POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title: U23 Coach

Reports to: General Manager - Performance

Location: Karāpiro, Cambridge

Key dates:

- Assessment Camp (Twizel or Karāpiro):16th – 19th December 2026
- Trials (Karāpiro): 21 - 25th February 2027
- Planning days and regional training: 1 March – 30th March 2027
- Campaign camp at Lake Karāpiro: 30th March through to departure – dates TBC
- International competition: Plovdiv, Bulgaria 27 July - 1 August 2027 – dates TBC by World Rowing
- Team review day (Karapiro): September - Date TBC

Employment Status: contract

ROWING NEW ZEALAND OVERVIEW

Rowing New Zealand (RNZ) is the national sport organisation (NSO) for all rowing in New Zealand. RNZ has a kaitiaki responsibility for the sport as well as supporting the delivery of quality experiences for all participants through the pathway at Community (Schools, Clubs, Universities), Development (pathways for athletes and coaches) and Performance (international campaigns including World Championships and Olympic Games) levels.

RNZ's key purpose is to foster and promote the sport of rowing in New Zealand in all its forms and classifications through:

- Growth in participation and membership
- Delivery of more role models for New Zealand and Rowing
- A strong, healthy, and sustainable organisation
- Continued medal success internationally

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT - we seek to be better

- We are curious and open minded, combining our strong work ethic with innovation to make our organisation a great place to work.
- We learn from our mistakes and embrace pressure as a privilege.

ACCOUNTABILITY – own our own outcome

- We act with integrity and take responsibility while holding each other to our standards.

TRUST TOGETHER - we are one team

- We achieve when we are aligned, inclusive and respectful.
- We maintain transparency and fairness through communication across the organisation.
- One person's success is everybody's success.

CARE - we are supportive

- We show empathy and understanding for other people in our team.
- We respect our peers by valuing their opinions and role.
- We converse honestly and kindly. We care about people first.

HONOUR - we are proud to be part of history

- We respect New Zealand's rowing history.
- We are humble as we strive to inspire the next generation and our country.

KEY PURPOSE OF THIS ROLE

The U23 Coach plays a pivotal role in developing high-performing athletes capable of medalling at the U23 World Championships and transitioning into Rowing New Zealand's Elite Programme. This role requires a coach who can foster athlete growth, lead a squad-based training environment, and adapt to evolving crew selections, including the integration of US-based rowers.

The coach will lead and coordinate interdisciplinary support staff to ensure athletes receive world-class guidance across all performance domains. Strong communication and relationship-building skills are essential to foster trust, clarity, and alignment across the programme.

KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE ROLE

Performance Coaching

- Deliver crews capable of a podium performance at the U23 World Championships.
- Lead and develop a squad of athletes, building toward final crew selection and international competition.
- Implement age-appropriate, athlete-centred coaching strategies that support holistic development.
- Collaborate with the HP team to plan and monitor training programmes.
- Lead and coordinate HPSNZ support staff within the daily training environment, ensuring their expertise is applied effectively and consistently in the best interests of both individual athletes and the overall crew performance.
- Support athletes to develop towards elite-standard performance, against the RNZ Picture of Performance
- Support the integration of US-based athletes into the squad and campaign.
- Contribute to rower and coach interactions regarding the objectives, expectations, programmes, and culture of the U23 programme.

Performance Targets

- Deliver crews capable of a podium performance at the U23 World Championships aligned with crew capability.
- Successful progression of U23 athletes to elite standards against Picture of Performance.
- High athlete engagement and satisfaction with coaching, communication, and programme culture.
- Strong alignment with RNZ High-Performance values and strategic goals.

Athlete and Coach development

- Support athletes on their journey to becoming high-performance rowers, both on and off the water.
- Instil habits, mindsets, and behaviours aligned with elite-level expectations — including independence, resilience, and self-leadership.
- Foster a learning environment that helps athletes understand and embrace high-performance standards.
- Promote a coaching culture of collaboration, shared learning, and mutual support.
- Actively pursue personal development as a coach — staying ahead of global best practices, embracing innovation, and refining coaching strategies.
- Lead by example in maintaining a world-leading approach to athlete development, while embracing the strengths of New Zealand's rowing culture

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Work Experience:

- Experience leading national representative teams and managing squad dynamics.
- Demonstrated ability to identify and develop talent within a high-performance environment.
- Experience in team leadership, co-ordination, and motivation in a rowing environment.
- Proven success coaching medal-winning crews at senior or premier level (e.g., Nationals).
- Proven success coaching medal winning crews at international level preferred

Skills and Attributes

- Strong planning and organisational skills.
- Effective communicator and relationship builder across diverse teams.
- Adaptable, collaborative, and solution-oriented.
- Able to lead interdisciplinary support teams and integrate feedback into coaching practice.
- Committed to continuous learning and innovation in coaching practice.
- Data-informed approach to coaching, with a strong understanding of performance benchmarks, athlete tracking, and standards required for international success.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Direct relationships: Athlete Performance Lead, Athlete Development Manager, Domestic and International Pathway Leads, Coach Development Manager, Elite and U19 coaching team
- Other relationships: General Manager Performance, Selection Panel, CEO
- Training support: HPSNZ support staff