

TEAM IRELAND

Guidelines for Applications



March 2024

Team Ireland Programme

Scheme of Assistance for Irish Tennis Players

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Introduction

Tennis Ireland is fully committed to providing our leading players with every opportunity to progress within our sport. Our efforts focus on ensuring that Irish players can maximise their playing opportunities in tandem with our plans to continuously improve facilities on and off court.

As tournament play is the most essential part of player development, Tennis Ireland will continue to look at maximising international hosting opportunities for both junior and senior players.

However, Tennis Ireland also recognises that this alone is not enough and as such are pleased to announce details of our **2024 Team Ireland Tennis Programme**.

The **Team Ireland Tennis Programme**, which is part of our national performance strategy, will provide ringfenced funding and non-financial support to assist Irish Tennis Players, both male and female, based on achievement of specific performance benchmarks.

The objective of this support is to help our leading players offset some of the costs associated with equipment, training, and the necessity for regular international travel (at both junior and at professional level) so they can compete at the highest level possible, while demonstrating progress in their performances.

The Team Ireland programme is governed by a committee which was specifically established to oversee the operation of the scheme and to consider applications received. This committee consists of two representatives from Tennis Ireland, a nominee from Sport Ireland, the International Club of Ireland and two members of the business community who have an affinity with Tennis.

Grants from the scheme are funded by allocations from both Tennis Ireland and Sport Ireland and will be allocated via a clear, transparent, and benchmarked programme that rewards those who are highly performing. In the coming years, it is hoped that additional funds will be raised from the private sector through sponsorship or philanthropy as the Team Ireland Tennis Programme develops.

Full details are contained in the relevant sections below.

Please note:

- The budgeted funding allocation for the programme and any third-party funding that has been allocated to the programme, will only be used for the 'Team Ireland' scheme and will not be available for general Tennis Ireland expenses or non-grant activities.
- The expenses and resources required for the administration of the scheme will be separately met by Tennis Ireland.
- An appeals committee will deal with any complaints from players regarding the decisions of the Team Ireland Programme Committee

Objective of ‘Team Ireland’

The objective of the Scheme is to provide support, both financial and non-financial, to young professional and amateur tennis players who have met the performance criteria benchmarks and are demonstrating progress in their careers.

Who can Apply?

Players who are aged 16 and over, on or before 31st December 2023 can apply. Successful applicants must be competing on at least one of the following tours:

- ATP World/Challenger & ITF Tours for men
- WTA World & ITF Tours for women
- ITF Junior Boys & Girls Tours
- ITF Wheelchair Tennis Tour
- NCAA Division I Intercollegiate Tennis

Applications will be open once each year for the following award year. Players who are being supported by the scheme, must make themselves available for all Junior international team Championships, Davis Cup or Billie Jean King Cup should they be selected.

Grand Slam Contribution

In addition to the Team Ireland Programme, a contribution is available for players who compete in Grand Slam Qualifiers and main draws. There is no application process, but an agreement must be signed by both the player (and parent/guardian if player is U18) and Tennis Ireland. Contributions are as follows:

Qualifiers - €1,000

Main Draw - €2,000

If a player competes in both the qualifiers and main draw the total contribution is €2,000.

Davis and Billie Jean King Cup Fees

In addition to the Team Ireland Programme, players selected for Davis Cup or Billie Jean King Cup will receive a fee.

Players that are selected for and play in Davis or Billie Jean King Cup for Ireland will receive the below player fee as per the group or tie they are selected for.

There is a promotion bonus per player if the team achieves promotion into a higher group.

Player fees applicable to Davis Cup/Billie Jean King Cup from 2023 onwards

| Davis Cup Group | Davis Cup Group Fee | Billie Jean King Cup Group | Billie Jean King Cup Fee |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Finals – Knock out tournament | | Finals | |
| Finals – Group stage | | | |

To be determined if and when we secure promotion to this level.

| Qualifiers | | Qualifiers | |
|---------------------------|---|------------|---|
| World Group I tie | €3,000 per player + €2,500 win bonus | Group I | €3,000 per player + €2,500 promotion bonus |
| World Group I Playoff | €2,000 per player + €2,000 promotion bonus | | |
| World Group II tie | €2,000 per player + €1,500 win bonus | Group II | €2,000 per player +€1,500 promotion bonus |
| World Group II Playoff | €1,000 per player + €1,000 promotion bonus | | |
| Group III | €1,000 per player + €1,000 top 2 finish promotion bonus | Group III | €1,000 per player +€1,000 promotion bonus |
| Group IV | €1,000 per player +€1,000 top 2 finish promotion bonus | | |

All players on the team receive the base fee for the group they play in. If the team win a promotional playoff i.e. win a playoff to get into the next group e.g. World Group II Playoff to get into World Group II, then players receive a bonus in addition to the base fee. If the team loses the playoff, they receive the base fee of the group they are currently in, in relation to the example above, they would receive the Group III fee as they did not gain promotion. No fees are paid to players if the nation receives a walkover, or give a walkover.

A review of all fees will take place in January 2026 with any changes to take effect in 2026 for the respective ties/playoffs/group stages.

Eligibility and Criteria

Irish Tennis players who meet the performance criteria outlined below will be eligible to apply for the Programme. Applicants must provide evidence of a competition schedule (see application form), which will lead to becoming an established player on the ITF World Tennis Tour, the ATP Tour, the WTA Tour, or ITF Wheelchair Tennis Tour.

4 Funded Tiers + Wheelchair

- Application forms available from March 2024.
- Committee will meet in April 2024.
- Successful applicants will be notified before Tuesday 30th April via email.

- Successful players will be paid their first amount on Wednesday 15th May of the award year (2024), and their second amount on Thursday 15th August of the award year (2024).
- Applications must be returned to Lisa Murphy (lisa.murphy@tennisireland.ie) by 5pm Friday 19th April 2024.

Tiers of Benchmarked Criteria

Please note:

Players will be awarded the below amounts based on their age and corresponding ranking according to the tiers below at the time of applying/their ranking on 25th March 2024. Please see examples below each tier for an explanation.

Applications that do not meet the requirements will be deemed null and void.

Players can apply for either singles or doubles tier – not both.

Tier 1 – Men & Women

| Age | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23+ |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ITF Ranking | 300 ITF Junior | 175 ITF Junior | 80 ITF Junior | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| ATP/WTA Ranking | Achieve a Ranking Point | 1500 or better ATP/WTA | 1000 or better ATP/WTA | 750 or better ATP/WTA | 600 or better ATP/WTA | 450 or better ATP/WTA | 350 or better ATP/WTA | 250 or better ATP/WTA |
| Award | €10,000.00 + Non-Financial Support | | | | | | | |

Tier 1 Qualifying Players:

A singles player who achieves a ranking on or inside the ranking criteria above on the ITF/ATP/WTA ranking date of 25th March 2024, will be awarded the full Tier 1 funding amount of €10,000 in two equal payments.

Examples 1 – A player turning 19 years of age in 2024 and achieving an ATP ranking of #1 - #750 on 25th March 2024.

Example 2 – A player turning 17 years of age in 2024 and achieving an ITF Junior ranking of #1 - #175 on 25th March 2024.

Tier 2 – Men & Women

| Age | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23+ |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ITF/NCAA Ranking | 500 ITF | 350 ITF | 200 ITF | 60 NCAA | 35 NCAA | 25 NCAA | 25 NCAA | 25 NCAA |
| ATP/WTA Ranking | Achieve a Ranking Point | Achieve a Ranking Point | Achieve a Ranking Point | 1200 or better ATP/WTA | 1000 or better ATP/WTA | 750 or better ATP/WTA | 650 or better ATP/WTA | 550 or better ATP/WTA |
| Award | €7,500.00 + Non-Financial Support | | | | | | | |

Tier 2 – Qualifying Players:

A singles player who achieves a ranking on or inside the ranking criteria above on the NCAA/ITF/ATP/WTA ranking date of 25th March 2024 (or end of college year date in terms of the NCAA), will be awarded the full Tier 2 funding amount of €7,500 in two equal payments.

Qualifying Player Example 1 – A player turning 20 years of age in 2024 and achieving an NCAA ranking of #1 - #35 on 25th March 2024.

or

Qualifying Player Example 2 – A player turning 18 years of age in 2024 and achieving an ITF Junior ranking of #1 - #200 on 25th March 2024.

Tier 3 – Men & Women (Bridging Tier)

| Ranking Achievement | |
|--|---|
| Junior to Pro Transition (age 17/18 years) | Have achieved a junior ITF ranking of #200 or better |
| College to Pro transition (completed college) | Have achieved an NCAA Division 1 ranking of #100 or better or an ATP/WTA ranking while in college |
| Award | €3000 broken into 6 X €500 contributions to the players first 6 tournaments |

Tier 3

Example of Players who should apply – Junior to Pro

A singles player who decides to transition directly from Junior to Senior/Pro tennis. The player must have finished 2023 with a ranking of #200 or better in ITF juniors on the last ranking date of 2023.

Mandatory Requirement: Before receiving any payment, players must present the 6 tournaments that they plan to play - a clear list of the tournament dates. After the event, players must send their tournament receipts to the Performance and Coaching Executive. Payment will be processed on 15th of the month following the tournament once receipts are submitted.

Example of Players who should apply – College to Pro

A singles player who decides to go to Senior/Pro tennis after he/she has completed their college education. This player must finish 2023 with a ranking of #100 or better in NCAA Division 1 on the last ranking date of the Official 2023 NCAA College Rankings.

Mandatory Requirement: Before receiving any payment, players must present the 6 tournaments that they plan to play, a clear list of the tournament dates. After the event, players must send their

tournament receipts to the Performance and Coaching Executive. Payment will be processed on 15th of the month following the tournament once receipts are submitted.

Tier 4 – Doubles Only, Men & Women

| Age | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24+ |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ATP/WTA Ranking | 750 | 650 | 550 | 450 | 400 | 350 | 350 |
| Award | €5,000.00 + Non-Financial Support | | | | | | |

Tier 4 – Qualifying Players:

A doubles player who achieves a ranking on or inside the criteria above on the ITF/ATP/WTA ranking date of 25th March 2024, will be awarded the full Tier 4 funding amount of €5,000 in two equal payments (15th May and 15th August 2024).

Example of a Qualifying Doubles Player

A player turning 19 in 2024 and achieving an ATP/WTA doubles ranking of #1 - #699 on the Official ITF/ATP/WTA ranking date of 25th March 2024 will be awarded the full Tier 4 funding

Wheelchair Player Support – Men and Women

| | Wheelchair Tier 1 | Wheelchair Tier 2 | Wheelchair Tier 3 |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ranking | ITF Top 50 | ITF 51-150 | ITF 151+ |
| Award | €10,000 | €7,500 | €3,000 |

Players will be awarded the above amounts based on their ranking on the Official ITF ranking date of 25th March 2024.

*Change in benchmarks from 2024: changes have been made to the criteria in line with the Grand Slam, Super Series, ITF 1, ITF 2 and ITF 3 events.

Exceptional circumstances

If a player has had a long-term injury/illness (minimum of 3 months) during the award year and wishes to be considered for an allocation, they must supply the following information, in writing, with their application:

1. Details of the injury/illness including the commencement date, full period missed.
2. Medical/physio or other reports/certificates confirming the injury and/or reason for absence.
3. Details of how the injury has affected current and potential rankings.

The Committee will consider the evidence and impact of the injury or illness and decide whether this information is sufficient to award support to the player including the tier.

Awarding Financial Support and Payment

The objective of providing financial support is to assist in covering expenses directly associated with participation on the relevant tour (transportation, accommodation, sustenance, coaching, equipment etc).

1. Financial Awards will only be made to players who meet the criteria they applied for outlined in Tier 1, 2, 3, 4 or Wheelchair Tennis on the Official ranking date of 25th March 2024.
2. Players may only apply for either a singles or doubles tier of funding.
3. All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application.
4. Details of the awards made under the Scheme will be published on the Tennis Ireland website.

Please Note:

Players who are awarded financial support, will automatically receive all non-Financial support as part of their award.

Payment

Allocations will be paid in two equal payments to successful candidates.

Payment 1 - The first half of the award will be made on 15th May 2024 by Tennis Ireland directly to the successful applicants and will be subject to providing the following:

- a) Signed Form of Agreement provided by Tennis Ireland at the time of award offered.
- b) Bank Details
- c) Provision of playing schedule for the first 6 months of 2024 (as required in application form)
- d) Completion of Sport Ireland Anti-Doping e-Course (players must provide evidence with application form)

Payment 2 - The second half of the award will be made on the 15th August 2024 by Tennis Ireland directly to the successful applicants and will be subject to providing the following:

- a) Provision of playing schedule for the second 6 months no later than the 31st May in the award year.
- b) Expenditure reports with appropriate receipts, covering the value of the grant for the first six months. This must be provided no later than 31st May 2024. If expenditure reports and receipts are not submitted by 31st May, payment will be withheld.
- c) Player endorsing TI in any interviews/articles/podcasts etc. in the first six months.

Twelve-month Rule

Funding and support are not guaranteed in perpetuity. Players who are already part of the scheme will need to reapply on an annual basis.

It is understood that players who have received awards in a previous year may not have been able to reach the necessary criteria to receive funding the following year due to injuries, sickness, or other unforeseen circumstances.

In cases such as this please read 'Exceptional Circumstances' above.

Non-Financial Support

Non-Financial support will automatically be awarded to players who receive financial support but may also be awarded to players who do not meet financial award benchmarks.

Non-financial supports include:

- Free of charge access to the Tennis Ireland National Tennis Centre for training.
- Potential for a Wild Card to the Irish Open or other Pro Events held in Ireland (subject to availability)
- Personal Accident Insurance under the Tennis Ireland Insurance Scheme
- Support for clothing and equipment through Tennis Ireland sponsors.

Conditions of Participating in the Programme

Participants in the Scheme will be bound by conditions of award outlined hereunder:

- Must be undertaking a current competition programme, the details of which must be submitted to the Team Ireland Programme at Tennis Ireland.
- Must compete as an Irish player (i.e., eligible to play in either Davis Cup or Billie Jean King Cup for Ireland) on the main International Tours or Tour for which financial support is being provided.
- Provide details of all eligible expenditure with appropriate receipts when requesting grant instalments. Any player who fails to make a return of expenditure will not receive further grant payments or be considered for further support under the Scheme.
- Acknowledge the support of Tennis Ireland and the Team Ireland Programme in media interviews and articles.
- Agreement to represent Ireland in Davis Cup or Billie Jean King Cup ties, if selected.
- Subscribe to anti-doping policies set out by Sport Ireland and abide by a drugs free philosophy and complete the required anti-doping training on an annual basis.
- Subscribe to the policies set out in the ITF's Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (TACP)
- Any breach of the rules or misconduct regarded by the Committee as incompatible with participation in the Scheme may result in the withdrawal of all or part of the financial support and/or access to services awarded under the Scheme.

- Agree to a maximum of 4 appearances (media, academy, community outreach etc.) throughout the 12 months in which support is provided.
- Must compete in two Tennis Ireland National/Tour 1000 events and/or the Irish Open. (Failure to do so must be explained in writing to the Team Ireland committee via lisa.murphy@tennisireland.ie)

A written agreement will be provided to successful applicants in receipt of financial awards which will outline the above conditions for participating in the programme in addition to the award offered. This agreement must be signed by the player and returned to Tennis Ireland within the timeframe provided to receive the first payment.

Application Procedures

Application forms for the scheme will be available from Tennis Ireland and applicants are requested to:

- (i) Ensure that application forms are completed fully and accurately and that all the necessary information is supplied. This includes:
 - A draft of their upcoming tournament schedule (First 6 months) based on available information.
 - Coach and coaching programme
 - Training and fitness programme
 - Financial details
 - Statement outlining goals and objectives.
 - Year beginning ranking which will clearly indicate Financial or Non-Financial Tier applied for
- (ii) Ensure that they fulfil the criteria specified for the category.
(Application will be deemed null and void if the applicant does not fulfil the criteria)
- (iii) Provide proof of completion of Sport Ireland Anti-Doping eLearning Course
(If not previously submitted to Tennis Ireland).
- (iv) Completed Applications must be sent via email to lisa.murphy@tennisireland.ie no later than 5pm on Friday 19th April 2024. The closing date will be strictly adhered to and late applications will not be accepted.

Appeals Process

Players may appeal decisions of the Team Ireland High Performance Committee made in respect of or under the Scheme regarding non-inclusion or the level of grant allocation. The appeal must be made on the appropriate Team Ireland Tennis Application Appeal Form, which will be available after the announcement of the awards. Appeals must be made within 7 days of receiving outcome of application.

Such appeals must be made by the player to the Secretary of the Appeals process by e-mailing info@tennisireland.ie

NB – please ensure you put ‘**Team Ireland Application Appeal**’ in the subject line of the e-mail.

An independent panel will be established and any decision of the panel in relation to such an appeal shall be final and binding, and no further appeal may arise.