



## **Cross Country NWT 2026 Arctic Winter Games Athlete Selection Policy**

This policy sets out the process used by Cross Country NWT to select athletes for Team NWT at the 2026 Whitehorse Arctic Winter Games (AWG) March 8-14, 2026.

### **1. TEAM COMPOSITION**

To be selected using this document:

1. A maximum team of eighteen (18) athletes to participate at the 2026 Arctic Winter Games in the following categories:
  - Males born in 2012/2013 - maximum 3
  - Females born in 2012/2013 - maximum 3
  - Males born in 2010/2011 - maximum 3
  - Females born in 2010/2011 - maximum 3
  - Males born in 2008/2009 - maximum 3
  - Females born in 2008/2009 - maximum 3

### **2. ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for selection, athletes must be:

- Born in an eligible birth year listed under Team Composition. Must be at least twelve (12) years of age as of December 31, 2025.
- A Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident, or eligible for Canadian Citizenship and able to demonstrate active pursuit of such;
- A continuous resident of the Northwest Territories for at least six months prior to the Arctic Winter Games, and able to meet all other eligibility and residency criteria listed in section 2 of the Sport North 2026 Arctic Winter Games Team NWT Handbook. (Note: Athletes attending a school out-of-territory remain eligible to compete provided their permanent residence remains within the Northwest Territories);
- Members in good standing with Cross Country NWT;
- At least two calendar years removed from competing in a World Youth Championship;
- A signatory to the athlete Code of Conduct agreement provided by Sport North.
- All participants 18 years or older are required to complete a RCMP criminal records check or Enhanced Police Information Check (EPIC) by March 1, 2026. Results of

checks completed six (6) months prior to the start of the 2026 Arctic Winter Games are considered valid.

Once selected, athletes are expected to follow the training plan established by their coaching team. Athletes may also be expected to attend competitions taking place prior to the Games, as instructed by their coaching team.

### **3. ATHLETE SELECTION PROCESS**

All athletes hoping for selection to Team NWT must participate in Cross Country NWT's Territorial Trials. Exceptions to this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances based as outlined in the 2026 AWG Handbook and the Government of the Northwest Territories AWG Participant Eligibility Policy.

Athletes who participate in Cross Country NWT's Territorial Trials:

- Must be a member in good standing of Cross Country NWT. Membership is obtained by membership in a NWT ski club or a registered community or school program that is registered with CCNWT.
- Must compete in their designated age category.

Cross Country NWT will determine the race distances, techniques and format for Territorial Trials based on the Technical Package supplied by the AWG International Committee and the Territorial Trials host facilities. Territorial Trials ski races are run in accordance with Nordiq Canada (NC) rules and regulations.

Athletes are awarded points for their finishing position in each race:

1 <sup>st</sup>	5 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 points
4 <sup>th</sup>	1 point

The top three ranked athletes in each category, based on total points, shall be selected to attend the Arctic Winter Games.

The Cross Country NWT Athlete Selection Committee will designate alternate athletes in each category. The alternate athlete in each category is the next highest-ranked athlete after the selected athletes to meet all other criteria in this document.

#### **Tie-breaking**

In the event that two or more athletes are tied with the same number of points, best aggregate race times will be used to break the tie.

#### **Venue**

Territorial Trials shall be held in Yellowknife over January 7-11, 2026.

### **Secondary selection process**

In the event that temperatures at Territorial Trials reach -20C or lower, a secondary athlete selection process featuring fitness testing and ski technique evaluation shall be used.

The Cross Country NWT Athlete Selection Committee will select athletes based on the following:

- Indoor fitness testing with athletes ranked via a points-based system (1<sup>st</sup> – 5 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 2 points, 4<sup>th</sup> – 1 point) for their performance in a series of tests. The overall fitness test score for each athlete will be the sum of their points earned in each test
- Ski technique assessment as per Nordiq Canada's Draft Technique Development: Theory and Technical Report Card Manual during which members of the Athlete Selection Committee evaluates each athlete using the same points system as described above. An athlete's final ski technique score will be the average of all scores received from committee members
- Overall fitness test score and ski technique score receive equal weighting in final athlete selection
- The Athlete Selection Committee may also, as part of the secondary selection process, consider the competitive record of an athlete during the prior 12 months

### **Vacancies**

Where there is a vacancy in a category, the Athlete Selection Committee may, with appropriate consideration for the athlete's maturity, fitness and skill level, select an alternate athlete (including from the immediately preceding age category, at the committee's discretion) to fill the vacancy, provided that the athlete meets all selection criteria for that preceding age category. Vacancies are filled at the time of Territorial Trials.

### **Race Suits**

Athletes will receive race suits on loan as per the Team NT Suit Policy. Warm-up suits may be purchased at an additional cost.

### **Alternates**

Athletes not selected for Team NT may be considered for alternate positions at the discretion of the Athlete Selection Committee.

## **4. ATHLETE SELECTION COMMITTEE**

The Athlete Selection Committee consists of the AWG Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager, and Coach-in-training as appointed by Cross Country NWT. The Athlete Selection Committee names its chairperson from within the group and is responsible for managing the selection of athletes to the Arctic Winter Games team, including monitoring of Territorial Trials and communication with all athletes.

The Athlete Selection Committee must be free from actual and perceived conflict of interest and, where a conflict of interest may exist, committee members must identify the conflict and excuse themselves from selection decisions.

Parents of athletes, or other individuals deemed by Cross Country NWT's board to have special interest in the selection process, are not permitted to be members of the Athlete Selection Committee. Cross Country NWT may appoint another individual to the Athlete Selection Committee to replace any individual with a conflict of interest.

## **5. REMOVAL FROM THE TEAM**

A selected athlete may be removed from the team if the athlete:

- Loses their eligibility as outlined above
- Fails to remain a member in good standing with Cross Country NWT
- Fails to meet performance expectations
- Fails to train toward, or meet the physical standards expected by the Arctic Winter Games in the opinion of the coaching team
- Exhibits misconduct or conduct detrimental to the image of Cross Country NWT
- Is unable to perform due to injury, illness or other medical reasons as determined by Cross Country NWT in consultation with medical professionals
- Fails to meet expectations laid out in the Sport North Federation Event Discipline Procedure

The coaching team and/or Athlete Selection Committee may apply to the Cross Country NWT board to remove any athlete at any stage of the athlete selection process.

A written letter to the athlete from the Cross Country NWT board will communicate the reasons for deselection of an athlete or their removal from an earlier stage of the athlete selection process.

## **6. APPEALS**

Appeals of selection decisions will be heard and decided in accordance with the Cross Country NWT Appeal Policy.

## **8. REPLACEMENT of ATHLETES**

Alternate athletes, as designated under Section 3, should be included in any training and competition(s) taking place prior to the Arctic Winter Games to ensure their preparation if called upon.

Alternate athletes may be selected if one or more of the originally selected athletes are removed prior to the Arctic Winter Games. The Athlete Selection Committee must be satisfied of the alternate athlete's continuing eligibility before naming the athlete to the team.

If the alternate athlete has not kept up their physical fitness, is unavailable or is uninterested, the Athlete Selection Committee may at its discretion approach other athletes who attended Territorial Trials to be named as alternates.

Reference: *Nordiq Canada's Technique Development: Theory and Technical Report Card Manual, Team NT Suit Policy*