined. Responsible role: the Health & Research committee, the office.

12 months. Result: the research project with a university partner is designed, and the sources of its financing are defined. Responsible role: the Health & Research committee, the President. Decision: the partner and the study design. Resources: the grant line and partnership sources.

24 months. Result: the study is under way or completed under its protocol, with NWANA's participation in participant preparation and technique control secured. Responsible role: the Health & Research committee.

Direction 8. Market Development

The market for equipment and professional services develops following the operating programs: demand from participants and organizations creates the base for work with manufacturers, sports retail and professional services. At the first stage, this work is conducted within the partnership proposals and industry initiatives of the national partnerships direction and is built on the programs' actual demand.

6 months. Result: the market part is included in the first stage's partnership proposals: the Nordic Walking category, equipment and institutional channels for operating programs. Responsible role: the office.

12 months. Result: based on the first operating programs, actual demand for equipment and services is defined by participant categories. Responsible role: the office.

24 months. Result: work with manufacturers and sports retail is built on the first-stage programs' actual demand and prepares the second stage's expansion. Responsible role: the office, the President.

Direction 9. National Partnerships

Market development partners. BSN SPORTS: the final proposal is formed from the approved program and the commercial financing construction; a Board decision on the package of program, plan and construction; materials: the program, the proposal, the figures of the financial model; delivery of the proposal opens negotiations on the role of lead development partner for the institutional channel. National Sporting Goods Association: the same package of decisions and materials; the Association's role is industry organizer and organizer of the industry pool; the delivery opens negotiations on a working group and a consortium. SFIA: a proposal on category and research; the decision is approval of the text by the President; the delivery opens negotiations on an industry initiative and its participants. Money under each partner arrives only under a signed agreement, in tranches by stages.

Partnership stages are recorded in the contacts registry: candidate, interested, MOU under negotiation, MOU signed, activity started.

6 months. Result: the proposals are formed from the approved program and the commercial financing construction; the package of program, plan and construction is brought to a Board decision. Responsible role: the President, the office.

12 months. Result: negotiations on the delivered proposals are under way; agreements are prepared based on the outcomes of the negotiations. Responsible role: the office conducts the negotiations, the CEO signs agreements after Board approval.

24 months. Result: partnerships operate under signed agreements; the industry pool and consortium are formed based on the first stage's negotiations. Responsible role: the President and the Board.

Direction 10. Financing and Management

The first package NWANA offers for financing is the first six months of the program under the financial model. This is the base scenario before the headquarters is added. The package covers the model's paid team (executive director, coordinators, field visit specialists), completion of the Beginner course, the first field launches of programs, support for the sport system and insurance of NWANA's own activities. The work of the leadership and the professional team is paid within the package under the financial model, within the legal limits for a nonprofit organization.

Under partial financing, each tranche is assembled from parts of the financial model at their calculated prices and records three things: what work it launches, what period of paid leadership and team time it covers, and what volume remains unfunded. Results differ in composition: a tranche for completing the Beginner video produces a finished course, while the licensing system additionally requires the evaluation of candidates' practical work and the national registry and is not launched by a video tranche alone. The launch order under partial financing: the core team and the Academy; field visits to regions with confirmed partners; sport events to the calendar. Each time, the remainder stays as a designated gap, stating what financing is missing.

Insurance: quotations under the requests sent replace the financial model's assumptions before the tranches are finalized. The decision on purchasing policies is taken after the quotations are received.

The grant line operates in parallel, following the registry of foundations and the deadlines of foundation programs.

The headquarters is a separate project with its own order and schedule; it is independent of the center and can open earlier. Order: the placement requirements are defined by the financial model's calculation, whose assumptions are about 800 square feet and four workstations; the President decides the location together with the Board; then lease, light fit-out and launch. Rent is a variable line and depends on the location. The headquarters sits outside the first stage's base scenarios and joins on its own schedule when financing is in place.

6 months. Result: the results of the first agreements are summed up: which agreements are signed, what volume of work is financed and what gap remains; insurance quotations are received and entered into the financial model; the headquarters placement requirements are confirmed, and the location selection order is launched when financing is available. Responsible role: the office conducts negotiations and reporting, the President and the Board evaluate the results. Decision: the volume of

work launched, based on the financing actually raised. Resources: office time, the financial model.

12 months. Result: signed agreements and first tranches finance the operating part of the first stage; field visits and launches proceed through the program's stages; the headquarters opens on its own schedule if the location is chosen and launch and operating financing are secured. Responsible role: the CEO signs agreements, the office conducts execution and reporting to partners; the CEO conducts the headquarters lease and launch. Decision: the Board approves the terms of each agreement. Resources: partner tranches and grants from all sources combined.

24 months. Result: the first stage's results are calculated on the facts; the second stage's financing construction is assembled from the results, including the industry pool and sponsorship programs; with the location chosen and launch and operating financing secured, the headquarters operates as the management center. Responsible role: the President and the Board. Decision: the volume and sources of the second stage. Resources: the first stage's results as the base for negotiations.

Second Stage, 2029–2030

The second stage scales the directions based on the first stage's results. Transition conditions: the first stage's results by the program's indicators, the financing raised for the second stage, the readiness of the team and the sites. The volume of the stage is fixed by a separate Board decision based on the first stage's results.

Sport: the United States and North American championships take a permanent place in the calendar; the inclusion of Nordic Walking in sports systems develops under agreements with their organizers.

Education: the Academy trains specialists at all levels; the registry of licensed instructors operates as a public instrument for verifying qualifications.

Training centers: the network develops based on the results of the first center, if it is open by that time.

Regional development: the forms of presence that proved suitable at the first stage expand to new states through regional teams.

Organizational development: own subdivisions, affiliation and joint projects develop in the forms that proved workable at the first stage.

Institutional recognition: published research results support evidence-based recognition and inclusion in the catalogs and standards of national organizations.

Science and health: research from completed projects is published, and its results are used in the recognition work and in program development.

Market development: based on the demand of operating programs and participants, NWANA expands work with manufacturers, sports retail and professional services; the Nordic Walking category is strengthened in institutional channels.

National partnerships: the network includes organizations of all the program's categories; commercial partners develop the market together with NWANA on a contractual basis; the first stage's industry initiatives expand based on their results.

Financing and management: the headquarters, opened with the location chosen and launch and operating financing secured, operates as the permanent management center of the program; the financing of the stage is built from all sources combined across all directions.