



Annual Plan Submission to the Dunedin City Council.

Prepared on behalf of Swim Dunedin by the Dunedin Swim Coaching Board.

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1. Exec Summary

Swim Dunedin, operating under the Dunedin Swim Coaching Board, is deeply integrated into the local swimming community, providing coaching services across a wide range of skill levels and supporting a variety of aquatic disciplines. Dunedin holds a proud reputation for swimming excellence, having developed regional, national, and Olympic-level athletes.

In close alignment with stakeholders such as the Dunedin City Council (DCC), local swim clubs, and other aquatic organisations, Swim Dunedin fosters collaboration and drives the growth of swimming at all levels.

We are seeking committed multi-year funding, ideally the 9 year period, to support lane hire. This funding will continue to free up financial resources to focus on coaching, athlete development, and increased community programming, ensuring the sustainability and equitable accessibility of our services across Dunedin.

2. Introduction

Swim Dunedin, operating under the Dunedin Swim Coaching Board (DSCB), is proud to be an integral part of Dunedin's aquatic community. The programme delivers structured coaching services to a diverse range of swimmers, from emerging talent in Competitive Development through to elite athletes preparing for international High Performance competition. Swim Dunedin is dedicated to embedding swimming as a cornerstone and lifelong sport within the city, nurturing talent through to high-performance pathways where relevant.

Through strong community involvement and collaborative partnerships, we ensure swimming remains inclusive and accessible to all — delivering long-term benefits to individual health, youth development, and Dunedin's continued success on the national and world stage across aquatic disciplines. Uniquely in Dunedin, Swim Dunedin provides a comprehensive aquatic coaching pathway, including support for related sports such as surf lifesaving, triathlon and water polo. As a continuation of foundational programmes like Just Swim, our services ensure that young people and adults can stay engaged in aquatic sports beyond basic learn-to-swim, an offering not available elsewhere in the region on this level.

Swim Dunedin's operations are built on strong partnerships with the Dunedin City Council, local swim clubs, Swimming Otago, and Swimming New Zealand. This collaborative model supports the sustainability of local clubs by allowing swimmers to maintain their club affiliation while training with Swim Dunedin, thereby enhancing club participation and the broader swimming ecosystem.

The programme contributes meaningfully to the goals outlined in several DCC strategic frameworks:

- **Parks and Recreation Strategy:** by promoting participation in sport and active lifestyles across all ages.
- **Social Wellbeing Strategy:** by fostering physical and mental health, inclusion, and resilience through accessible programming.
- **Youth Strategy:** by supporting skill development, leadership, and pathways to excellence for young people in the city.

Our 2025/26 strategy remains focused on community benefit, with a strong emphasis on retention of talent, equitable access, and increased programming through coaching. Continued funding is essential to maintain momentum and deliver on these shared goals for the Dunedin community as we focus forward to keeping athletes in the sport and relevant disciplines.

3. Overview of application purpose

Swim Dunedin acknowledges the vital role of the Dunedin City Council in providing access to quality aquatic facilities, and we remain committed to maximising the use of these shared community assets. Our longstanding and collaborative relationship with Moana Pool enables us to optimise existing spaces, ensuring that swimmers across all levels can thrive.

Swimming remains one of the most popular activities in Dunedin, offering both a recreational and competitive outlet that complements other aquatic sports such as water polo, surf lifesaving, and triathlon. Through accessible, experienced, and high-quality coaching, Swim Dunedin encourages lifelong engagement contributing directly to Dunedin's health, wellbeing, and sporting culture. The programme also allows for staff development in young coaches.

As participation continues to grow across all levels of our programme, access to adequate water space has become an increasing challenge. Swim Dunedin currently operates at capacity, particularly during peak training hours. With aquatic sports gaining momentum citywide, this pressure is felt not only by our programme but across Dunedin's broader swimming and aquatic community. Investment in lane hire and forward-planning for potential aquatic facility development is critical to meeting current demand and unlocking the potential for even greater community engagement and giving Dunedin the facilities it needs.

In alignment with the DCC's **Parks and Recreation** and **Social Wellbeing Strategies**, our programmes take a holistic approach to athlete development. Over the past year, this has included increased emphasis on mental wellbeing, nutrition, and personal development, recognising that swimming builds resilience, confidence, and physical fitness.

Affordability and accessibility are cornerstones of our philosophy. All squads are priced with consideration of community needs and subsidised where necessary. Over the past five years, membership fees have increased by only 7%, compared to a national inflation rate of over 20% , a deliberate decision to ensure equitable access for all.

Swim Dunedin is proud of its reputation for innovation and continuous improvement in coaching. Our team of experienced and developing coaches are passionate about mentoring swimmers to reach their full potential. The achievements of our athletes on the national and international stage , including multiple AquaBlacks , stand as testimony to the programme's impact not only on elite pathways but on the strength and fitness of athletes across multiple disciplines.

4. Current Programmes and structure

Swim Dunedin operates a tiered system of squads tailored to accommodate swimmers of varying ages, abilities, and training commitments.

Beginning with **Club Plus**, the entry-level squad feeds from other DCC-based offerings like Just Swim, and ascending to Performance, the highest-tier swimmers progress through the ranks based on age, skill level, Performance, high-performance ability and training regimen.

The Performance squad represents the pinnacle of achievement within Swim Dunedin, catering to elite athletes with national and international competition aspirations.

Moving down the ladder, the **Competitive start** squad serves as a stepping stone for swimmers aiming to excel in competitive swimming. This squad provides a supportive environment for athletes to refine their skills and prepare for higher-level competition.

Meanwhile, our **Competitive Development** squads focus on nurturing emerging talent, offering structured training programs designed to develop fundamental swimming techniques and build a solid foundation for future success.

Swim Fit is a great squad that caters for those potentially wanting the swimming discipline, but on a non competitive basis. With greater lane space, we would be able to offer this in afternoons as well as mornings.

Our goal is to attract talented athletes to the sport and retain their participation over the long term. Swim Dunedin endeavours to foster a lifelong love for swimming among athletes of all ages and backgrounds, enriching their sporting journey and overall well-being. We strive to create an inclusive environment where athletes from all backgrounds feel welcome and supported.

Swim Dunedin's squad numbers sitting close to 200 across squads, with highest numbers across Club Plus, Competitive Dev and Competitive, reflects a strong and resilient programme that continues to meet community needs. With significant increases in entry-level squads such as Club Plus and Competitive, this ensures a sustainable pipeline of future athletes across both recreational and high-performance streams. The programme's ability to consistently attract and retain participants directly supports Dunedin City Council's Parks and Recreation and Social Wellbeing strategies by promoting active lifestyles, youth development, and community connection.

Ongoing funding will ensure Swim Dunedin can continue to service participation, support athlete progression, and maintain strong utilisation of Moana Pool facilities.

5. Funding Request and DCC Alignment.

Swim Dunedin is seeking committed multi-year funding support, with the aspiration of integration into the DCC's 9-Year Plan (2025–2034). Historically, Council support has primarily focused on lane hire, a contribution that has been vital in sustaining programme delivery, maintaining affordability for families, and nurturing world-class athletes within our city.

We are immensely grateful to the Dunedin City Council for its ongoing partnership, particularly in the lead-up to the 2024 Olympic cycle, during which Swim Dunedin supported multiple Olympic contenders. That investment has already yielded strong returns, not only in terms of elite performance on the world stage, but also in civic pride, youth engagement, and strengthened community identity.

As Swim Dunedin continues to grow, covering lane hire and potential additional operational support will allow us to:

- **Expand athlete development pathways**, from grassroots to high performance;
- **Deliver specialised clinics**, in line with feedback from athletes, parents, and wider stakeholders;
- **Strengthen coaching and staffing structures**, improving stability
- **Maintain essential training equipment** to ensure safety and progression across all levels.

Importantly, the cost of this grant to DCC is effectively **cost-neutral**. The funding we seek directly offsets lane hire costs payable to Moana Pool, ensuring facilities are fully utilised rather than under-used. In addition, Swim Dunedin's more than 200 registered athletes — plus their siblings and families — generate significant additional value to the Council through regular paid use of Moana Pool facilities. When considering lane hire revenue, pool admissions, and wider community engagement, the relationship between Swim Dunedin and the DCC is clearly net positive. Continued investment therefore represents not only a high-impact community initiative but also a financially sound partnership for the city.

In the 2023 financial year, Swim Dunedin's pool hire costs were \$36,969, increasing to \$44,097 in 2024 — a rise of nearly 21% in direct costs to the Dunedin Swim Coaching Board. Moving forward, we seek to fully cover lane hire costs over the proposed nine-year period to ensure the continued viability and accessibility of aquatic programming for the Dunedin community.

This investment aligns directly with the DCC's **Parks and Recreation Strategy** by promoting active participation and long-term engagement in sport and the **Social Wellbeing Strategy**, through fostering inclusion, health, and community connectedness. Furthermore, it supports the intent of the draft **9-Year Plan** to deliver sustainable and inclusive recreational opportunities that enhance Dunedin's livability, noting we attract students from all over Aotearoa.

Without continued and expanded funding, Swim Dunedin faces mounting financial pressure. To preserve affordability for participants, retain coaching excellence, and meet the growing demand for aquatic sport in the region, Council support is essential. This investment not only sustains the current positive impact but unlocks the potential for even greater reach and community benefit in the years ahead.

6. Results

Refer to Appendix A - across all results and aquatic disciplines

7. Financial insights

The Dunedin Swim Coaching board continually strives to ensure that our coaching fees are a reasonable cost for athletes and their families whilst representing value for money for high quality swimming coaching. In recent years we have experienced increased costs associated with wages, lane hire and direct costs in supporting all our athletes across many aquatic sports.

Like most organisations, we have also experienced rising costs in recent years due to inflation and to accommodate the growth in our swimmer numbers. Increased swimmer numbers in our program, in turn increases our pool hire costs which benefits the council in pool hire and pool entry revenue.

Most of our coaches are employed on a casual or short-term basis which means a significant amount of time is spent training our coaches to a high standard. By securing long term funding we would be in a position to offer permanent roles to our valued coaches providing further efficiency and stability to our program and potentially at better rates.

The DSCB is immensely grateful for Dunedin City Council's financial contribution in recent years as without that support we would not be financially viable. We look forward to continuing working with the Dunedin City Council to provide a world-class aquatic program for the city of Dunedin.

8. Conclusion

Swim Dunedin is proud to play a vital role in Dunedin's aquatic landscape, providing a clear pathway for participation, development, and high performance that delivers lasting benefits to the wider community. Our programme not only fosters individual athlete success but also strengthens Dunedin's reputation for excellence in aquatic sports, encourages lifelong engagement in physical activity, and contributes meaningfully to the city's social wellbeing.

With swimmer numbers growing, facility pressures mounting, and a proven record of success across both grassroots and elite levels, the need for sustainable, multi-year support is certain. Continued investment from the Dunedin City Council will ensure Swim Dunedin can continue to deliver outcomes for individuals, families, and the broader community.

We are grateful for the DCC's ongoing partnership and its commitment to supporting vibrant, healthy communities.

Appendix A

High Performance:

Olympics 2024 Paris	<p>Erika Fairweather</p> <p>4th 400 Freestyle *best equal result by a female swimmer since 1952</p> <p>7th 200 Freestyle</p> <p>8th 800 Freestyle</p> <p>Kane Follows</p> <p>33rd 100 backstroke</p> <p>21st 200 backstroke</p> <p>Erika Fairweather and Caitlin Deans</p> <p>8th 4x200m free relay - 1st NZ Womens relay team in history to make an Olympic Relay final</p>
Oceania (Gold Coast) April 2024	<p>Esme Paterson</p> <p>2nd 100 Fly and 4th 200 Fly</p>
Sydney Opens May 2024	<p>Caitlin Deans:</p> <p>2nd 400 freestyle</p> <p>6th 200 freestyle</p> <p>13th 100 freestyle (PB 100/200 fr)</p> <p>Kane Follows:</p> <p>1st 100 backstroke</p> <p>1st 200 backstroke</p> <p>3rd 50 backstroke (PB)</p>
Tri Series	<p>Selected Charlotte Aburn and Alfie Weatherston Harvey</p> <p>Gabby Trotter named as a Coach</p>
	<p>Neo Salomonssen achieved his first NZR 100 fly</p>

Success Across the Past Year:

Nationals	
New Zealand Secondary Schools (July 2024)	<p>Abby Samuels: Silver</p> <p>Alfie Weatherston Harvey 2 silver and bronze</p> <p>Charlotte Aburn: 3 bronze</p> <p>Lily McGrath: Gold, 2 silver and bronze</p> <p>Lily McGrath Otago record 14yrs 50 Breaststroke</p> <p>34 top 10 placings and 37 personal bests</p>
New Zealand Short Course Championships (Aug 2024)	<p>Age Group Medals</p> <p>Neo Salomonssen Gold 50/100 fly and 100 free, silver 200 fly</p> <p>Alfie Weatherston-Harvey: Gold 800/1500 free</p> <p>Lily McGrath: Bronze 50 breaststroke</p> <p>Sophie Wellington: Bronze 50 backstroke</p> <p>Open Medals</p> <p>Esme Paterson: Gold 100 and 200 fly</p> <p>Ruby Heath: Gold 800 free, silver 400 freestyle bronze 1500 free</p> <p>Emilia Finer: Bronze 400 fr and 400 Individual Medley</p> <p>Alfie Weatherston-Havery: Bronze 800 fr</p> <p>Otago Records: Neo 50/100 and 200 fly, 100 free</p> <p>Fina B QT for World SC Esme Paterson 200 fly (and Ruby Heath 400 free, 800 free)</p> <p>54 personal best times</p>
South Island Short Course Championships (July 2024)	<p>South Island Short Course Champs (Christchurch) Otago Records to Lily McGrath (14yrs) 50 Breastroke, Neo Salomonsson (15yrs) 50 fly.</p> <p>46 personal bests from 13 athletes.</p>

<p>National Age Groups (April 2025)</p>	<p>A strong team attended NAGS with many outstanding performances.</p> <p>Gold:</p> <p>Neo Salomonsson (50,100 fly)</p> <p>William McFarlane (800, 1500 free)</p> <p>Charlotte Aburn (50 free)</p> <p>Annalise Miller (100 free)</p> <p>Lily McGrath (50, 100 breaststroke)</p> <p>Silver:</p> <p>Charlotte Aburn (50 free, 200 free, 400 free)</p> <p>Bella McEntyre (200 free, 800 free)</p> <p>Annalise Miller (200 free, 400 free)</p> <p>Lily McGrath (200 breaststroke)</p> <p>Neo Salomonsson (200 fly)</p> <p>Bronze:</p> <p>Charlotte Aburn (100 Free)</p> <p>Bella McEntyre (200 Free)</p> <p>Neo Salomonsson (200 Individual Medley)</p> <p>Otago Records</p> <p>Neo Salomonsson 50 and 100 Fly</p> <p>Lily McGrath 50 and 100 Breaststroke</p> <p>Many top 10 finishes and personal bests.</p>
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Domestic	
Wanaka	17 swimmers attended and most attained PBS
Otago Sec Schools	Nearly 50 Swim Dunedin athletes competed making up 60% of the entries. In 11 events our athletes took all 3 top placings and every event except 1, where we had a swimmer they were placed in top 3. Otago Secondary Schools record to Alfie Weatherston-Harvey
Neptune Kings Birthday Meet:	Otago Records: Erika Fairweather (100 free) and Sophia Kivileva (11yrs 1500m free). Sophia broke Caitlin Deans record by 24 seconds
Otago Short Course (June)	Nearly 70 athletes competed, over 70 gold medals, 60 plus silver and nearly 50 bronze medals. In many races our athletes were placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the same event Many personal bests
SISC (July)	South Island Short Course Champs (Christchurch) Otago Records to Lily McGrath (14yrs) 50 Breaststroke, Neo Salomonsson (15yrs) 50 fly 46 personal bests from 13 athletes.
Colin Walker Memorial Meet (Queenstown, Sept)	Small team of 6 with numerous pbs
Oamaru Meet (Oct)	14 swimmers, 31 PBs and 8 New Times at this development meet
Kiwi Challenge (Oct)	62 swimmers attended this meet with numerous Personal Bests and New Times Otago record Neo Salomonsson 50m Butterfly
Aquagym Challenge (Christchurch, Oct)	Neo Salomonsson Otago Record 100 Fly, 50 fr and NZR 100 Fly 15yrs 4 personal bests including 5 second pb in 100 br
Cromwell Meet	4 swimmers - few personal bests and new times
Otago Long Course Champs (Dec)	Over 60 Swim Dunedin members competed with an abundance of medals and pbs. Otago Records to Neo Salomonsson (50 fly) and Hannah Ker-Fox (100 back)
Balclutha Meet (Jan)	Team of 20 swimmers headed to Balclutha for the day. 31 Personal Bests and 30 new times
Alexandra Meet (Feb)	Team of 19 swimmers. 39 Personal Bests and 3 new times

<p>South Island Long Course Champs (Feb)</p>	<p>SOUTH ISLAND OVERALL CHAMPIONS</p> <p>Alfie Weatherston Harvey Open 400m Freestyle, Open 800m Freestyle, Open 1500m Freestyle</p> <p>Neo Salomonsson Open 50m Butterfly, Open 100m Butterfly, Open 200m Butterfly</p> <p>Caitlin Deans Open 200m Freestyle, Open 800m Freestyle</p> <p>Esme Paterson Open 100m Butterfly, Open 200m Butterfly</p> <p>Kane Follows Open 50m Backstroke, Open 200m Backstroke</p> <p>Charlotte Aburn Open 400m Freestyle</p> <p>Lily McGrath Open 50m Breaststroke</p> <p>Sophie Wellington Open 200m Backstroke</p> <p>Tom Gold Open 50m Freestyle</p> <p>70 age group podiums</p>
<p>Makos Junior Festival (Mar)</p>	<p>33 athletes, high personal bests rate and Fergus Kindiak 2 Otago 9 and under records</p> <p>50m and 200 fr</p>
<p>Otago Primary Schools</p>	<p>Many pbs and podium finishes</p> <p>First Otago record for Iliana Peniamina 9yrs 50 breaststroke. Other Otago Primary records went to Hannah Ker-Fox (12yrs 50 back and 50 free), Fergus Kindiak (9yrs 50 free)</p> <p>Maori Hill School broke the record for 4x50fr (10 years) and Columba College smashed the 4x50 fr (12 years) by 17 sec. Both relay teams consisted of all Swim Dunedin athletes.</p>

Success across other aquatic disciplines - who train with Swim Dunedin:

Category	Details
Ice Swimming	<p>Emilia Finer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 World Records (250m Freestyle, 100m Butterfly, 200m Individual Medley) - "Queen of the Ice" at 2024 Ice Swimming NZ & Southern Hemisphere Pool Champs <p>World Ice Swimming Championships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 500m Freestyle: 6:18.08 (Age Group Gold, new Age Group World Record, Overall Silver) - 250m Freestyle: 3:01.95 (Age Group Gold, Overall Silver) - 200m Individual Medley: 2:38.55 (Age Group Gold, new Open World Record, Overall Gold) - 100m Butterfly: 1:12.95 (Age Group Gold) - 100m Butterfly: 1:11.69 (Overall Gold)
Open Water Swimming	<p>Ruby Heath</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NZ Open Water Champs (Taupō): Silver in 10km, 1st in 5km - Qualified for aQuelle Midmar Mile (South Africa), placed 3rd

<p>Surf Lifesaving</p>	<p>Rae Kwan & Molly Shivan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selected for NZ team at Lifesaving World Championships 2024 (Gold Coast) - Podium finishes at Australian Pool Champs <p>Lifesaving World Championships 2024 Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gold: 4x50m Obstacle Relay (Rae Kwan & Molly Shivan, NZR) - Gold: Rescue Tube Relay (Rae Kwan & Molly Shivan) - Gold: Ocean Woman Relay (Molly Shivan) - Silver: 4x50m Mixed Lifesaver Relay (Rae Kwan) - Silver: Board Rescue (Molly Shivan) - Bronze: Line Throw (Rae Kwan) - Bronze: 4x50m Medley Relay (Molly Shivan & Rae Kwan) <p>Claudia Kelly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Represented NZ at 50th Japanese Lifesaving Championships - Wins: 1st Ironwoman, 1st Board, 2nd Ski, 3rd Surf - Australian SLS Open Champs: Gold (Ski Relay & Tube Rescue), Bronze (Double Ski), 5th (Ski Race), 13th (Iron Final) <p>Charlotte Aburn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Named Junior Black Fin
<p>2025 Aon New Zealand Surf Life Saving Champs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - U17 Tube Rescue Gold (Charlotte Aburn, Vicky Aburn, Margo Trump, Izzy Miller) - Toby Hill: 1st U15 Male Diamond - Charlotte Aburn: 2nd U17 Female Surf Swim, 3rd U17 Female Run Swim Run - Aidan Blair: 3rd U19 Male Surf Swim - Claudia Kelly: 1st Open Female Surf Race, 1st Open Female Iron, 2nd Open Female Ski Race, 3rd Open Female Run Swim Run - Pippa Nicol: 2nd Open Female Run Swim Run - Olive Pearce: 3rd Open Female Surf Race - Multiple team event medals across clubs
<p>2025 Oceans (Junior Nationals Surf Lifesaving)</p>	<p>Peta Richardson</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2nd U14 Diamond
NZ Pool Lifesaving Champs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple individual podiums: Victoria Aburn (U15), Rae Kwan, Pippa Nicol (Open) - Pippa Nicol also podiumed in relay events
World Games Series (Lifesaving Pool Rescue, China)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pippa Nicol and Isla Petherbridge represented NZ
Triathlon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grayson Westgate: 24th out of 70 at June 2024 Asia Tri Cup - Grayson Westgate March 2025: 4th at Oceania Sprint Triathlon U23 - NZSS Triathlon: 9 athletes placed Top 10 in respective age groups
Otago Sports Awards (June 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lars Humer: Coach of the Year - Erika Fairweather: Junior Sportsperson and Supreme Award winner - Erika Fairweather: Finalist for Senior Sportswoman of the Year (34th Trillian Trust Māori Sports Awards)