

# Dual Career of Athletes After life impact & sustainability plan

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## **Introduction**

In the world of elite athletics, the pursuit of excellence demands unwavering dedication, commitment, and sacrifice. Athletes at the pinnacle of their sports invest not only in their physical prowess but also in their intellectual and career development. The SHARE project, which embodies the ethos of supporting holistic growth for elite athletes, recognizes that the journey does not end with athletic achievements but extends into a successful and fulfilling post-sport career.

As the SHARE project strives to bridge the gap between athletes' sporting careers and their pursuits in the labor market, it is imperative to not only create impactful change but also ensure its longevity. Sustainability and the enduring impact of the program are at the forefront of our mission. To achieve this, we have crafted a comprehensive sustainability and impact plan structured into eight distinct sections.

This plan not only reaffirms our commitment to the athletes but also serves as a roadmap to maintain and expand the program's influence in the years to come. Each section of the plan has been carefully designed to address the unique needs of elite athletes, ensuring that their dual careers are not only supported but also enriched. By focusing on continuous evaluation, alumni networks, research, partnerships, athlete-centered approaches, and mental well-being, we are paving the way for a robust and lasting legacy for the SHARE project.

This plan underscores our dedication to athletes' success, both on and off the field, and our recognition of the long-term value they bring to society. By implementing the sustainability and impact plan, the SHARE project is not just an initiative for the present but a beacon of enduring support for elite athletes as they navigate the dual careers that define their remarkable journey.

### **1. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure the ongoing success and relevance of the SHARE project in supporting elite athletes on their dual career journeys, a robust system for continuous monitoring and evaluation is essential. This section outlines the key elements of this system and how it will be implemented.

#### **1.1. Key Performance Metrics:**

Define and regularly review a set of key performance metrics that align with the program's goals. These metrics may include athletes' successful transition to post-sport careers, educational attainment, career satisfaction, and well-being.

#### **1.2. Data Collection and Analysis:**

Establish a data collection process to track and analyze the defined metrics. Utilize data analytics and reporting tools to compile and evaluate relevant data. This process will involve collaboration with athletes, coaches, and program staff to ensure data accuracy and completeness.

### **1.3. Feedback Mechanisms:**

Implement a feedback system that actively seeks input from elite athletes, coaches, and program stakeholders. This can be achieved through regular surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews to gather qualitative feedback.

### **1.4. Periodic Program Reviews:**

Conduct periodic program reviews, ideally on an annual basis, to assess the effectiveness of different program components. These reviews should focus on identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

### **1.5. Continuous Improvement:**

Use the data collected and feedback received to make informed decisions about program modifications and resource allocation. Regularly assess whether program objectives are being met and adjust strategies accordingly.

### **1.6. Reporting and Transparency:**

Publish regular reports on program performance, outcomes, and areas of improvement. Ensure transparency in sharing the results with athletes, stakeholders, and the public to maintain trust and accountability.

### **1.7. Benchmarking:**

Benchmark the SHARE project against other similar initiatives globally. Learn from best practices and adapt strategies to ensure that the program remains at the forefront of dual career support for elite athletes.

By establishing a system for continuous monitoring and evaluation, the SHARE project can adapt and grow in response to the ever-changing needs of elite athletes. This ensures that the program remains effective, relevant, and impactful in supporting athletes in both their sporting endeavors and their transitions to post-sport careers.

## **2. Alumni Network**

Recognizing that the journey of an elite athlete extends beyond the field of play, the creation of an alumni network is a pivotal element of the SHARE project. This network is designed to support athletes who have successfully transitioned to post-sport careers, facilitating mentorship and networking opportunities for current athletes.

### **2.1. Alumni Engagement:**

Reach out to athletes who have completed their sporting careers and successfully transitioned to post-sport careers. Invite them to become part of the SHARE alumni network.

### **2.2. Mentorship Program:**

Establish a mentorship program within the alumni network. Experienced athletes can provide guidance and support to current athletes, sharing their experiences, challenges, and strategies for successful dual careers.

### **2.3. Networking Opportunities:**

Organize regular networking events, both in person and virtually, that bring together current athletes and alumni. These events provide a platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and building professional relationships.

#### **2.4. Resource Sharing:**

Create a platform where alumni can share resources, job opportunities, and educational insights with current athletes. This resource-sharing hub will serve as a valuable repository of information.

#### **2.5. Career Development Workshops:**

Offer specialized career development workshops and seminars within the alumni network. These workshops can cover topics such as resume building, job searching, interview techniques, and career advancement strategies.

#### **2.6. Annual Gatherings:**

Organize annual alumni gatherings or conferences that facilitate face-to-face interactions among current athletes, alumni, program staff, and other stakeholders. These gatherings can include keynote speakers, panel discussions, and workshops on relevant topics.

#### **2.7. Online Platform:**

Develop a dedicated online platform where alumni and current athletes can connect, interact, and access resources. This platform should offer discussion forums, job boards, and access to career-related content.

#### **2.8. Mentoring Circles:**

Form smaller mentoring circles within the alumni network, where athletes at different stages of their post-sport careers can engage in peer-to-peer mentoring. This creates a supportive and dynamic mentorship ecosystem.

#### **2.9. Alumni Ambassadors:**

Appoint alumni ambassadors who serve as representatives of the network. These individuals can actively promote the SHARE program and encourage other athletes to join the network.

By establishing a vibrant alumni network, the SHARE project not only empowers current athletes but also leverages the experiences and expertise of those who have successfully transitioned to post-sport careers. This network is a testament to the program's commitment to long-term support and a testament to the enduring bond among elite athletes, ensuring they can thrive in their dual careers and continue to excel in their chosen paths beyond the realm of sports.

### **3. Research and Innovation**

The SHARE project recognizes the importance of staying at the forefront of dual career support for elite athletes. To achieve this, investment in research initiatives is essential. This section outlines how research and innovation will be integrated into the program to analyze long-term outcomes and ensure alignment with evolving job market trends.

#### **3.1. Research Initiatives:**

Establish dedicated research initiatives focused on the long-term outcomes of dual career support for elite athletes. These initiatives will explore the career trajectories, well-being, and overall success of athletes who have gone through the SHARE program.

### **3.2. Data Collection and Analysis:**

Implement rigorous data collection and analysis methods to assess the impact of the program on athletes' dual careers. This may involve longitudinal studies, surveys, interviews, and the collection of relevant performance metrics.

### **3.3. Collaboration with Academic Partners:**

Collaborate with academic institutions and researchers with expertise in sports science, career development, and athlete well-being. Form research partnerships to gain insights and access resources for comprehensive studies.

### **3.4. Innovation Lab:**

Establish an innovation lab or unit within the SHARE program to experiment with novel approaches, strategies, and tools. This lab will serve as an incubator for innovative ideas and practices.

### **3.5. Industry Engagement:**

Engage with industries and corporations to stay abreast of job market trends and evolving skill requirements. Regularly survey industry needs and collaborate with employers to understand changing job dynamics.

### **3.6. Continuous Learning:**

Encourage program staff, coaches, and athletes to engage in continuous learning and professional development. Stay informed about the latest research findings and emerging best practices in dual career support.

### **3.7. Program Adaptation:**

Use research findings to adapt and refine the SHARE program continuously. Ensure that the program remains responsive to the changing needs of athletes and the evolving demands of the job market.

### **3.8. Thought Leadership:**

Position the SHARE program as a thought leader in dual career support for elite athletes. Publish research findings, whitepapers, and reports to share insights and drive industry discussions.

By investing in research initiatives and promoting innovation, the SHARE project strives to be on the cutting edge of dual career support. Research findings will not only help validate the program's impact but also drive continuous improvement, ensuring that elite athletes receive the most relevant and effective support in their transition to post-sport careers.

## **4. Partnerships and Funding**

The sustainability and impact of the SHARE project depend significantly on forging strategic partnerships and securing sustainable funding sources. This section outlines the strategies for establishing collaborations with government agencies, sports organizations, educational institutions, and corporations, as well as actively seeking grants and sponsorships.

### **4.1. Government Agencies:**

Collaborate with relevant government agencies at local, regional, and national levels. Seek partnerships that align with the government's interest in promoting education, workforce development, and athlete well-being.

#### **4.2. Sports Organizations:**

Partner with sports organizations, both at the grassroots and elite levels, to leverage their networks and resources. Collaborations with sports' governing bodies can provide access to a broader pool of athletes and potential funding sources.

#### **4.3. Educational Institutions:**

Establish partnerships with educational institutions, including universities, colleges, and vocational schools. These institutions can offer educational support, scholarships, and resources for athletes pursuing academic endeavors.

#### **4.4. Corporations:**

Engage with corporations that value the skills and qualities developed in sports, such as teamwork, discipline, and leadership. Seek corporate sponsorships and support for the SHARE program, emphasizing the mutual benefits of investing in athlete development.

#### **4.5. Grants and Foundations:**

Actively pursue grants and funding opportunities from foundations and philanthropic organizations dedicated to sports, education, and youth development. Craft compelling grant proposals that align with the mission and goals of these entities.

#### **4.6. Sponsorship Agreements:**

Secure sponsorship agreements with companies and brands that are interested in aligning their image with athlete development and dual career support. These agreements can provide financial support and in-kind resources.

#### **4.7. Endowment Fund:**

Establish an endowment fund dedicated to sustaining the SHARE project in the long term. Encourage individuals, organizations, and alumni to contribute to this fund, which can provide ongoing financial stability.

#### **4.8. Fundraising Campaigns:**

Organize fundraising campaigns and events that involve the community, fans, and supporters of elite athletes. These campaigns can raise awareness and generate financial support for the program.

#### **4.9. Financial Accountability:**

Maintain transparency and financial accountability in all partnerships and funding sources. Regularly report on the allocation and utilization of funds to build trust with partners and stakeholders.

By actively pursuing strategic partnerships and diverse funding sources, the SHARE project aims to secure the financial stability needed for its sustained operation. These collaborations and funding efforts ensure that elite athletes continue to receive the vital support required for their dual career journeys, fostering their success in both sports and post-sport careers.

### **5. Integration with Sports Institutions**

The SHARE project recognizes the importance of collaboration with sports' governing bodies and institutions to embed dual career support within their policies and guidelines for elite athletes. This section outlines the strategies to advocate for and facilitate the institutionalization of dual career planning.

**5.1. Collaboration with Sports Governing Bodies:**

Engage in active dialogue and collaboration with sports' governing bodies, including national and international associations. Advocate for the recognition of dual career support as an integral part of athlete development.

**5.2. Educational Partnerships:**

Establish partnerships with sports institutions, academies, and training centers. Encourage these institutions to integrate dual career planning into their curriculum and athlete development programs.

**5.3. Policy Advocacy:**

Advocate for the development and implementation of dual career policies and guidelines within sports' governing bodies. Work with these organizations to create a framework that addresses the educational and career needs of elite athletes.

**5.4. Research-Based Recommendations:**

Provide research-based recommendations and data to support the case for dual career integration. Demonstrating the positive impact of dual career support on athlete performance and post-sport career success is crucial.

**5.5. Educational Partnerships:**

Collaborate with educational institutions to facilitate flexible learning options that accommodate the training and competition schedules of elite athletes. Encourage these institutions to offer scholarships and academic support.

**5.6. Information Dissemination:**

Create educational materials and resources that can be disseminated to sports institutions. These materials should emphasize the importance of dual career planning and provide guidance on its implementation.

**5.7. Dual Career Liaisons:**

Appoint dual career liaisons within sports institutions who can serve as points of contact for elite athletes pursuing academic or career goals. These liaisons can provide guidance and support.

**5.8. Athlete Representation:**

Encourage the participation of elite athletes in decision-making processes within sports institutions. Athletes' perspectives and needs should be considered when shaping dual career policies and programs.

**5.9. Capacity Building:**

Offer capacity-building workshops and training programs for coaches, administrators, and staff within sports institutions. These programs should focus on the integration of dual career support.

Through strategic collaboration and advocacy efforts, the SHARE project aims to make dual career support an integral part of the policies and guidelines of sports institutions. By institutionalizing dual career planning, elite athletes can seamlessly balance their sports and educational or career pursuits, ensuring their long-term success and well-being.

## **6. Athlete-Centered Approach**

Central to the sustainability and impact of the SHARE project is a commitment to maintaining an athlete-centric focus in program development. This section outlines the strategies for continuously assessing and addressing the evolving needs of elite athletes, providing them with tailored support as they progress in their sports and careers.

### **6.1. Needs Assessment:**

Conduct regular needs assessments to understand the evolving requirements of elite athletes. Engage athletes, coaches, and program stakeholders in this process to gather firsthand insights.

### **6.2. Personalized Support Plans:**

Develop personalized support plans for elite athletes based on their individual goals, career aspirations, and progress in their sports. These plans should be dynamic and adaptable to changing circumstances.

### **6.3. Ongoing Communication:**

Maintain open lines of communication with elite athletes. Regularly solicit feedback, engage in discussions, and provide platforms for athletes to express their concerns and suggestions.

### **6.4. Career Progression Tracking:**

Implement a system for tracking the career progression of athletes who have gone through the SHARE program. This tracking should include academic achievements, career milestones, and sports performance.

### **6.5. Mentorship and Guidance:**

Assign dedicated mentors and advisors to elite athletes. These mentors should offer guidance, support, and assistance tailored to the unique needs of each athlete.

### **6.6. Performance Evaluation:**

Continuously assess the performance of the SHARE program in meeting the needs of elite athletes. Use performance data to make data-driven decisions and improvements.

### **6.7. Educational and Career Path Support:**

Provide athletes with access to resources and support systems that align with their chosen educational and career paths. This may include academic advising, job placement services, and entrepreneurship guidance.

### **6.8. Tailored Resources:**

Ensure that all resources and tools offered by the SHARE program can be customized to meet the specific requirements of each athlete. This flexibility allows for an individualized approach to dual career support.

### **6.9. Annual Athlete Summits:**

Organize annual athlete summits where elite athletes can come together to share their experiences, challenges, and success stories. These summits provide a platform for peer learning and community-building.

By adopting an athlete-centered approach, the SHARE project aims to provide elite athletes with tailored and dynamic support throughout their dual career journeys. This focus on

individualized assistance ensures that athletes receive the guidance and resources they need to excel in both sports and post-sport careers, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and well-being

## **7. Mental Health and Well-being**

The mental health and well-being of elite athletes are critical aspects of the SHARE project's sustainability and impact. This section outlines strategies for prioritizing mental health support and offering resources to help athletes navigate the emotional challenges of transitioning to post-sport life.

### **7.1. Mental Health Education:**

Integrate mental health education into the SHARE program, ensuring that athletes have access to resources and information about common mental health challenges and coping strategies.

### **7.2. Confidential Counseling Services:**

Offer confidential counseling services that are easily accessible to elite athletes. These services should be staffed by qualified professionals who understand the unique pressures athletes face.

### **7.3. Mental Health Workshops:**

Conduct mental health workshops and training sessions that address issues such as identity challenges, performance anxiety, and stress management. Equip athletes with tools to enhance their mental resilience.

### **7.4. Peer Support Networks:**

Establish peer support networks where athletes can connect with others who have experienced similar mental health challenges during their dual career transitions. These networks provide a sense of community and understanding.

### **7.5. Holistic Well-being:**

Promote holistic well-being by emphasizing the importance of physical fitness, nutrition, and work-life balance. These aspects contribute to mental health and overall quality of life.

### **7.6. Post-Career Mentoring:**

Provide post-career mentors who are experienced in addressing mental health challenges during career transitions. These mentors can offer guidance and support to athletes.

### **7.7. Mental Health Advocacy:**

Advocate for mental health awareness and support within the sports community and among program stakeholders. Participate in initiatives that reduce the stigma associated with seeking help.

### **7.8. Crisis Response Plan:**

Develop a crisis response plan to address acute mental health issues that may arise. Ensure that there is a clear process for identifying and responding to mental health crises.

### **7.9. Ongoing Evaluation:**

Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of mental health support services and resources. Use feedback from athletes and mental health professionals to refine and improve these offerings.

Prioritizing mental health and well-being within the SHARE project is essential to ensuring that elite athletes are not only successful in their dual careers but also experience a high quality of life. By addressing mental health challenges, the program contributes to the overall resilience and success of athletes during their transitions and beyond.

## **8. Educational Partnerships**

Strengthening collaborations with educational institutions is a key element in ensuring the sustainability and impact of the SHARE project. This section outlines strategies to expand partnerships with educational institutions, providing elite athletes with access to high-quality education and certification programs, including flexible academic arrangements and online learning options.

### **8.1. Academic Partnerships:**

Foster strong partnerships with universities, colleges, and vocational schools. These institutions should offer academic programs that align with the career aspirations of elite athletes.

### **8.2. Scholarships and Financial Support:**

Work with educational partners to secure scholarships and financial support specifically for elite athletes. These opportunities should help alleviate the financial burden associated with pursuing education.

### **8.3. Customized Learning Plans:**

Develop customized learning plans for athletes, allowing them to balance their training and competition schedules with their academic pursuits. These plans should be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances.

### **8.4. Online Learning Platforms:**

Explore partnerships with online learning platforms and institutions to provide athletes with remote access to high-quality education. Online courses can be a valuable resource for athletes on the move.

### **8.5. Certification Programs:**

Collaborate with educational institutions and professional organizations to offer industry-recognized certification programs. These certifications enhance athletes' qualifications and job prospects.

### **8.6. Academic Advisors:**

Appoint academic advisors who specialize in working with elite athletes. These advisors can provide guidance on course selection, degree programs, and academic planning.

### **8.7. Career-Integrated Education:**

Encourage educational institutions to incorporate career-integrated education into their curriculum. This approach links academic learning with real-world career experiences.

### **8.8. Dual Career Scholarships:**

Advocate for the establishment of dual career scholarships that are specifically designed to support athletes pursuing education alongside their sports careers.

### **8.9. Research and Innovation Hub:**

Create a research and innovation hub within educational institutions that focuses on understanding the unique needs and challenges of elite athletes. This hub can inform program improvements and tailored educational offerings.

By strengthening educational partnerships, the SHARE project ensures that elite athletes have access to high-quality education and certification programs that facilitate their dual career journeys. These collaborations provide athletes with the flexibility to pursue academic goals while excelling in sports, contributing to their long-term success and well-being.