

# The Sports Excellence Scholarship Fund



## 2024 IMPACT STATEMENT



Sports  
Excellence  
Scholarship  
Fund



Supporting young  
Australian sports people.



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This year has been another record-breaking one for the Sports Excellence Scholarship Fund (SESF) as we continue to support talented young athletes across Australia. We are proud to have awarded **255 scholarships** to emerging athletes, smashing our goal of 230, from a total of 1,700 applications. This doubling in demand reflects the expanding reach and reputation of SESF and highlights the pressing need for greater access to financial support in sport.

SESF remains dedicated to supporting accessibility in sport for all Australians, including those from underrepresented communities. In 2024, we awarded scholarships to 42 Indigenous athletes, 46 Para-athletes, 65 regional athletes, and 29 remote athletes. These figures underscore our commitment to building a diverse sporting community and empowering athletes who face additional financial and logistical barriers.

Our partnerships have been crucial in making this impact possible. We are deeply grateful to our enduring supporters, including the **MCC Foundation, The Phillips Foundation, New Balance, Bunnings, RACV, ASCA** several dedicated philanthropists and many other financial partners.

This year's major events were our best yet kicking off with Bonjour, Paris, our Paris Olympics-themed celebration at the MCG, Parmas for Purpose - our first-ever fundraising event—and other boutique gatherings like SESF on the Greens lawn bowls with our alumni, a Golf Day, a Virtual Golf Challenge, and an exclusive networking event at Sydney Tower.

At these events, we celebrated significant milestones, awarding **Brooke Buschkuehl** a life membership and naming **Anthony and Liz Phillips** as SESF's first-ever patrons. Each event was a great success and underscored SESF's growing presence and the strong community of supporters that make our mission possible.

Our alumni continue to inspire us with their achievements. **Jack Howell**, a 2016 SESF recipient and ambassador, proudly debuted as our first-ever Paralympian. **Bec Henderson**, a 2018 recipient and ambassador, became SESF's first dual Olympian after competing in both the Tokyo and Paris Olympics. We also celebrated **Harley Reid**, a 2017 recipient, who won Goal of the Year in his impressive first AFL season; **Jasper Stubbs**, a 2019 recipient, who made his Masters debut; and the return of the AFLW season with alumni **Monique Conti** (2014), **Maddy Prespakis** (2015), and **Gabby Newton** (2016) leading the way.

The SESF team is incredibly proud of this year's achievements and eager to reach new heights in 2025. Heartfelt thanks to the SESF Board and volunteers, whose dedication enables young athletes to overcome challenges and pursue their dreams. To our partners, supporters, and families—thank you for your unwavering commitment to making sport accessible. Wishing you all a joyful festive season and a successful new year!



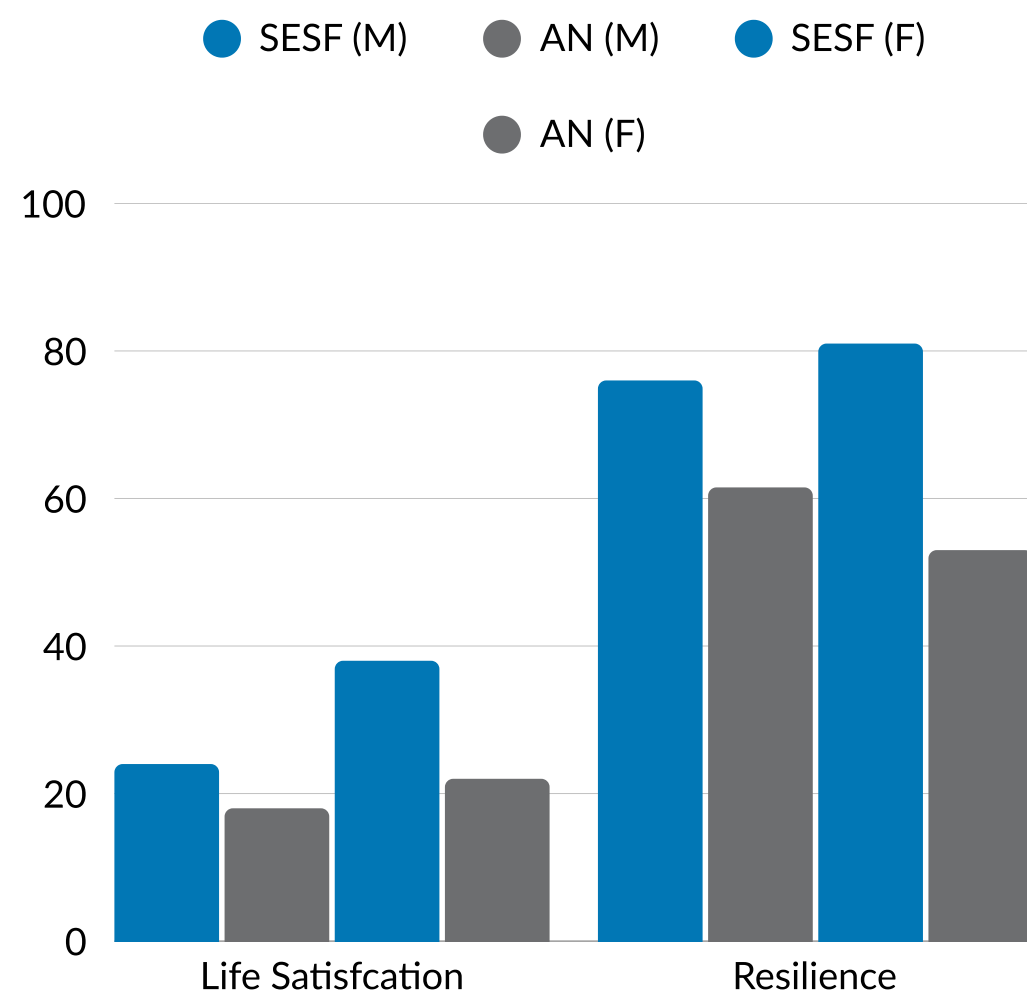
*Nick Mooney*

Nick Mooney  
**SESF Executive Director**

# The HOPE Survey

The Hope Survey, supported by The Phillips Foundation, Giving Connect, Resilient Youth Australia, and The University of Adelaide, has enabled us in 2024 to measure the transformative impact of SESF scholarships on youth. The survey assesses *hope, resilience, and life satisfaction*.

## THIS IS WHAT WE FOUND:



- 38% of SESF females and 24% of males rate their Life Satisfaction at the highest level.
- 75.7% of SESF males and 81.3% of females are considered Resilient.
- 79% of SESF recipients report feeling Hopeful “most” or “lots” of the time.

SESF recipients display **higher resilience, greater hope, and better life satisfaction** after receiving their scholarship, compared to the Australian National (AN) averages.

“What **IMPACT** did receiving an SESF scholarship have on you?”

"I find **playing sports is a major part of me staying well and gives me an outlet** as well as having positive moments."

"It **took a lot of stress off my mum**, to pay for everything."

**"Motivation that I can do well. I am good enough."**

"I learned about myself and how to deal with different situations on and off the field, life skills **I will use the skills and be the best version of myself. I can be.** Once in a lifetime opportunity."

"A huge impact as I got to compete with the best in the world and **I now believe that I too could become the best in the world** one day."

"It **made me feel as i was important and vauled** and help relieved our financial problems."

SESF recipients told us our scholarships **REDUCE financial stress, BUILD confidence and personal growth**, and **OFFER a pathway** to future sporting opportunities.

# 2024 BY THE NUMBERS ...

## SESF SCHOLARSHIPS

255

111%

Target 230

## APPLICATIONS

1700

115%

Target 1500

1 in 7



applications are successful

86

Regional athletes

35

Remote athletes

48

Indigenous athletes

51

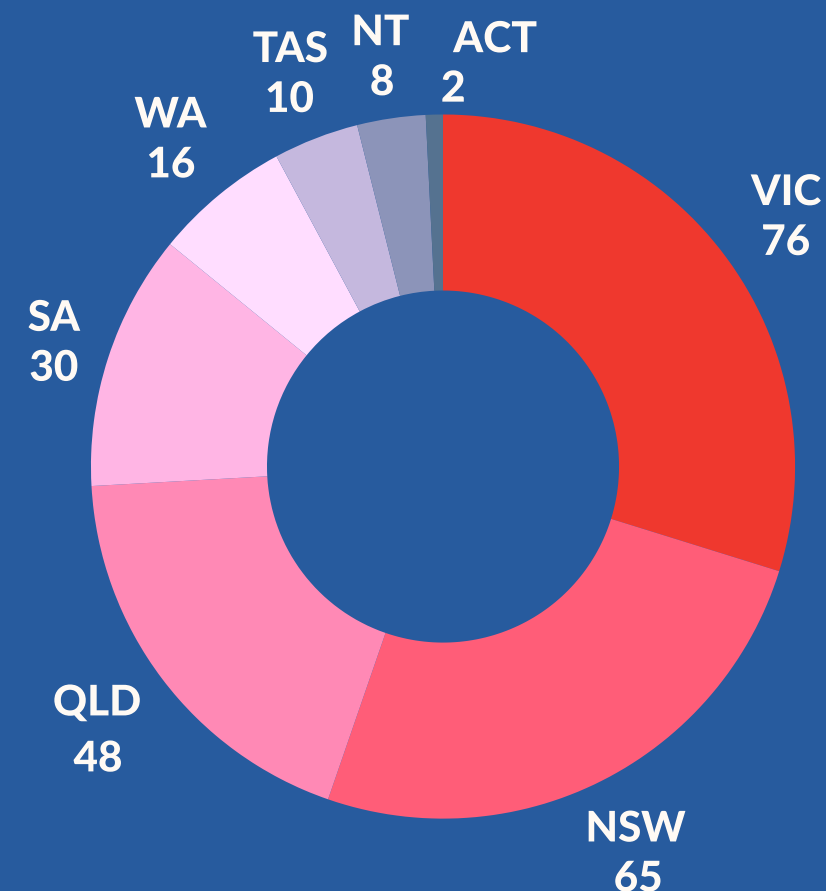
Para-athletes

70  
60  
50  
40  
30  
20  
10  
0

Athletics Football & Futsal Swimming Basketball Netball



51% 49%  
Gender



Scholarships by State

Scholarships by Sport (Top 5 of 38)





SESF reached **EVERY** corner of Australia in 2024!

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Name	School	State	Sport
Sophie Hale	Bass Valley Primary School	VIC	Softball
Bul Dhieu	St John Paul II College	ACT	Basketball
Macie Petterwood	Scotch Oakburn College	TAS	Athletics
Hugh Kite	Binya Public School	NSW	AFL
Addison Gardiner	Paringa Park Primary School	SA	Calisthenics
Will Heath	Brisbane State High School	QLD	Cycling
Mikka Kolle	Rowville Secondary College	VIC	Futsal
Maxwell Giles	Yirara College	NT	Athletics
Dannica Starkey	Sunshine Beach State High School	QLD	Karate
Kaleb Glas	Mount Barker Community College	WA	Swimming



Visit the full [2024 Hall of Fame](#)

# OUR STORY:



**2012** \_\_\_\_\_ SESF Launch at University High School.  
3 Scholarships awarded.  
Commencement of Alumni and  
Partner Education Annual Forum.

**2013** \_\_\_\_\_ 8 scholarships awarded.  
SESF partnered with the Business  
Working with Education Foundation.

**2014** \_\_\_\_\_ 20 scholarships awarded.  
Steve Hooker is appointed as first  
SESF Ambassador.  
Partnership with Schools Connect  
Australia.

**2015** \_\_\_\_\_ 14 scholarships awarded.  
Partnership with Schools  
Connect Australia.

**2016** \_\_\_\_\_ 22 scholarships awarded.  
Partnership with Schools  
Connect Australia.

**2017** \_\_\_\_\_ 34 scholarships awarded.  
Deductible Gift Recipient status  
achieved.

**2018** \_\_\_\_\_ 39 scholarships awarded.

**2019** \_\_\_\_\_ 45 scholarships awarded.  
Launch of the new SESF website. SESF  
becomes an Incorporated Association.

**2020** \_\_\_\_\_ National sporting events cancelled due  
to COVID-19 - no scholarships awarded.  
Mentor program commences with 10  
mentors & mentees.  
First SESF Executive Director appointed.

**2021** \_\_\_\_\_ Assessment of scholarships based on  
reactivation of school sport.  
Continuation of the mentoring  
program. Foundations built for national  
roll out and partnerships created.

**2022** \_\_\_\_\_ SESF launches national program.  
145 scholarships awarded across 6 states.  
Peter Wright and Steve Moneghetti are  
awarded SESF Life Memberships.

**2023** \_\_\_\_\_ 175 scholarships awarded from 900  
applications.  
National School Principals Advisory  
Committee established.  
Ashleigh Brennan is awarded an SESF  
Life Membership.

**2024** \_\_\_\_\_ 255 scholarships awarded from 1700  
applications.  
Brooke Buschkuehl is awarded an SESF  
Life Membership.  
Liz and Anthony Phillips named SESF  
Patrons.  
2 SESF alumni compete in the Paris  
Olympics and Paralympics.

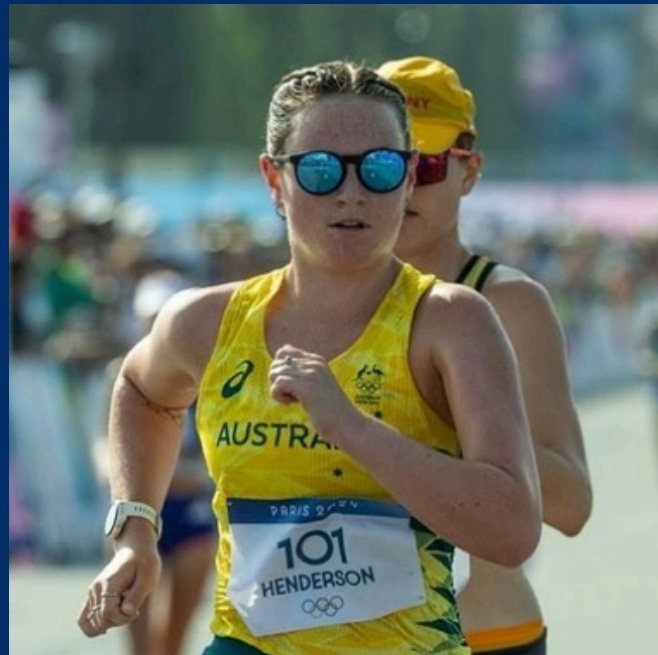


# SESF ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



## JACK HOWELL MAKES HIS PARALYMPICS DEBUT

We are incredibly proud of Jack Howell, a 2016 SESF scholarship recipient, who recently made his debut at the 2024 Paris Paralympics in the Men's PTS5 Paratriathlon. At just 19 years of age, Jack is not only the youngest international competitor in the world rankings but also the youngest member of the Australian team. Jack finished an impressive 7th place, adding to an already stellar year!



## BEC HENDERSON BECOMES A DUAL OLYMPIAN

Bec Henderson, 2018 alumni and SESF ambassador, made history as the first SESF alumni to become an Olympian, competing in the 20km Race Walk at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics at just 20 years old, finishing 38th. She has now become a dual Olympian, competing in both the 20km Race Walk and the Marathon Team Racewalk Relay at the Paris 2024 Olympics.



## Harley Reid wins AFL Goal of the Year

Congratulations to Harley Reid, a 2017 SESF scholarship recipient, for winning Goal of the Year at the 2024 AFL Brownlow Awards. Harley has had an outstanding year since being picked No.1 in the 2023 AFL Draft by the West Coast Eagles. He made his much-anticipated debut in Round 1 against Port Adelaide and secured a nomination for the Rising Star Award for his impressive season.



## Jasper Stubbs becomes a professional golfer

Jasper Stubbs has turned professional after his debut at the 2024 Masters, following a share of 32nd place in his title defense at the Asia Pacific Amateur Championship in Japan. The Victorian, who won the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship in 2023, will begin his professional career with the 2024/25 Challenger PGA Tour of Australasia, becoming the first Australian AAC participant this year to make the switch.



## AFLW stars continue to shine

Season 9 of the AFLW saw three SESF alumni take the field. **Monique Conti** (2014) continued to dominate the midfield for the Richmond Tigers after winning the 2023 Best and Fairest. **Maddy Prespakis** (2015), 2020 Best and Fairest winner, remained one of the top player for Essendon and the whole league. **Gabby Newton** (2016) began a new chapter with the Fremantle Dockers.



# SESF EVENTS

## BONJOUR, PARIS!

### MCG, MELBOURNE

SESF celebrated the upcoming Paris Olympics and Paralympics, featuring an inspiring panel with Olympians and SESF ambassadors Mack Horton OAM, Bec Henderson, Brooke Buschkuehl, and Paralympian Tim Matthews OAM. The panelists shared insights on their athletic journeys and preparations and conducted a mentoring session with SESF alumni.



# PARMAS FOR PURPOSE

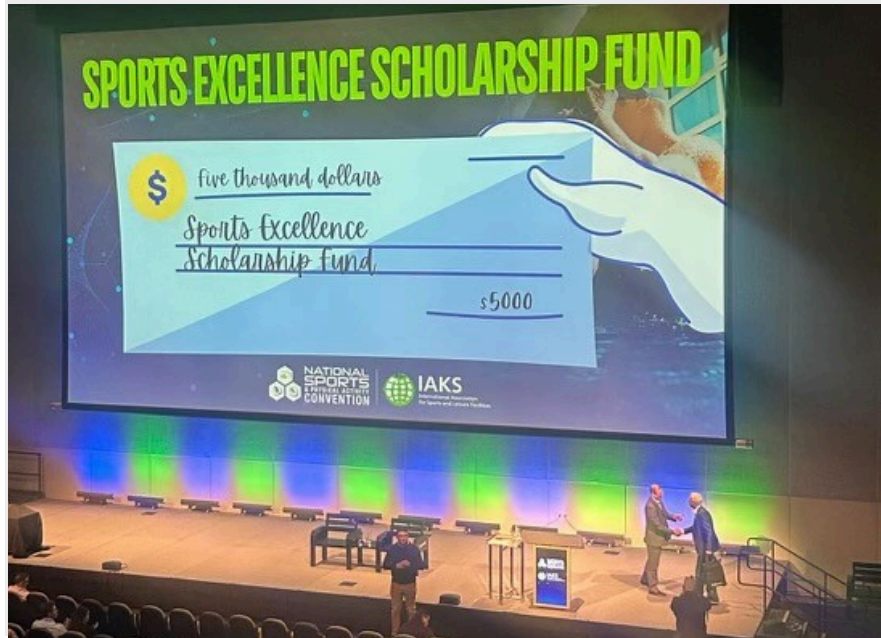
## THE PALACE HOTEL, SOUTH MELBOURNE

Our thought-provoking panel on integrity in sport, featured Jaimie Fuller of eo Sports Lab, Ash Brennan, SESF Life Member, Mack Horton OAM, and Daniel Stuk of Tennis Australia. A special thanks to SESF contributor Chris Ryan for hosting the event and bringing the SESF community together for a meaningful cause.





# CATCHING UP WITH PARTNERS AND ALUMNI!





# BROOKE BUSCHKUEHL IS AWARDED AN SESF LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Brooke Buschkuehl (née Stratton), a three-time Olympian, Commonwealth Games silver medalist, and Australian & Oceanic long jump record holder, was honored with an SESF life membership in 2024. Brooke's journey in athletics began at age 5, and she has risen to become one of Australia's most accomplished long jumpers, competing at the highest levels, including the Rio, Tokyo, and Paris Olympics.

Beyond her athletic achievements, Brooke has been an incredible asset to SESF, serving as a mentor and ambassador. She has taken on mentorship opportunities, shared her experiences with aspiring athletes, and actively promoted SESF's mission to support emerging talent. Her dedication to empowering young athletes and her significant contribution to SESF were recognized with this prestigious honor.

SESF is deeply grateful for Brooke's unwavering support, her contributions have enriched the SESF community and left a lasting impact on future sports stars.





# OUR BOARD:



**Andrew Horton**  
Chairperson



**Nick Mooney**  
Founder and Executive Director



**Steven Gatt**  
Deputy Chairperson  
Finance Officer



**Peter Wright**  
Life Member of the SESF



**Fiona Taylor**  
Principal of Western Heights College



**Pieter van Pinxteren**  
Regional School Sport Officer,  
School Sport Victoria

# NATIONAL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>State</u>
Matthew Grining	Penguin P-12 / President Tasmanian Principals Association	TAS
Fiona Taylor	Western Heights College	VIC
Cameron Heath	Casey Fields Primary School	VIC
Tim East	Batchelor Area School	NT
Rob Lawson	Darling Range Sports College	WA
Neesha Flint	Geraldton Grammar School	WA
Ken Bates	Mount Annan High School	NSW
Andrew Hooper	Emu Heights Public School	NSW
Steven Richard	Bolwarra Public School	NSW
Clayton Disley	Reynella East College	SA
Peter Turner	Bray Park State High School	QLD
Simon Murphy	Blackheath & Thornburgh College	QLD

Thank you to all the SESF contributors and partners. These include commercial, sporting organisations, collaborative and private partners.

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COMMERCIAL NATIONAL SPORTING PARTNERS



COMMERCIAL STATE SPORTING PARTNERS



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS



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Supporting young  
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Thank you for supporting the next generation of future sporting stars.

**Nick Mooney**

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[www.sesf.org.au](http://www.sesf.org.au)

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