

PROJECT INVICTUS



SASSIC

SA SPORTS SERVICES AND INDUSTRY COUNCIL

2025

FRAMEWORK



FRAMEWORK TO ESTABLISH:

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SPORTS SERVICE AND INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

SASSIC

SA SPORTS SERVICES AND INDUSTRY COUNCIL

THE CASE FOR A SPORTS TRANSFORMATION MOVEMENT

PREPARED BY:
PROJECT INVICTUS SPORTS THINK TANK
WWW.PROJECTINVICTUS.CO.ZA
WWW.SPORTSINDUSTRY.ORG



SASSIC

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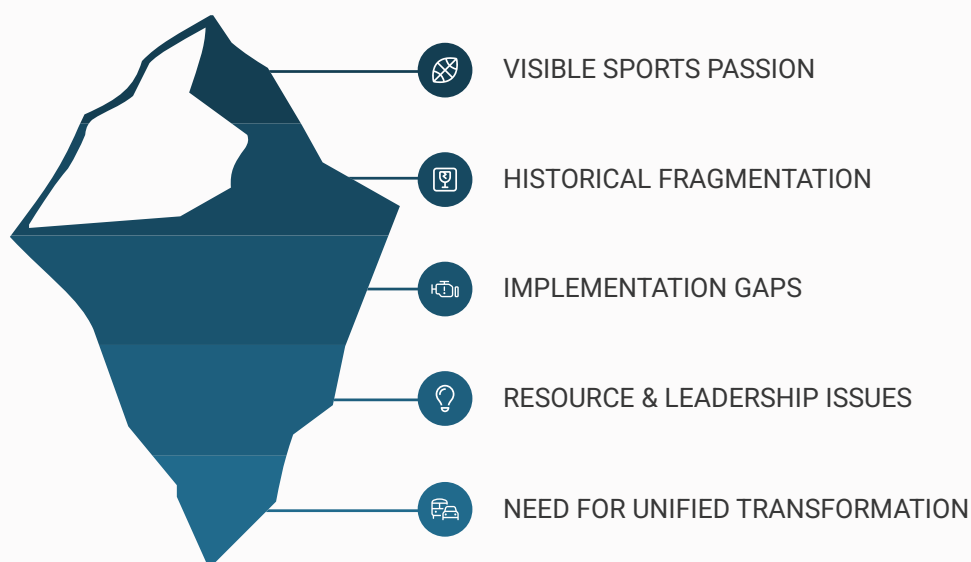
THE CURRENT STATE OF SOUTH AFRICAN SPORTS



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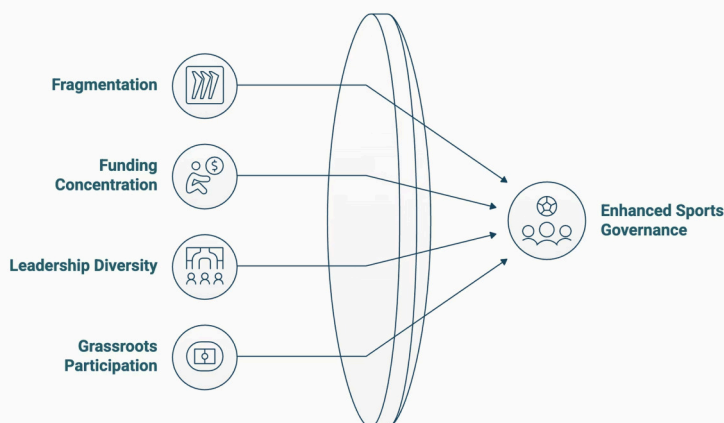
South Africa has a **vibrant and passionate sports ecosystem with immense yet largely untapped potential** for commercial growth and socio-economic impact. Despite a rich sporting history, the sector still faces **fragmentation and historical imbalances** that limit inclusivity and economic optimisation. Achieving a **truly inclusive, equitable, and commercially optimised sports sector** requires a dedicated, collaborative approach. The nation's **constitutional imperative of transformation** in sport – ensuring equal opportunities across races, genders, and communities – adds urgency to this mission.

Over the past decades, various policies (like the National Sport and Recreation Plan and Transformation Charter) have aimed to democratise sports. Yet **gaps remain in implementation**: many sports bodies operate in silos, funding is concentrated in a few popular sports, and leadership often lacks diversity. **Grassroots participation** – especially in disadvantaged schools – has declined due to resource gaps. These challenges call for a **unifying platform** to drive systemic change.



THE CURRENT STATE OF SOUTH AFRICAN SPORTS

Challenges in Sports Governance



KEY CHALLENGES

- Fragmentation across sports bodies
- Concentrated funding in popular sports
- Lack of diversity in leadership
- Declining grassroots participation

CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVES

- Equal opportunities across races
- Gender equality in sports
- Community inclusion
- Democratisation of sports

Building a Fair and Inclusive Society

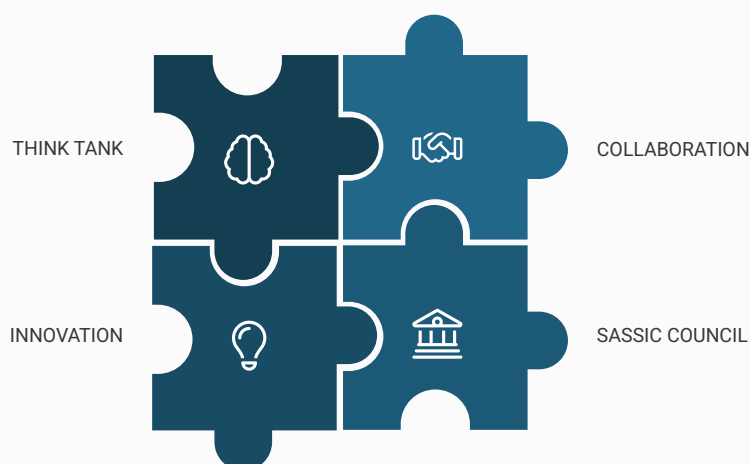




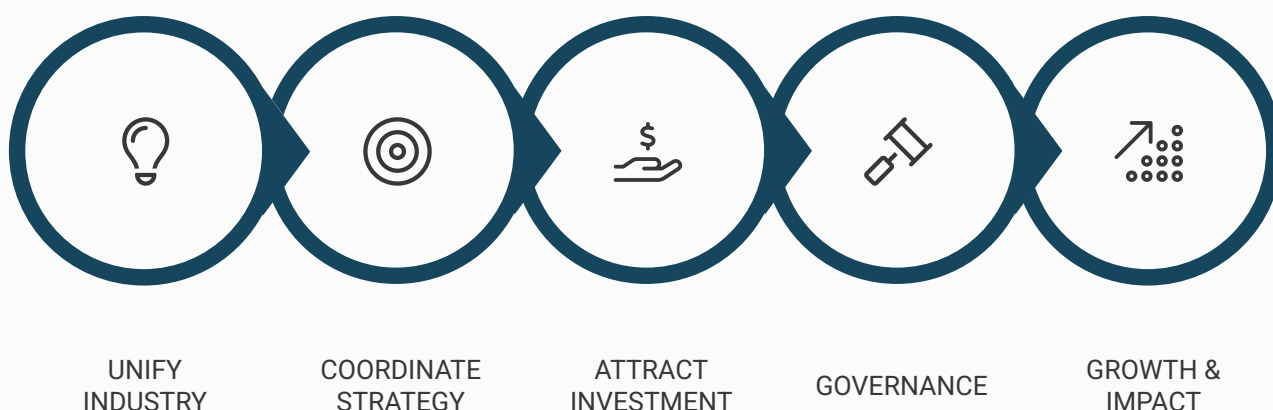
INTRODUCING PROJECT INVICTUS AND SASSIC

INVICTUS
EMPOWERING SPORT

INTRODUCING PROJECT INVICTUS AND SASSIC



Project Invictus, a newly conceived think tank, has recognised this opportunity and outlined a bold plan: to **catalyse the commercialisation and transformation of South African sport** through innovative strategies and stakeholder collaboration. At the heart of this plan is the establishment of a **South African Sports Service and Industrial Council (SASSIC)** – a central body to **unify the sports industry, coordinate strategy, attract investment, and uphold good governance**. This report details how SASSIC can be set up and operated as a transformative movement for sports, drawing lessons from a successful precedent in another sector, and outlines steps, structures, and roles to ensure its impact across all levels of sport.



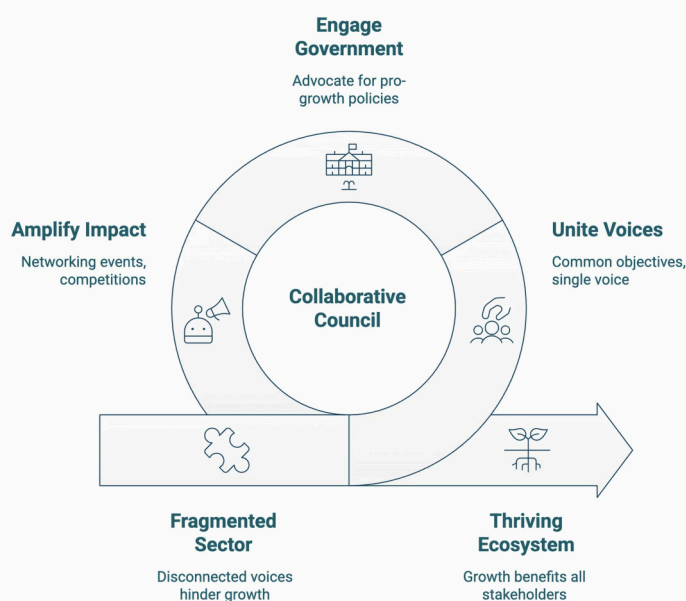
LESSONS FROM SIMODISA

SIMODISA
START-UP

LESSONS FROM SIMODISA: A BLUEPRINT FOR INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

Before delving into SASSIC, it is instructive to look at **SiMODiSA**, an industry-led movement that transformed South Africa's tech startup ecosystem. Back in 2013, entrepreneurs **Pieter de Villiers** and **Keet van Zyl** launched SiMODiSA to **bridge entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers**, igniting South Africa's now-thriving venture capital sector. The formula was clear: *first collaboration, then capital*. By convening stakeholders around common goals, SiMODiSA helped remove barriers that small businesses faced – such as limited access to capital, markets, and talent – and drove high-impact policy changes to enable a supportive environment.

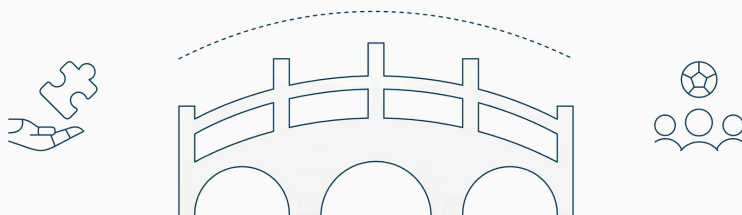
Transforming Industries Through Collaboration



SiMODiSA's approach combined direct engagement with government for pro-startup policies, and amplification through networking events and competitions. It effectively became "*the golden thread that connects SA's entrepreneurial ecosystem*," aligning efforts across public and private sectors. The impact was profound: from modest beginnings in 2013, South Africa's venture capital investments grew dramatically, exceeding R1 billion annually by 2022.

LESSONS FROM SIMODISA: A BLUEPRINT FOR INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

SASSIC transforms sports through collaboration, inspired by SiMODiSA's tech success.



Fragmented Sports Sector

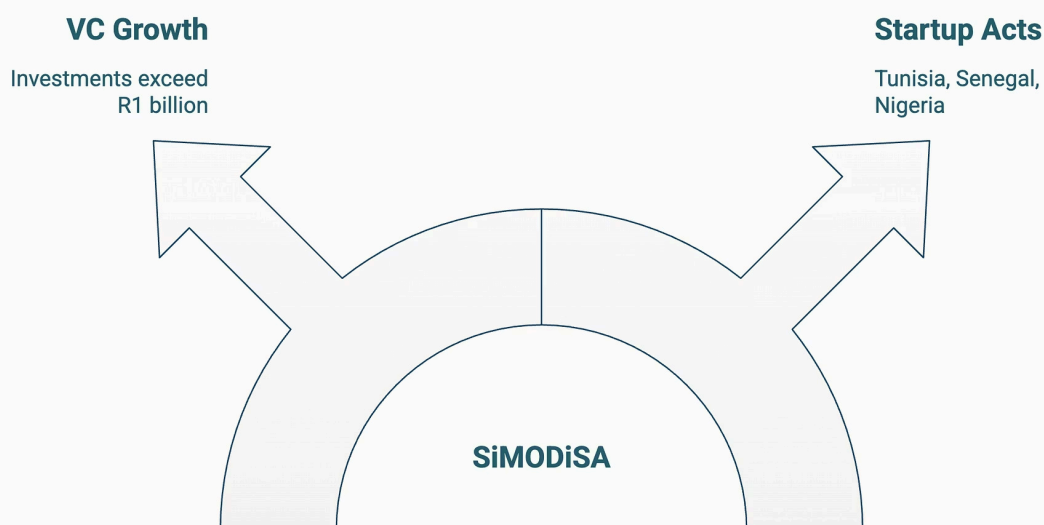
Lacks unified voice and direction.

Unified Sports Sector

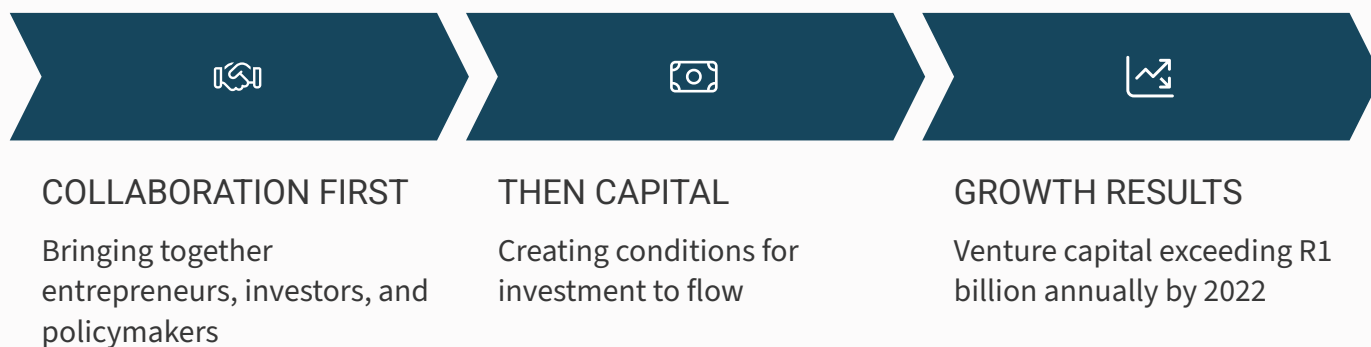
Achieves growth through collaboration and advocacy.

SiMODiSA's work has also inspired broader change – **countries like Tunisia, Senegal, and Nigeria passed "Startup Acts"** to boost their ecosystems, and South African stakeholders (led by SiMODiSA) have been pushing for a similar Startup Act locally. In other words, a focused industry movement can influence policy **across Africa**, as seen by the spread of startup-friendly legislation.

SiMODiSA's Impact on African Startup Policies



LESSONS FROM SIMODISA: A BLUEPRINT FOR INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION



The key lesson from SiMODiSA is that **a collaborative, industry-driven council can catalyse transformation** in a fragmented sector. By uniting diverse voices behind common objectives and speaking as one to government and investors, it's possible to unlock growth that benefits all. Project Invictus explicitly asks: *Can we do for sports what SiMODiSA did for tech?*. The answer is SASSIC – a similar coalition, tailored to sports. In fact, SASSIC's formation is **inspired by ecosystem-builders like SiMODiSA**, aiming to replicate that success in the sports industry. Just as SiMODiSA engaged influential people (entrepreneurs, investors, thought leaders) in dialogues that shaped policy, the sports sector needs its champions – respected athletes, coaches, executives – to drive a transformation agenda. The following sections outline how SASSIC will embody these principles.



SASSIC

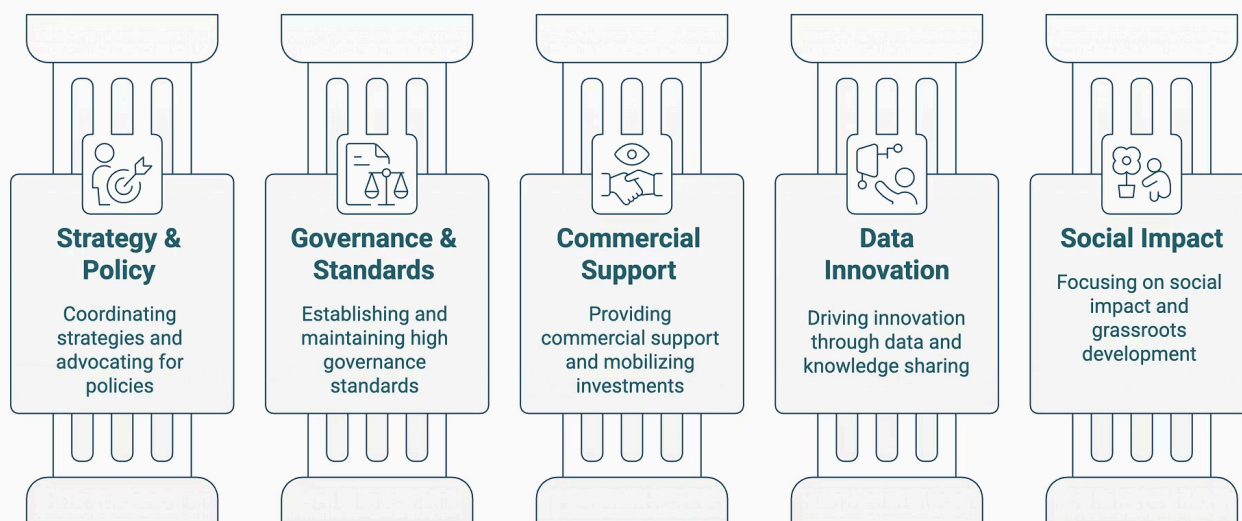
SA SPORTS SERVICES AND INDUSTRY COUNCIL

VISION AND MANDATE OF SASSIC

VISION AND MANDATE OF SASSIC

SASSIC (South African Sports Service and Industrial Council) is envisioned as the central coordinating body for the sports industry. Its **core mandate** is to **provide a unified voice for a fragmented sector, drive investment, and set governance standards** to unlock the full economic and social power of sport. This council is not meant to replace existing institutions, but to complement and bolster them. It will work **alongside the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC)** – which oversees mass participation and policy – and **SASCOC** (the Olympic committee coordinating high-performance sport) by focusing on the broader industry and commercial landscape. In essence, SASSIC fills the gap of an "industry association" for sport: representing stakeholders who previously lacked a collective forum, from federations and clubs to sports businesses, investors, and service providers.

The 5 Objectives of SASSIC



5 KEY OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC

COORDINATING STRATEGY & POLICY ADVOCACY

Establishing a unified approach to guide the industry's direction and effectively advocate for supportive policies.

GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

Implementing robust frameworks and best practices to ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability across the sector.

COMMERCIAL SUPPORT & INVESTMENT MOBILISATION

Fostering an environment that attracts investment and provides essential support for sports businesses to thrive.

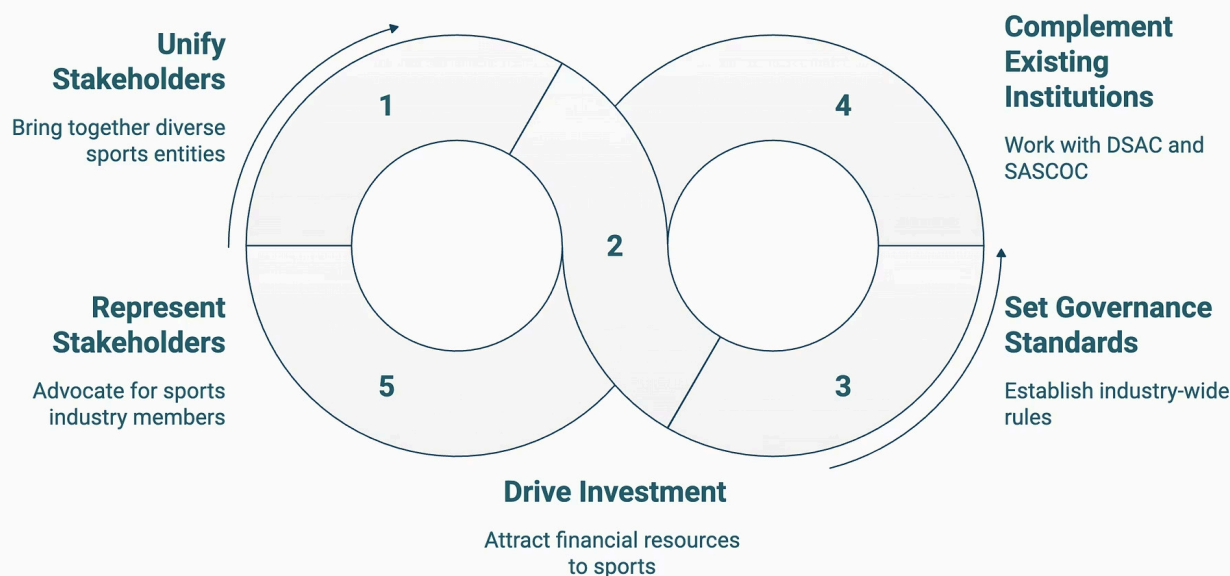
DATA-DRIVEN INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Leveraging data insights and facilitating the exchange of knowledge to drive innovation and informed decision-making.

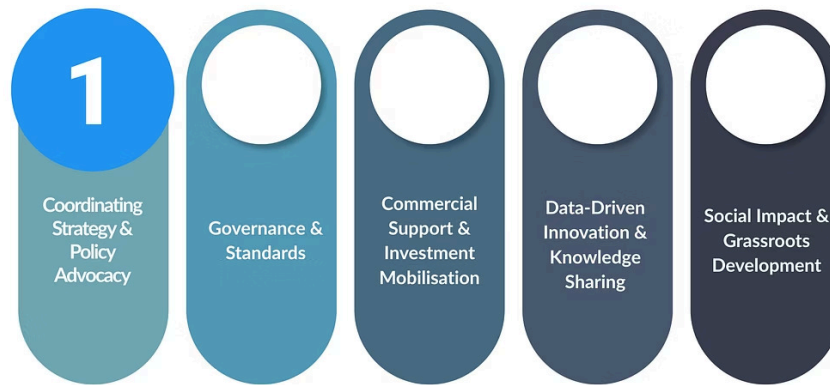
SOCIAL IMPACT & GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT

Promoting sport's positive social impact and nurturing talent through community-level and foundational programs.

SASSIC's Role in Sports Industry Enhancement



THE 5 OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC



SASSIC KEY OBJECTIVE 1: COORDINATING STRATEGY & POLICY ADVOCACY

SASSIC will serve as a **single platform for dialogue and strategic alignment** among stakeholders. It will lobby for supportive policies, tax incentives, and streamlined regulations that foster growth and attract investment in sports. By engaging policymakers with one credible voice (backed by a broad coalition), SASSIC can advocate for long-overdue reforms – for example, recognising sports as an industry in its own right, or introducing fiscal incentives for sports development (akin to how the film industry or start-ups have incentives).

This unified advocacy is vital to address **historical fragmentation and political interference** in sports policy. All efforts will be aligned with the National Sport and Recreation Plan and the Transformation Charter to ensure government's transformation targets are supported.



UNIFIED VOICE

Speaking as one to government and policymakers on behalf of the entire sports sector



POLICY REFORM

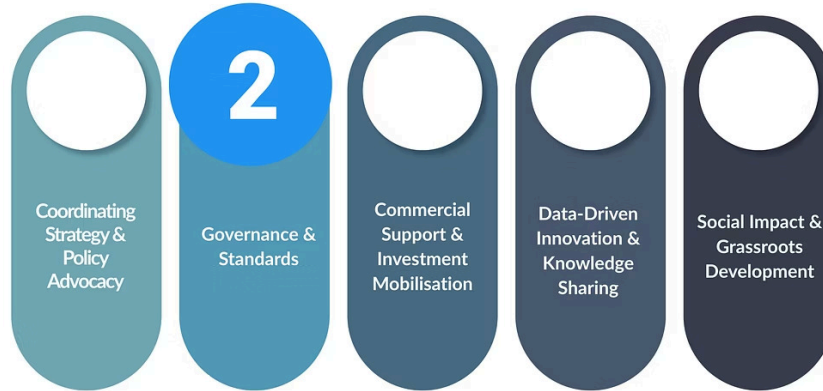
Advocating for supportive policies, tax incentives, and streamlined regulations



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Ensuring all stakeholders work together toward common transformation goals

THE 5 OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC

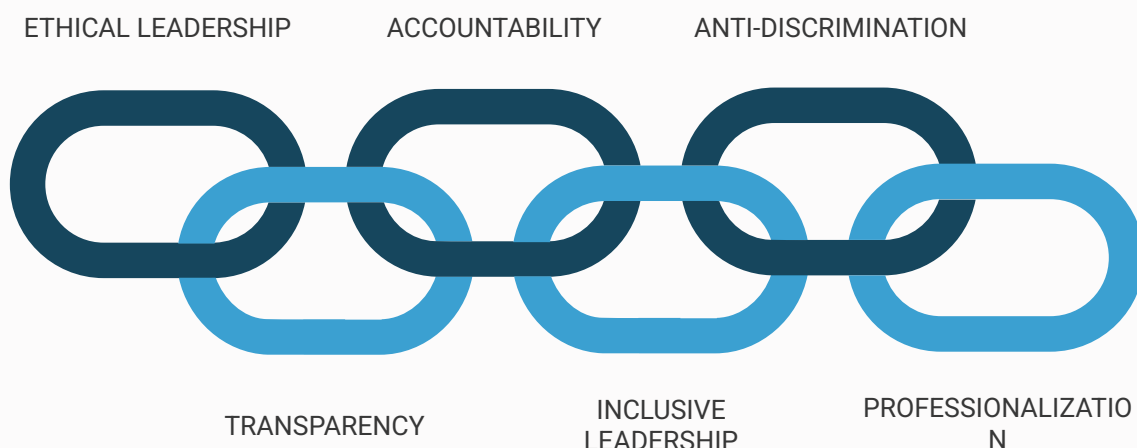


SASSIC KEY OBJECTIVE 2: GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

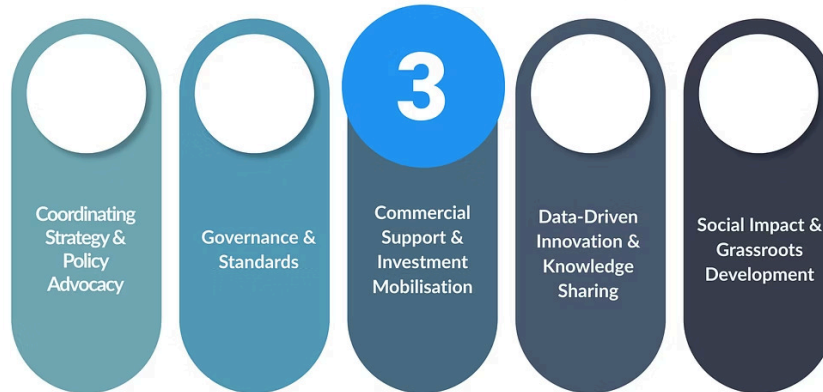
A cornerstone of SASSIC's mission is to **promote ethical leadership, transparency, and accountability across all sports bodies**. The council will help develop and **enforce best-practice governance codes** for federations and clubs. These standards explicitly address historical imbalances – for instance, by setting guidelines for inclusive leadership and anti-discrimination – in line with the Transformation Charter.

By championing governance reform and providing training and accreditation programmes for sports administrators, SASSIC aims to **professionalise sports management** nationwide. An emphasis on integrity will ensure that transformation is not just about numbers, but about **a culture of honesty and fairness**.

To **hold people accountable**, SASSIC will implement **robust monitoring and evaluation systems** that track progress on key objectives (including transformation targets) and ensure transparency in operations. Regular reporting and an independent oversight mechanism can help identify lapses and celebrate successes, fostering trust in the movement.



THE 5 OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC



SASSIC KEY OBJECTIVE 3: COMMERCIAL SUPPORT & INVESTMENT MOBILISATION

SASSIC will focus on **unlocking new revenue streams and investments for sports**. It plans to provide expertise and frameworks that help sports entities (leagues, federations, clubs) **professionalise their operations and maximise commercial revenue**. This could involve sharing best practices in sponsorship deals, media rights negotiations, merchandising, and event management.

A major goal is to **attract diverse capital into the sports sector**, correcting the current imbalance where a few high-profile sports get the lion's share of sponsorships. SASSIC will explore innovative funding models – for example, treating **"sports as a financial asset class"** to draw institutional investors.

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

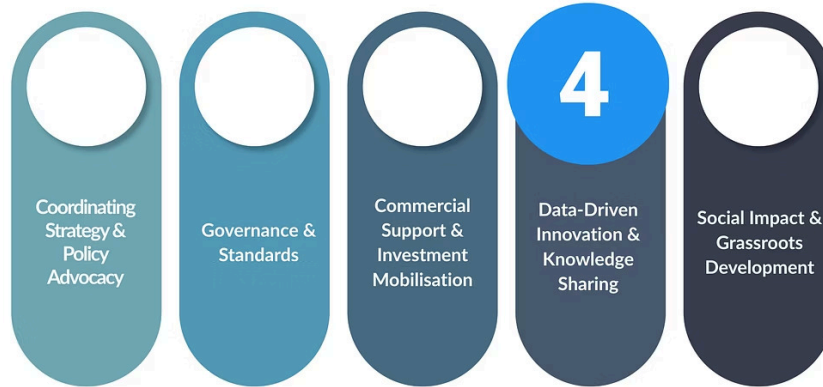
- Establishing a **Sports Investment Conference** to connect government, investors, media, and innovators
- Piloting a **"Betting-for-Good" social impact fund** channelling a portion of sports betting revenue to grassroots sports
- Creating a **Fund-of-Funds for sports ventures**

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- More equitable distribution of funding across sports
- Increased overall investment in the sports sector
- New revenue streams for smaller and emerging sports
- Professionalisation of commercial operations

By packaging investment opportunities and actively linking projects with funders, the council strives to make sport a **viable and attractive investment domain** for both local and international investors. Over time, these efforts will help grow the industry's financial base, benefiting even smaller and emerging sports.

THE 5 OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC



SASSIC KEY OBJECTIVE 4: DATA-DRIVEN INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Recognising the power of data and technology, SASSIC will support digital transformation in sports. One planned project is a **national sports data platform ("Data Lake")** to unify data on participation, talent, facilities, and fans. This AI-powered repository will enable evidence-based decision-making – for example, identifying talent pipelines in under-served areas or proving return-on-investment for community sports programmes.

By leveraging data insights, SASSIC and its members can more effectively tailor strategies, measure transformation progress (such as participation rates across demographics), and demonstrate impact to sponsors and policy-makers. The council will also facilitate knowledge sharing through research, publications, and workshops, ensuring that **success stories and innovations are disseminated across the sports ecosystem**.

1

NATIONAL SPORTS DATA LAKE

Comprehensive repository of sports participation, talent, facilities, and fan engagement data

AI

POWERED ANALYTICS

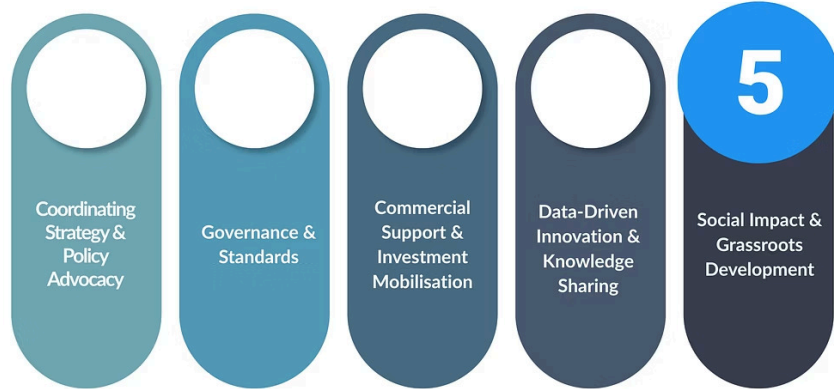
Advanced analytics to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities in the sports ecosystem

100%

EVIDENCE-BASED

Decision-making grounded in reliable data rather than assumptions or tradition

THE 5 OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC



SASSIC KEY OBJECTIVE 5: SOCIAL IMPACT & GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT

Finally, SASSIC's vision extends to maximising sport's contribution to society. A transformed sports industry should advance national development goals – creating jobs, improving public health, and fostering social cohesion. SASSIC will work to **revitalise school and grassroots sports**, which are the bedrock of both excellence and inclusion.

This includes advocating for full implementation of the School Sport Policy (to restore physical education and organised sport in all schools) and mobilising resources to build or upgrade sports facilities in historically disadvantaged communities. By boosting participation at the base, the talent pool widens and opportunities are extended to youth who previously lacked access.

SASSIC will measure and highlight the **socio-economic benefits** of sports growth – from employment in sports-related industries to community development – to reinforce support for transformation initiatives. In all these efforts, the **constitutional values of equality and human dignity** in sport will be the guiding light.

- **JOB CREATION**

Expanding the sports industry creates employment opportunities in coaching, administration, event management, and related services

- **PUBLIC HEALTH**

Increased sports participation improves physical and mental health outcomes across communities

- **SOCIAL COHESION**

Sports brings together people from different backgrounds, fostering national unity and shared identity

- **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

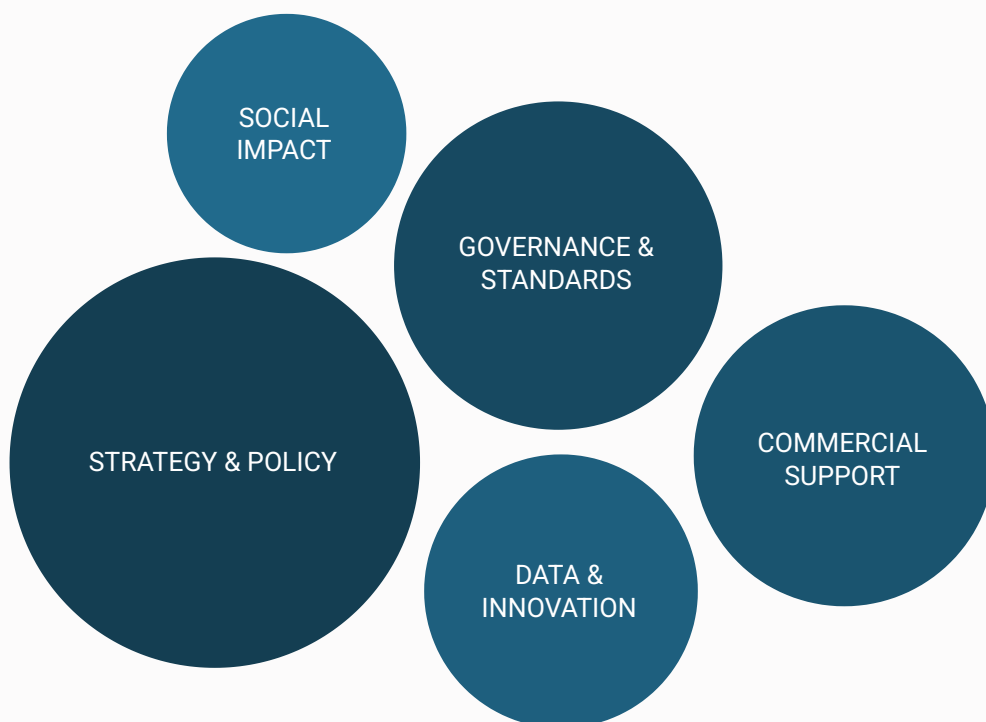
Sports teaches discipline, teamwork, and leadership skills that benefit young people throughout life

SASSIC'S COMPREHENSIVE MANDATE

In summary, SASSIC's mandate is ambitious and wide-ranging, covering **policy advocacy, governance reform, commercial enablement, data innovation, and grassroots impact**. It seeks to emulate SiMODiSA's catalytic role by uniting stakeholders and charting a new path for sports as both a business sector and a tool for nation-building.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF SASSIC INCLUDE:

1. **Coordinating Strategy & Policy Advocacy:** Providing a unified platform for dialogue and strategic alignment among stakeholders
2. **Governance & Standards:** Promoting ethical leadership, transparency, and accountability across sports bodies
3. **Commercial Support & Investment Mobilisation:** Unlocking new revenue streams and investments for sports
4. **Data-Driven Innovation & Knowledge Sharing:** Supporting digital transformation and evidence-based decision-making
5. **Social Impact & Grassroots Development:** Maximising sport's contribution to society and national development goals



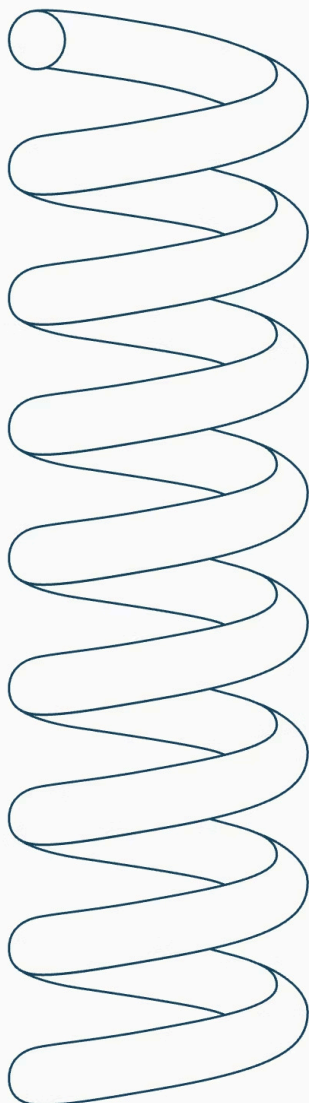
ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC

STEP-BY-STEP ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC

Launching a movement like SASSIC requires careful planning and **inclusive change management**.

Below are **navigable steps** to set up SASSIC and ensure it gains momentum and legitimacy:

Roadmap to Establish SASSIC



Convene Stakeholder Dialogues



Form Interim Steering Committee



Formalise Council Structure



Engage Stakeholders & Build Partnerships



Launch SASSIC



Implement Key Initiatives



Grow Membership & Institutionalise Change



Ongoing Change Management

STEP 1:

CONVENE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES AND DEFINE THE VISION

STEP 2:

FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS

STEP 3:

FORMALISE THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

STEP 4:

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS & BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

STEP 5:

LAUNCH SASSIC AND COMMUNICATE THE MISSION

STEP 6:

IMPLEMENT KEY INITIATIVES (QUICK WINS)

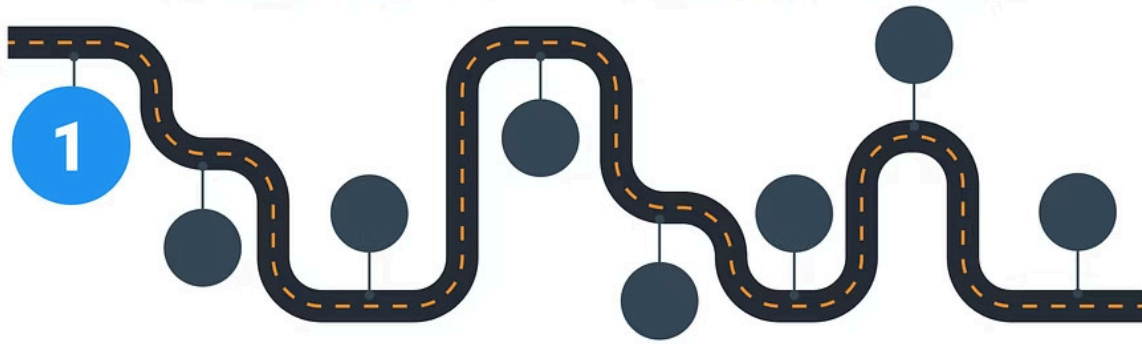
STEP 7:

GROW MEMBERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONALISE CHANGE

STEP 8:

ONGOING CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADAPTATION

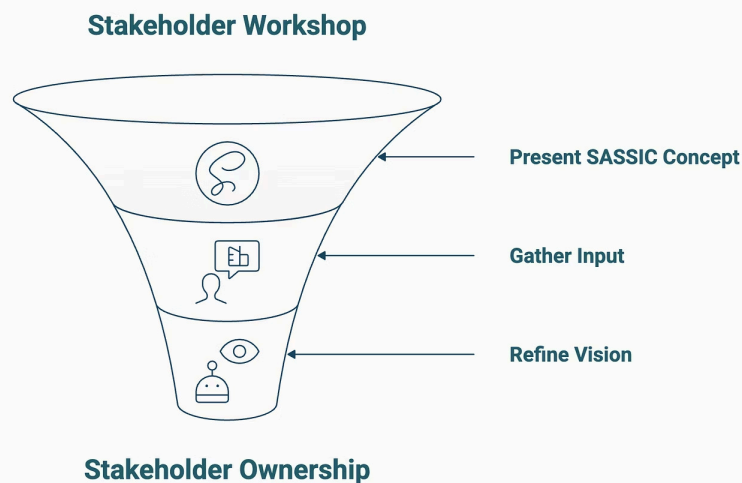
ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 1: CONVENE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES AND DEFINE THE VISION

The journey begins with broad engagement.

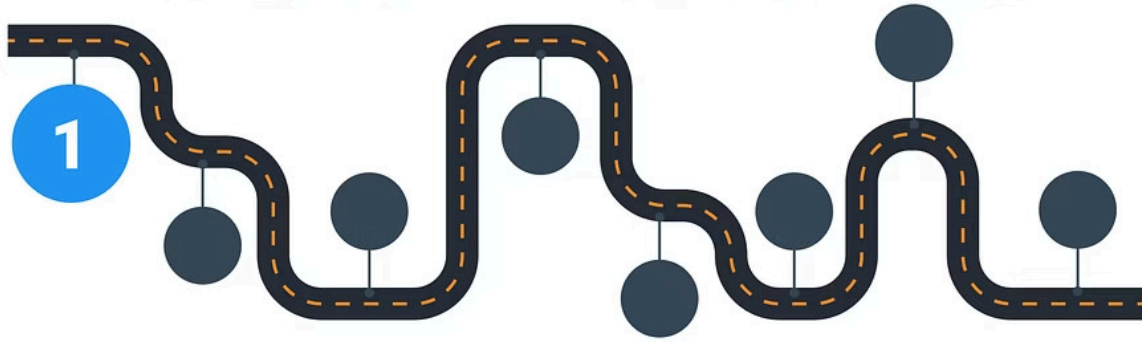
Stakeholder Engagement Process for SASSIC



Organise a **foundational stakeholder workshop** to bring together key voices in the sports ecosystem. This includes representatives from government (DSAC officials, sports ministry), major sports federations, league administrators, sports business entrepreneurs, sponsors, media partners, and athletes (or players' associations).

The purpose of this workshop is to **present the initial concept of SASSIC, gather input and buy-in, and collaboratively refine the vision and priorities**. Early inclusion of diverse stakeholders ensures that SASSIC's agenda addresses real needs and that the various parties feel *ownership* of the initiative.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 1: CONVENE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES AND DEFINE THE VISION

During these dialogues, influential individuals – for instance, a legendary former athlete or a respected sports manager – can champion the cause, lending credibility and passion to the discussions.

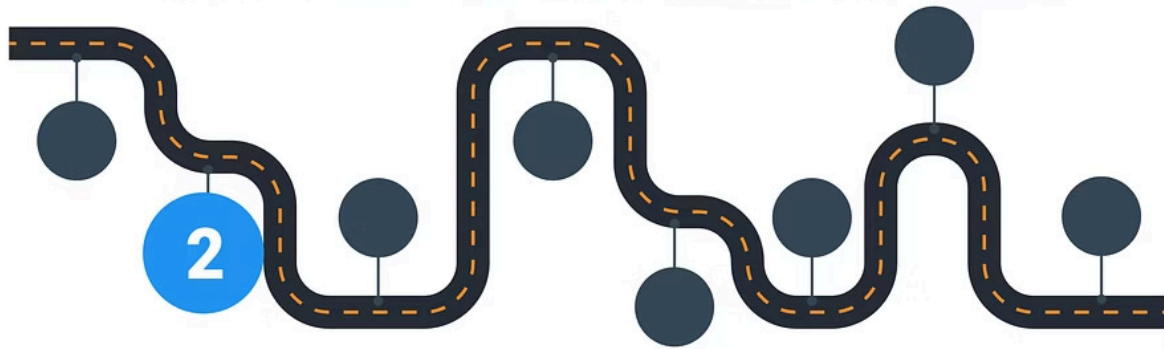
This stage mirrors how SiMODiSA started: through **policy dialogues and roundtables** that aligned the public and private sector around common goals.

The outcome of Step 1 should be a **shared mission statement and a preliminary framework** for SASSIC's role, shaped by the insights of those who will later drive it.

KEY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

- Government representatives (DSAC officials, sports ministry)
- Major sports federations
- League administrators
- Sports business entrepreneurs
- Sponsors and investors
- Media partners
- Athletes and players' associations

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 2:

FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS

TEMPORARY STEERING COMMITTEE

Establish a temporary steering committee composed of key influential figures from the workshop. This committee serves as the engine to drive the set-up phase.

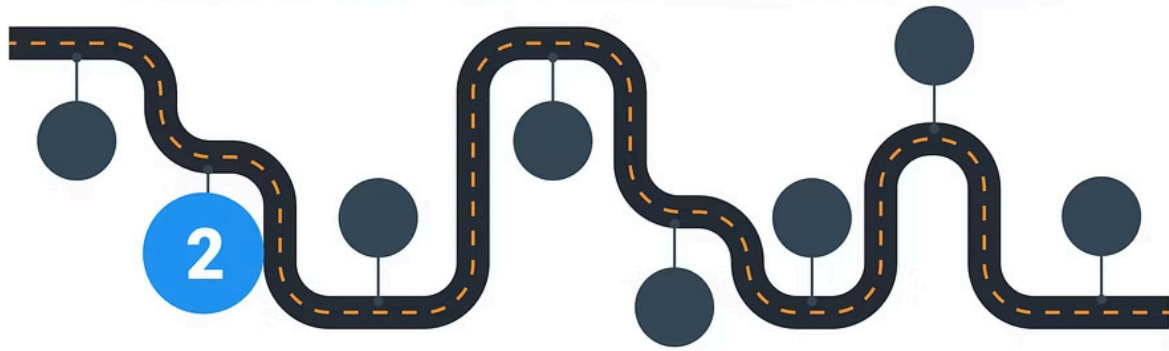
REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS

Members should be carefully selected to represent the main stakeholder groups: senior DSAC official, top executive from a national federation, prominent ex-athlete, business investor, media executive, and academic or civil society leader in sports development.

EXPERTISE AND CREDIBILITY

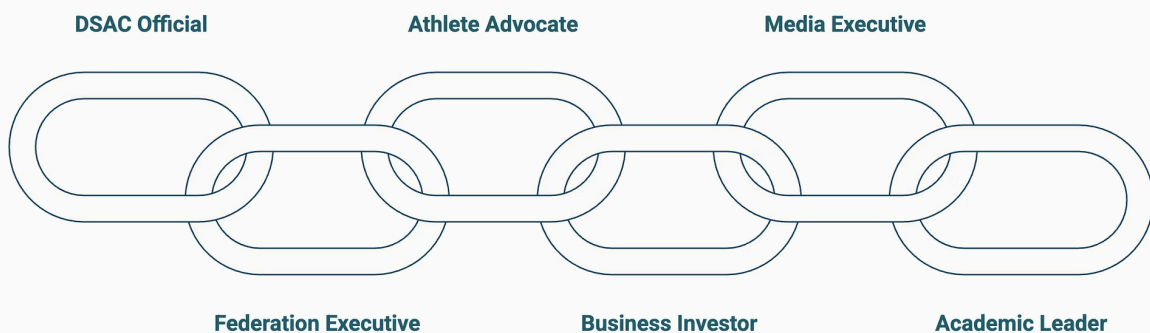
By having a mix of expertise and credibility, the steering committee can tackle diverse set-up tasks and signal unity.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



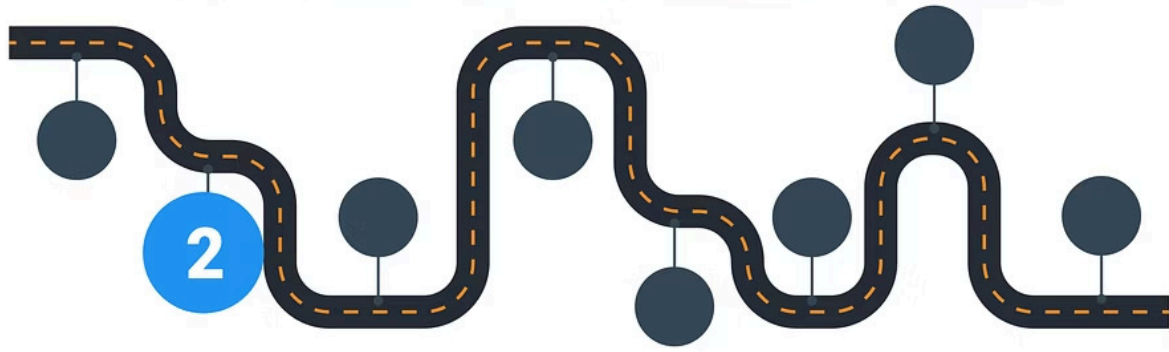
STEP 2: FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS

SASSIC's Committee Composition



- **SENIOR DSAC OFFICIAL**
Or sports commissioner, representing government oversight and policy.
- **PROMINENT EX-ATHLETE**
Or players' advocate, bringing the athlete's perspective and experience.
- **MEDIA EXECUTIVE**
Representing media partners crucial for outreach and public engagement.
- **NATIONAL FEDERATION EXECUTIVE**
A top executive from a national federation or SASCOC for sports governance expertise.
- **BUSINESS INVESTOR**
An investor with a keen interest in the sports sector and commercial growth.
- **ACADEMIC OR CIVIL SOCIETY LEADER**
Focused on sports development, offering research and community insights.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC

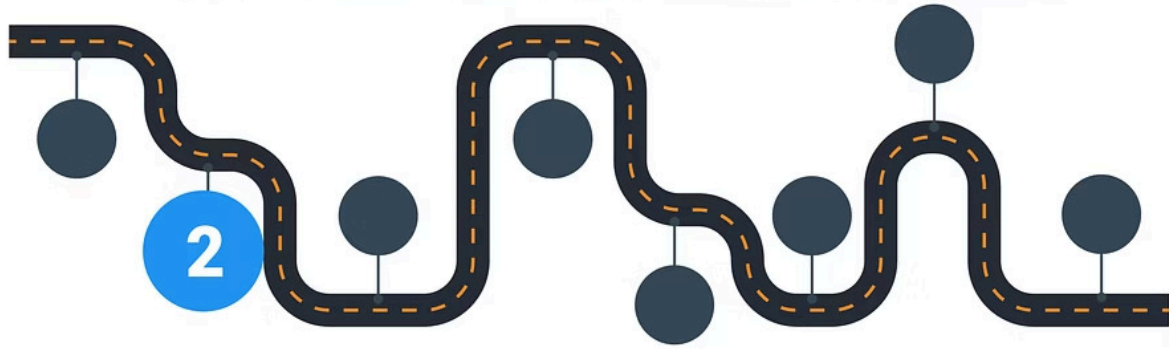


STEP 2: FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS

Building a Visionary Committee



ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



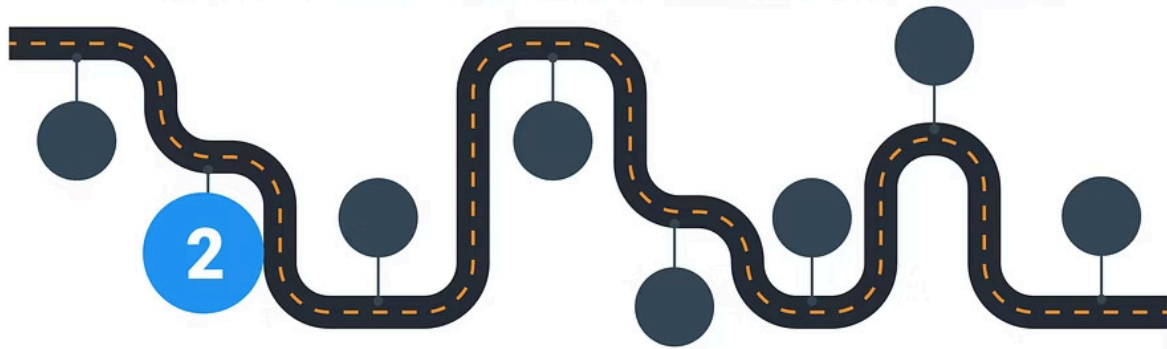
STEP 2:

FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS

SPECIFIC SELECTION CRITERIA FOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- **Proven Leadership & Influence:** Highly respected leaders with a track record of success in sports, government, or private sectors.
- **Stakeholder Representation:** Balanced representation from critical groups: government, federations, athletes, investors, media, and civil society.
- **Commitment to Transformation:** Passionate about driving systemic change, aligning with SASSIC's mandate for ethical governance, commercial growth, and grassroots impact.
- **Extensive Network & Resource Mobilisation:** Strong networks for fostering collaborations and mobilising resources (financial, human, intellectual).
- **Diverse Expertise & Strategic Insight:** Blend of complementary skills from policy and finance to marketing, digital innovation, and community engagement.
- **Dedicated Availability:** Willingness to commit significant time and effort to actively participate in foundational tasks and early projects.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 2: FORM AN INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE OF CHAMPIONS (CONTINUED)

The committee's **mandate** will be to:

1 REFINE THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Refine the strategic plan and organisational design of SASSIC based on stakeholder feedback. This includes detailing SASSIC's objectives, key programmes, and structure in a concise proposal or charter.

2 SECURE INITIAL FUNDING

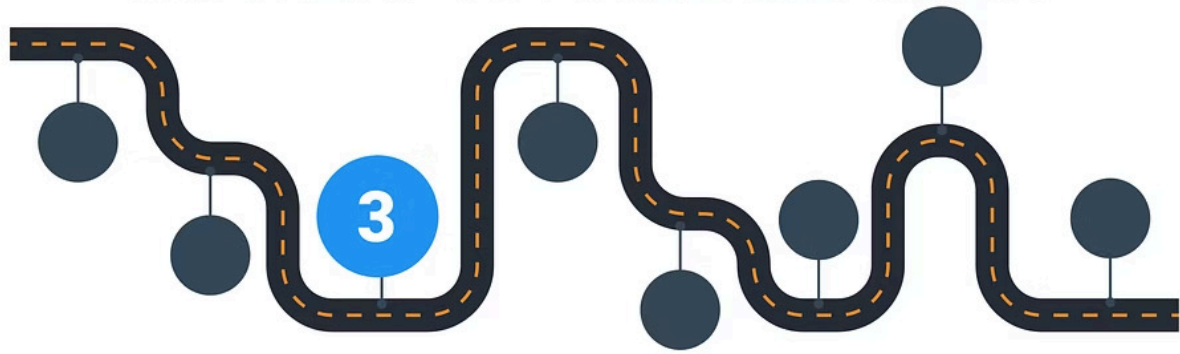
Secure initial seed funding and resources to launch SASSIC. Members will leverage their networks to obtain commitments – for instance, a government grant or allocation, corporate sponsorships, or donor funding to cover startup costs. Early funding is critical to hire a small secretariat and convene activities.

3 CHAMPION THE INITIATIVE

Champion the initiative within their circles to expand support. Each member should act as an ambassador, communicating the vision to others and possibly recruiting additional founding partners.

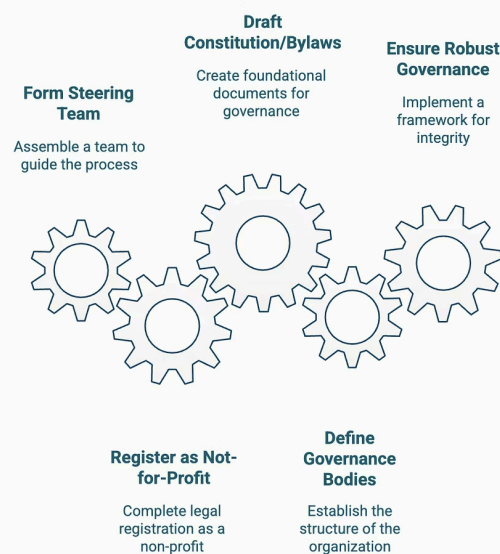
This interim committee is essentially the **change leadership team**, guiding the transformation from concept to reality. It should meet frequently and set clear milestones (e.g., finalising the charter, raising X amount of funding, setting a launch date).

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 3: FORMALISE THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Establishing SASSIC as an Organization



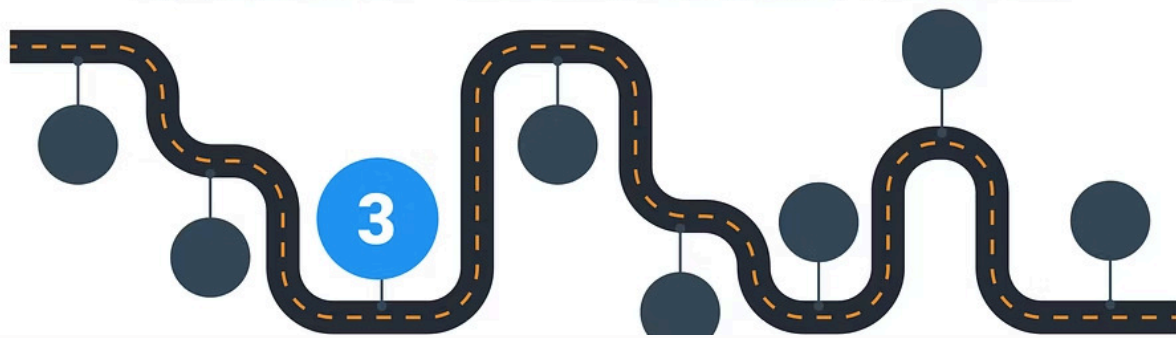
FORMALLY ESTABLISH SASSIC

Legal and organisational groundwork: registering as a not-for-profit, drafting constitution, defining governance bodies.

LEGITIMACY & INTEGRITY

A robust governance framework ensures legitimacy and integrity from the start.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



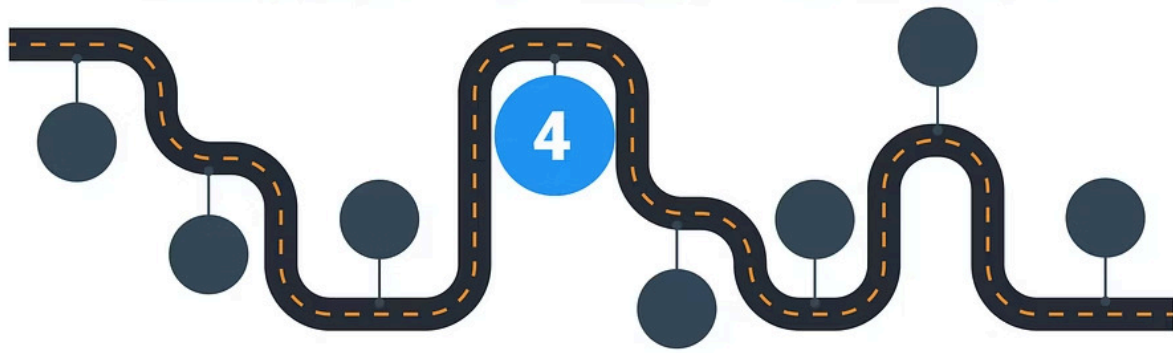
STEP 3: FORMALISE THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

KEY TASKS

- **Define the Board composition and roles** (see detailed discussion in a later section on Governance Structure). Determine the size of the board and allocate seats or criteria to ensure representation of all critical sectors (sports, government, private sector, athletes, etc.).
- Establish any subcommittees or working groups needed from the outset (e.g., a finance & audit committee to oversee funds, a media & communications committee, etc.).
- Develop a **membership model and enrolment process**. Clearly articulate who can join SASSIC and how (for example, sports federations may join as institutional members, companies as corporate members, etc., detailed in the Membership section below).
- Create an initial business plan and budget. Outline the funding sources (membership dues, sponsorship, government support, etc.) and expenditure plan (staff salaries, events, programmes) for the first 1–3 years.
- Articulate SASSIC's code of ethics or guiding principles, emphasising **integrity, transparency, and the transformational values** it stands for.

By formalising these elements, SASSIC transitions from an idea to a legal entity with a clear structure. This step is essentially about **institutionalising the change** so that it can outlast any one individual – a critical aspect of change management to avoid reliance on a few champions.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 4: ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS & BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

As SASSIC's structure takes shape, continue broadening the circle of support. Engagement at this stage moves from vision to concrete partnership offers. The interim committee (or newly formed board) should reach out to **prospective partners in all stakeholder categories** to invite them on board.



GOVERNMENT

Secure formal endorsement or recognition from DSAC and possibly the Presidency or Ministry of Sport



SPORTS FEDERATIONS AND LEAGUES

Invite national federations to become founding members



CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

Approach major sponsors, sports apparel companies, broadcasters, and investors



MEDIA

Bring media partners on board to help amplify SASSIC's message



ACADEMIC AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Engage universities or sports institutes as knowledge partners



INTERNATIONAL BODIES

Connect with international sports bodies or successful models abroad

All these engagements serve to **widen the coalition**. In change management terms, this is building a guiding coalition beyond the core team – making sure many influential **organisations** are pulling in the same direction. Through formal partnership agreements or public endorsements, momentum for SASSIC will grow. By the end of this step, a critical mass of stakeholders should be ready to move forward together.

A winding road with a dashed orange line. A blue circle with the number 4 is on the road. There are several dark grey circles on the road, some with lines connecting them to the road.

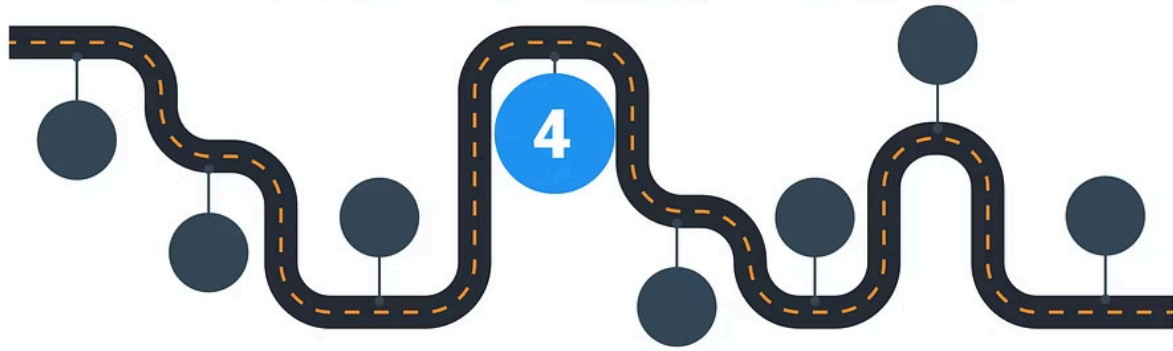
GOVERNMENT

SPORTS FEDERATIONS AND LEAGUES

CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

Approach major sponsors, sports apparel companies, broadcasters, and investors to support SASSIC. Many corporates are eager to invest in development and CSI (Corporate Social Investment) related to sports – SASSIC provides a coordinated avenue for that. For instance, a broadcasting company could sponsor the Sports Data Lake project, or a bank could sponsor the investment conference. In return, they get strategic insight and a voice in shaping a growing industry.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 4: ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS & BUILD PARTNERSHIPS (CONTINUED)

MEDIA

Bring media partners on board to help amplify SASSIC's message. This might involve partnering with a prominent sports media outlet or journalist network to cover SASSIC events and milestones. **Media engagement is key from the start**, as was the case in Project Invictus's approach of connecting with media early. A media partner can also help craft narratives that highlight the positive aims of SASSIC (e.g. human-interest stories of transformed athletes or communities), which will be important for public support.

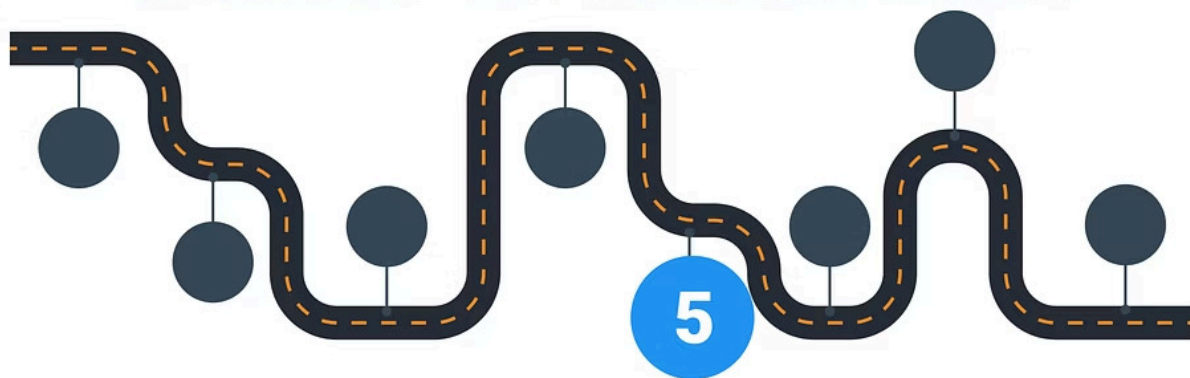
ACADEMIC AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Engage universities or sports institutes (such as the Sports Science Institute, or sport management programmes at universities) as knowledge partners. They can contribute research, help with data analysis, or run training programmes for coaches and administrators as part of SASSIC's capacity-building mission.

INTERNATIONAL BODIES

Consider linking with international sports bodies or successful models abroad for knowledge exchange. For example, connecting with organisations like the International Olympic Committee (on governance best practices) or countries that have strong sports industry councils for mentorship. This can broaden perspectives and lend global legitimacy.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 5: LAUNCH SASSIC AND COMMUNICATE THE MISSION

With groundwork laid, the stage is set to publicly launch SASSIC. This should be a well-planned event or series of announcements to introduce the council to the broader public and industry. Key actions include:

PUBLIC LAUNCH EVENT

Organise a high-profile launch event to present SASSIC to the public

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Release press statements and op-eds explaining SASSIC's goals

BRANDING AND TRANSPARENCY

Introduce SASSIC's branding and launch a comprehensive website

OUTREACH AND ROADSHOW

Hold smaller launch events in different provinces or with different sports groups

By the end of the launch phase, SASSIC should be publicly recognised as *the* emerging voice for sports industry transformation, with its mission widely communicated. The successful launch also marks the transition from planning to execution.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 5: LAUNCH SASSIC AND COMMUNICATE THE MISSION (CONTINUED)

PUBLIC LAUNCH EVENT

Organise a high-profile launch (perhaps a summit or press conference) where the SASSIC leadership and founding partners present the initiative. This event could coincide with or be part of the inaugural **Sports Investment Conference** to immediately demonstrate SASSIC's purpose. At the launch, unveil SASSIC's mission, strategic pillars, and upcoming initiatives. Having **influential athletes or ambassadors speak** at the event can draw attention – for example, a beloved former national team captain sharing why they support SASSIC's vision of opportunity for all in sport. Also, a government minister voicing commitment to collaborate would reinforce the message.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Alongside the event, release press statements and op-eds explaining SASSIC's goals. Make sure to highlight *why* this council matters: use compelling data (e.g., how much untapped economic value is in sports, or how many youth could benefit from revived school sports) and human stories. Emphasise that this is a **movement for positive change and unity**, not a protest or a breakaway faction. The narrative should frame SASSIC as **a constructive partner to all existing bodies, inspired by the collaborative success in other sectors (like tech)**. Leverage social media – create a strong online presence (Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) to engage younger stakeholders and keep the conversation going beyond traditional media.

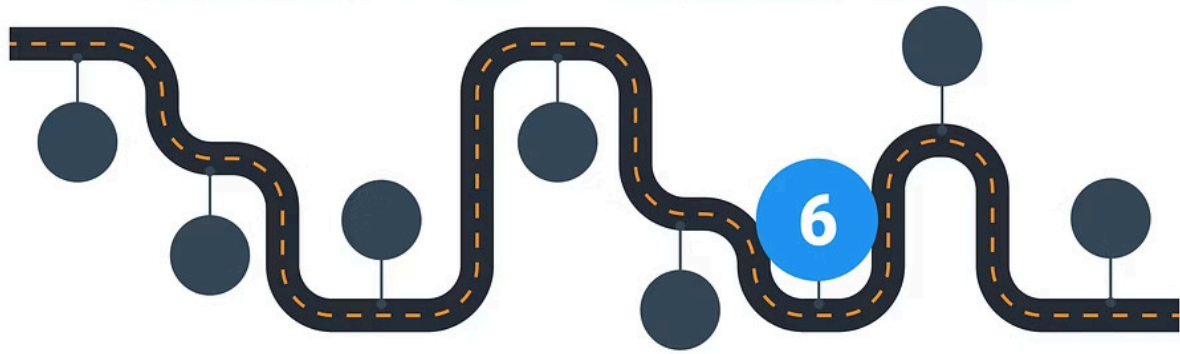
BRANDING AND TRANSPARENCY

Introduce SASSIC's branding (logo, website, etc.) which should symbolise a fresh, inclusive era for sports. Launch a website (as is already under development at **sportsindustry.org**) that outlines the mandate, initiatives, and ways to get involved. Publish key documents like the SASSIC charter or founding principles on the site for transparency. Also list the founding partners and members – seeing a roster of reputable organisations (and prominent individuals) gives SASSIC instant credibility. Provide a clear contact point for others to **"register their interest"** to join or support.

OUTREACH AND ROADSHOW

Consider holding smaller launch roadshows or info-sessions in different provinces or with different sports groups to make sure the word spreads beyond the main launch. This could mean attending federation AGMs to present SASSIC, or having regional workshops in sports hubs to explain how local clubs and officials can plug in.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 6: IMPLEMENT KEY INITIATIVES (QUICK WINS)

After launching, it's crucial to maintain momentum by quickly moving from talk to action. Early **"quick win" initiatives** will demonstrate SASSIC's value and build trust among stakeholders.

Based on SASSIC's core pillars, some initial projects might be:

1

GOVERNANCE CODE & TRAINING

Develop a Sports Governance Code of Conduct and provide training

2

SPORTS DATA LAKE PILOT

Begin development of the National Sports Data Lake with a pilot project

3

INVESTMENT MARKETPLACE

Host the first Sports Investment Conference to connect projects with funding

4

GRASSROOTS REVIVAL PROGRAMME

Launch a partnership for a pilot grassroots sports programme in schools

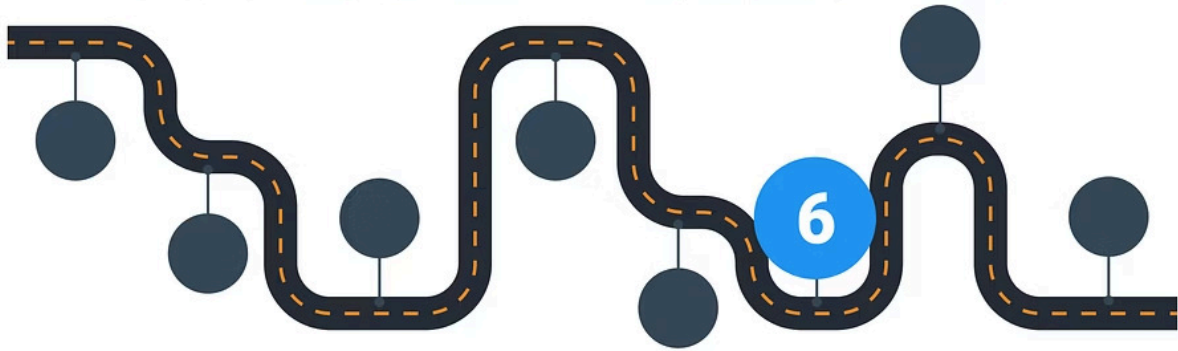
5

MEDIA CAMPAIGN "FACES OF TRANSFORMATION"

Share stories of individuals benefiting from sports transformation

Each quick-win initiative should be monitored and its results publicised. Achieving early successes, even modest ones, builds credibility and silences critics. It shows that SASSIC is not just another talk shop but an action-oriented body capable of making a difference. This momentum also helps in **change management**: people are more likely to embrace changes (like new policies or structures) when they see benefits materialising.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 6: IMPLEMENT KEY INITIATIVES QUICK WINS (CONTINUED)

GOVERNANCE CODE & TRAINING

Develop a **Sports Governance Code of Conduct** in consultation with experts and roll it out to member federations. This could be accompanied by workshops or webinars for federation officials on governance best practices, ethics, and financial transparency. By providing practical tools (e.g., template policies) and training, SASSIC helps members improve immediately. Even small changes – like an association adopting stricter anti-corruption measures – can be showcased as progress.

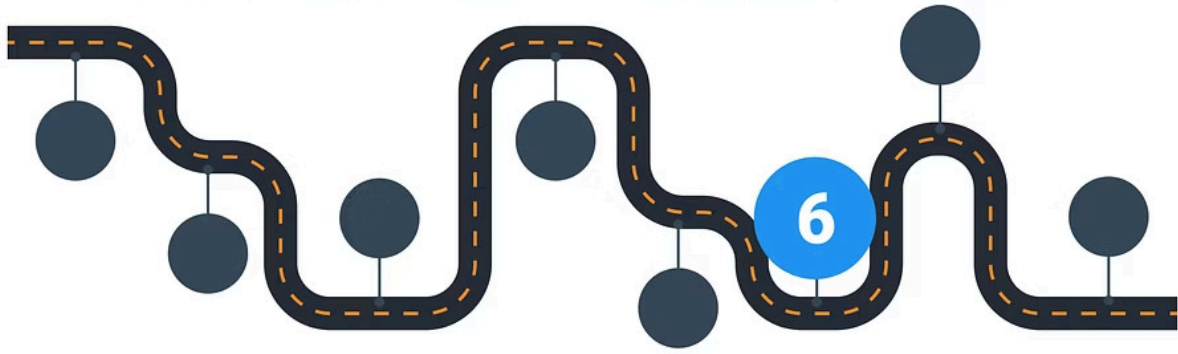
SPORTS DATA LAKE PILOT

Kick off the development of the **National Sports Data Lake (Project Vlei)** by partnering with a tech company or university. Perhaps start by aggregating data for one or two sports to prove concept – for example, compile nationwide school athletics participation stats, or create a dashboard of facilities in a province. Use this pilot to attract more data contributions. As data starts illuminating gaps (say, a region with low female sports participation), SASSIC can highlight this to spur targeted interventions.

INVESTMENT MARKETPLACE

Host the first **Sports Investment Conference** or a roundtable with investors. At this event, present a few ready opportunities (e.g., a community sports complex project seeking funding, or a sports tech start-up needing venture capital). By facilitating even one or two deals or funding commitments, SASSIC proves it can tangibly channel capital into sports. It also sends a message to cash-strapped sports entities that there's hope beyond traditional funding sources.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



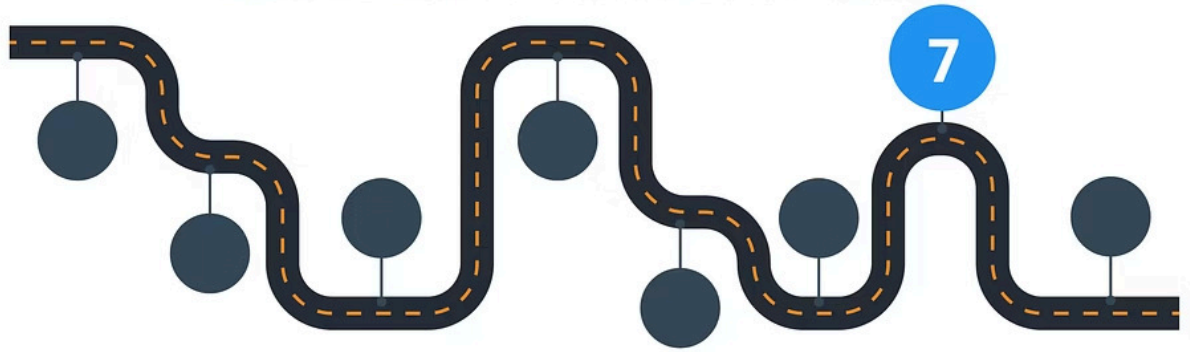
STEP 6: IMPLEMENT KEY INITIATIVES QUICK WINS (CONTINUED) GRASSROOTS REVIVAL PROGRAMME

Launch a partnership with the Department of Basic Education or NGOs for a pilot **grassroots sports programme**. For instance, select a district where SASSIC, with sponsor support, will refurbish a couple of school sports fields and organise inter-school leagues. Tie this with training young coaches from the community. A successful pilot that increases youth participation (and perhaps academic performance or community unity as side benefits) can be used as a template to scale further.

MEDIA CAMPAIGN "FACES OF TRANSFORMATION"

Work with media partners to run a positive campaign featuring stories of individuals benefiting from sports transformation – e.g., a female rugby player from a township who made a provincial team thanks to new development programmes. Such storytelling humanises the impact and keeps the public sentiment on the side of change. It also provides cover for active athletes to speak positively about transformation without it seeming like a labour protest (more on this in the athlete engagement section).

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



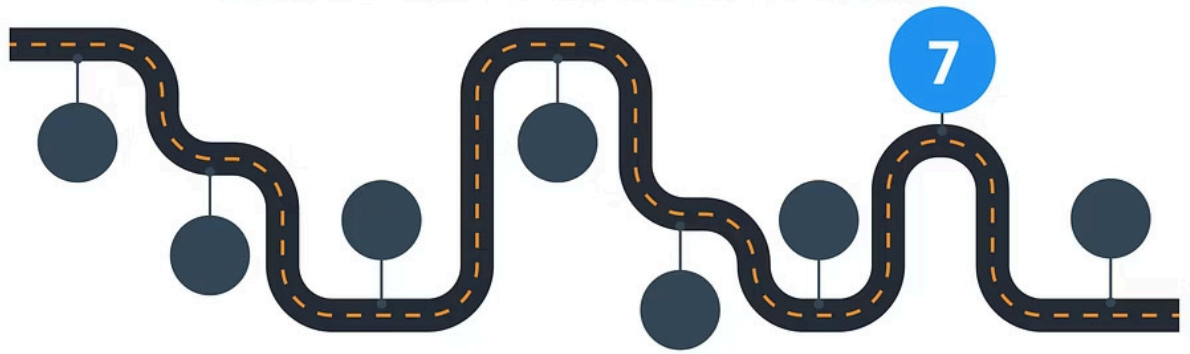
STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONALISE CHANGE

With initial successes, SASSIC should expand its reach and embed itself in the sports landscape for the long term:



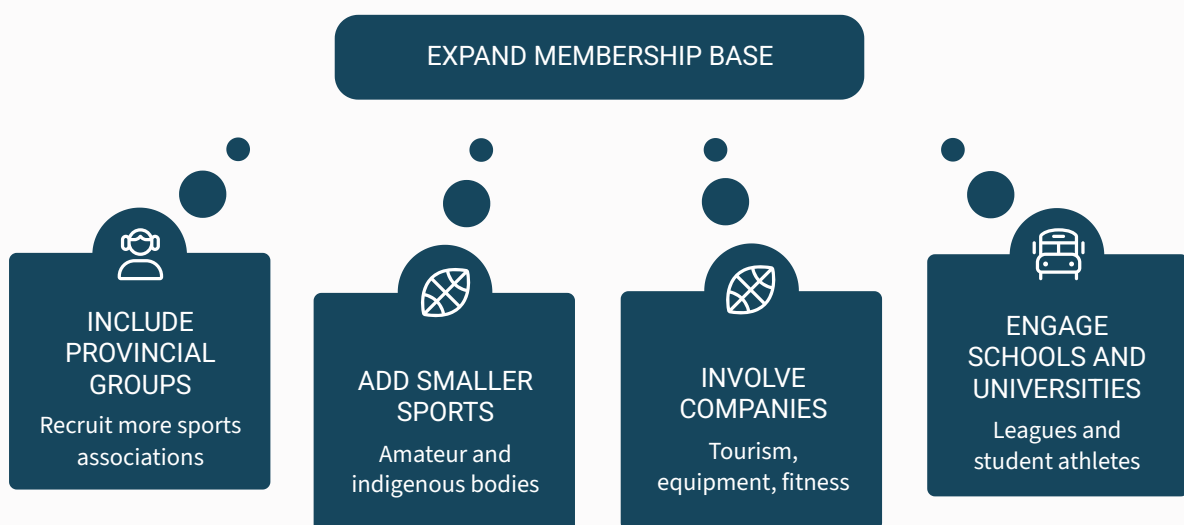
In essence, Step 7 is about entrenching SASSIC in the fabric of South African sport. When clubs, schools, companies, and government departments all routinely interact with or through SASSIC for their sport development needs, it will signal that the movement has truly taken root.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC

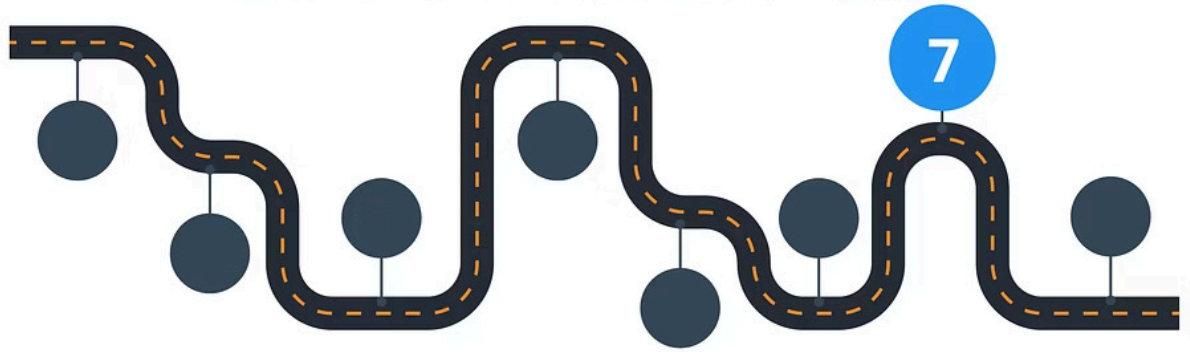


STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Actively recruit additional members beyond the founding group. This could include more provincial sports associations, smaller sports (like amateur or indigenous sports bodies), more companies (sports tourism, equipment manufacturers, health and fitness companies), and even **schools or universities** leagues. A broad membership base makes SASSIC truly representative. Consider tiered membership options so that even cash-strapped amateur bodies can join (perhaps through subsidised membership sponsored by bigger members, to ensure inclusivity). The council can set a goal, e.g., to have representation from every sport code and every province within a year or two.



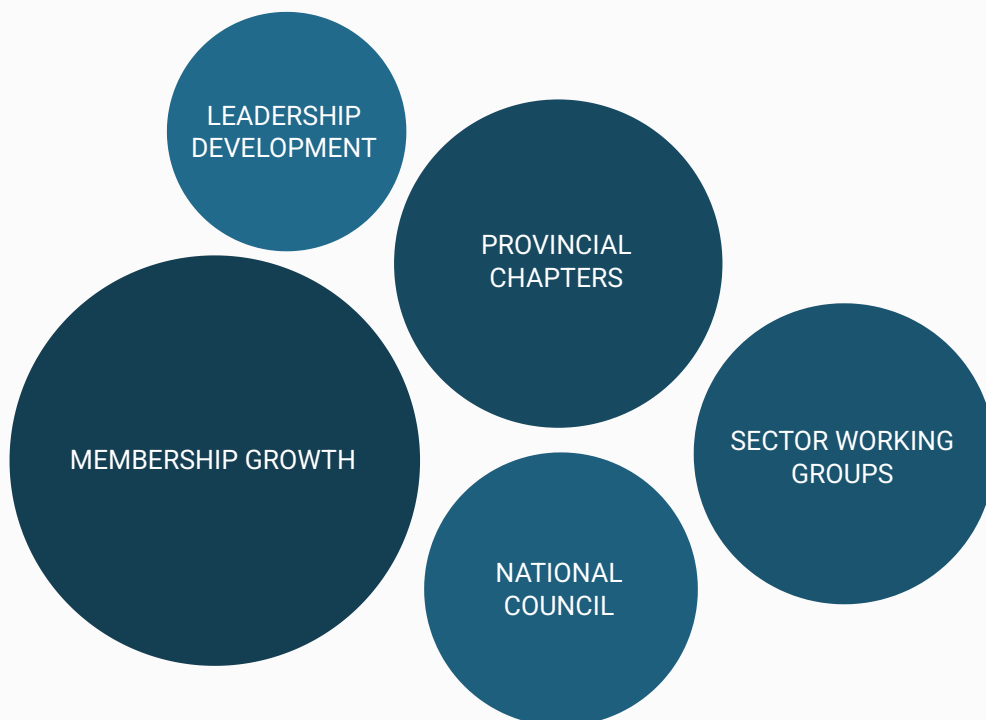
ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



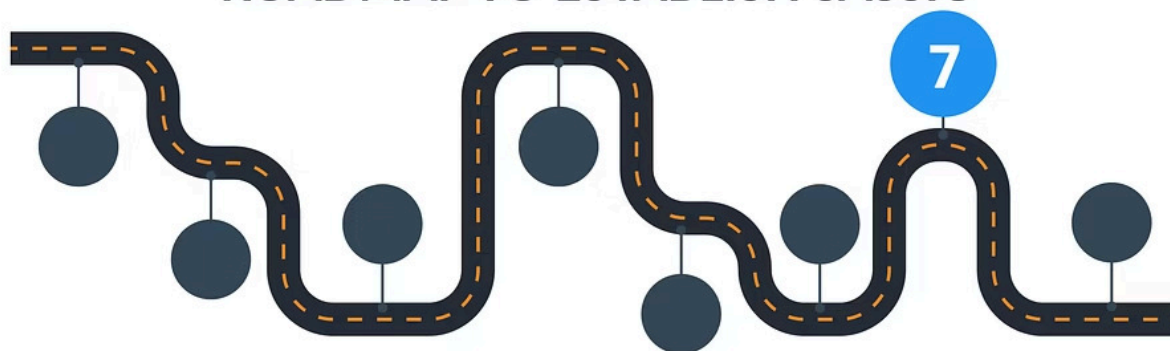
STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP

LOCAL CHAPTERS OR WORKING GROUPS

As membership grows, create structures to manage engagement. For example, establish provincial chapters of SASSIC or sector-specific working groups (e.g., a School Sport Working Group, a Women in Sport Leadership Network under SASSIC, etc.). These sub-groups allow focused attention on specific areas whilst feeding into the national council. They also nurture new leaders.

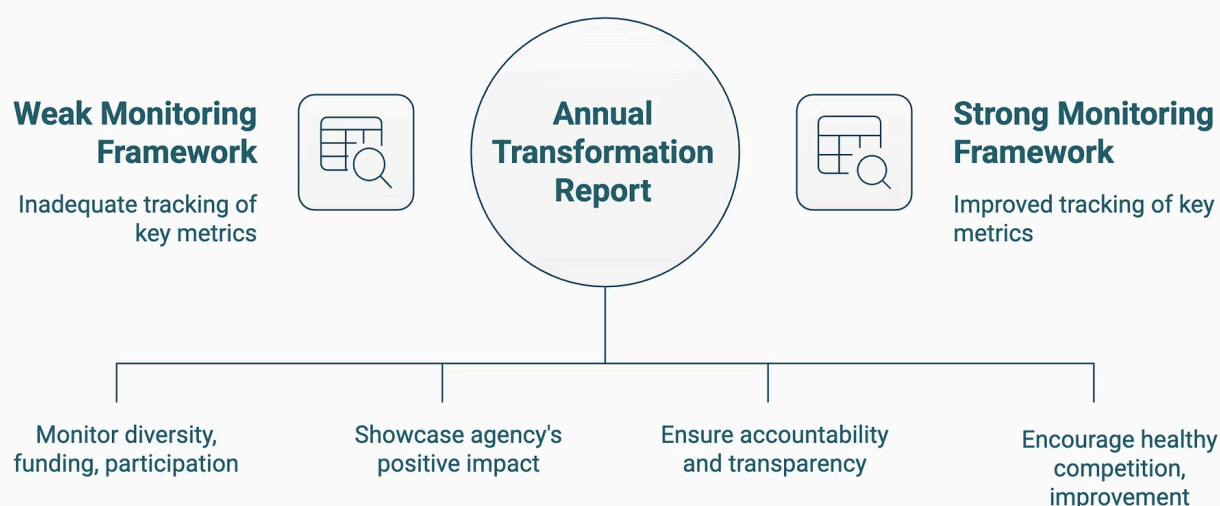


ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



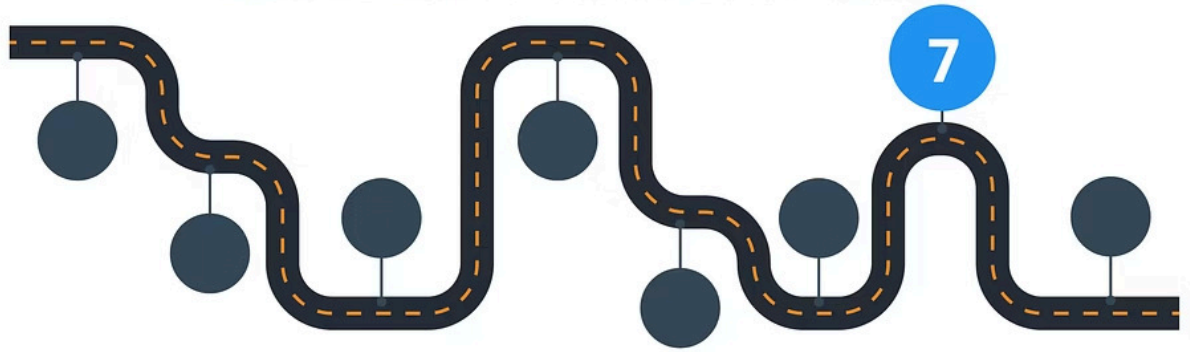
STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP MONITORING AND REPORTING

Strengthen Sports Transformation Monitoring



Continue to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation framework. Possibly produce an **annual "State of Sports Transformation" report** that tracks key metrics (diversity in national teams and leadership, sports funding trends, participation rates, etc.) and highlights SASSIC's contributions. Publicly releasing such a report holds everyone accountable and keeps transformation on the agenda. It could even rank or score sports federations on governance and development indicators – a bit of healthy competition can encourage improvement (nobody wants to be last in a ranking of governance, for example).

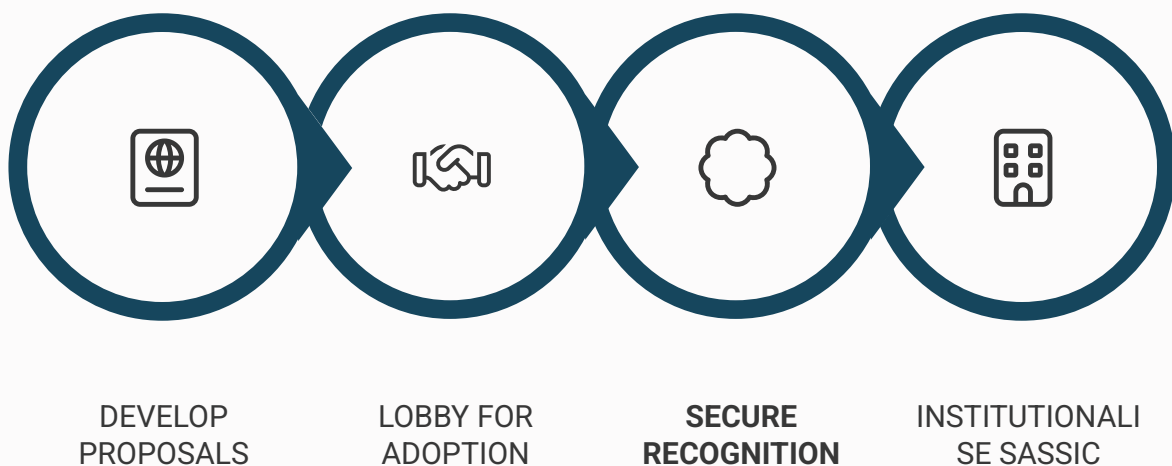
ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



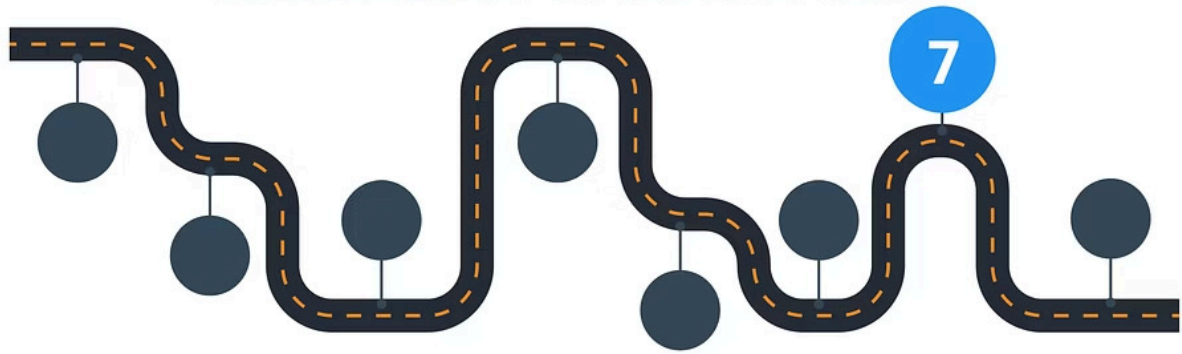
STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP

POLICY INTEGRATION

Work towards integrating SASSIC's proposals into official policy. For instance, if SASSIC drafts a policy for tax incentives on grassroots sports donations, lobby to get it adopted in the national budget. Or push for the **recognition of SASSIC as an advisory council in the National Sport & Recreation Plan updates**, ensuring it has a formal voice. Over time, SASSIC aims to be institutionalised as the go-to consultative body for any major sport-related economic or development policy. This solidifies the changes in the system beyond individual terms of office.



ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 7: GROW MEMBERSHIP FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

ENSURE SASSIC'S FUNDING MODEL IS SUSTAINABLE

Diversify income streams – perhaps a mix of membership fees, event revenues, training services, grants, and CSR contributions.

PLAN LONG-TERM BUDGETS

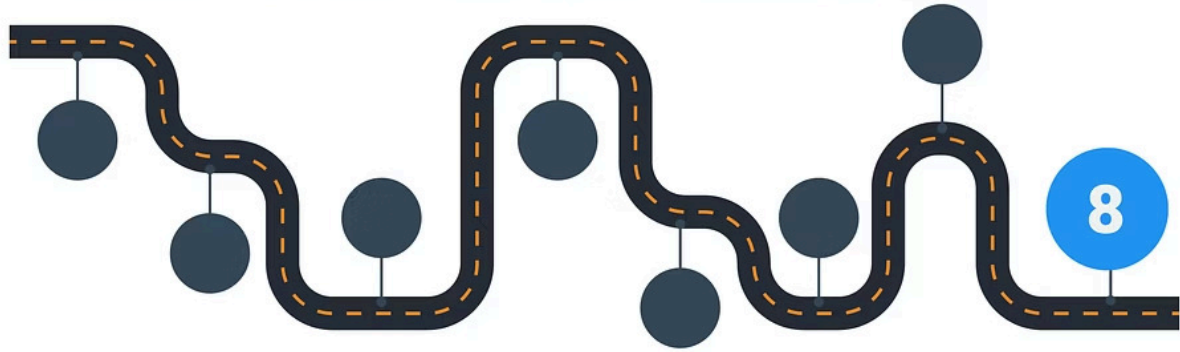
The interim steering committee's job was to kick-start funding; now a finance subcommittee or the board must plan long-term budgets.

INTRODUCE INNOVATIVE FINANCING

Collaboration with National Treasury on sports investment instruments will also come into play here. Financial stability underpins the council's independence and ability to execute plans.



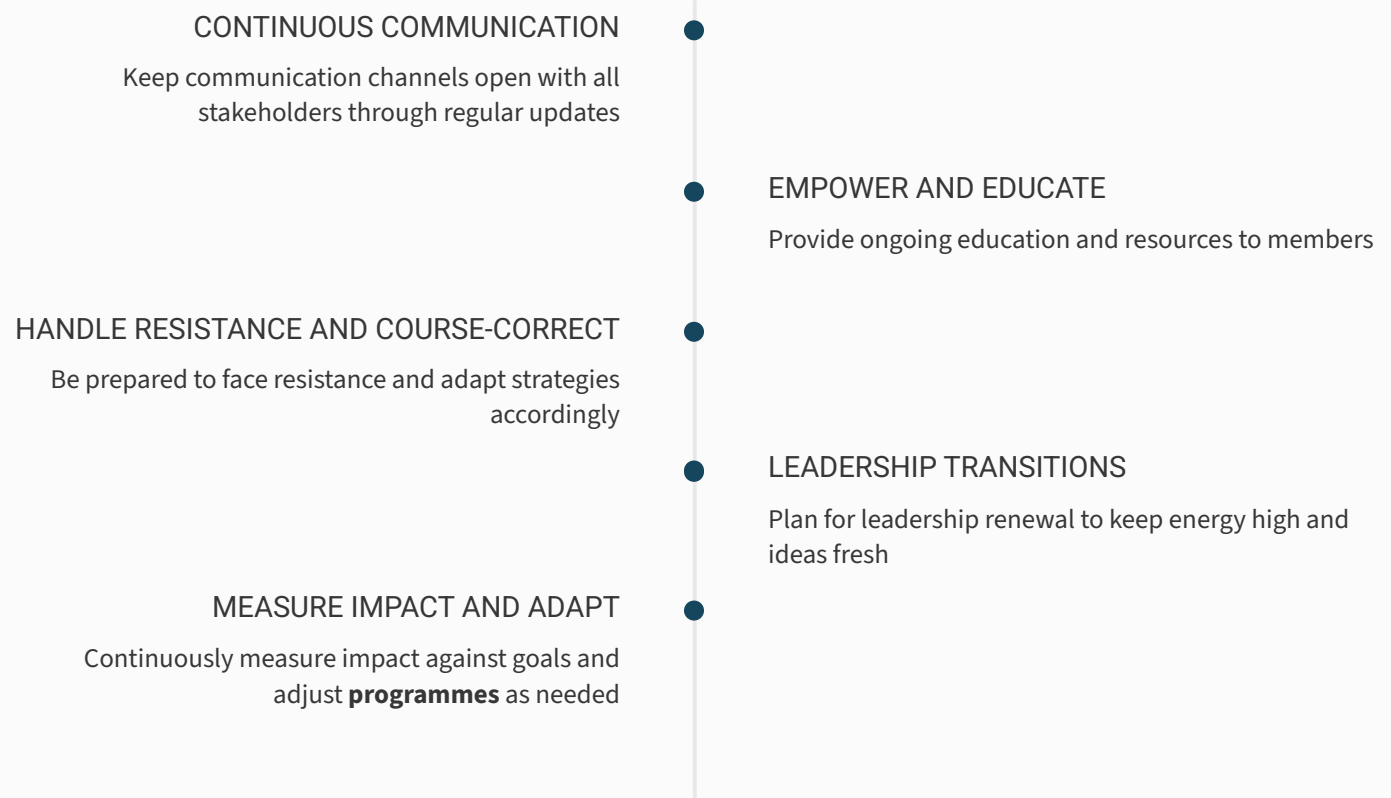
ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 8: ONGOING CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADAPTATION

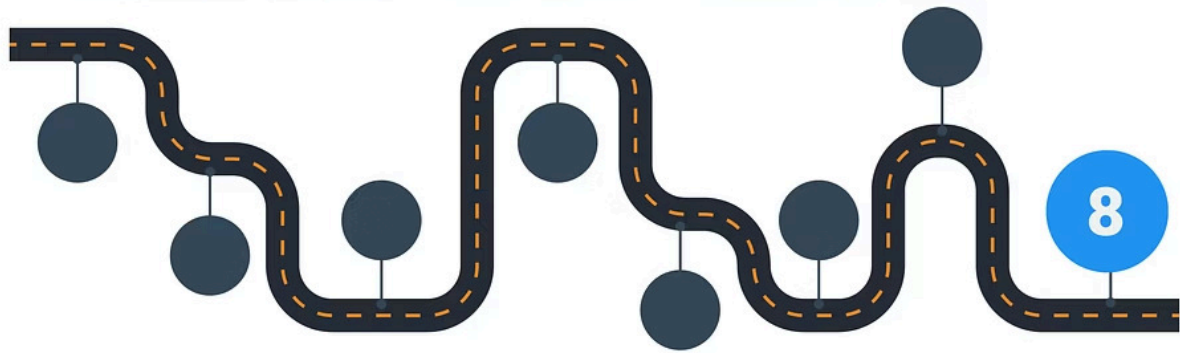
Change of this magnitude – creating an entire movement and shifting how an industry operates – is a continuous process.

Even after initial successes, change management principles remain important:



By following these steps methodically, the establishment of SASSIC will be well-managed and inclusive, increasing the likelihood of success. The process itself becomes one of building **consensus and commitment**, which is the essence of managing change on a large scale. Next, we will discuss in detail some of the structural and strategic considerations mentioned in these steps: engaging media and athletes, the governance and membership model of SASSIC, and initiatives at various levels of sport.

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 8: ONGOING CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADAPTATION (CONTINUED)

CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION

Keep communication channels open with all stakeholders. Regular newsletters, meetings, and social media updates will maintain transparency. Celebrate wins publicly and also acknowledge challenges candidly. This openness builds trust, as people feel informed and part of the journey.

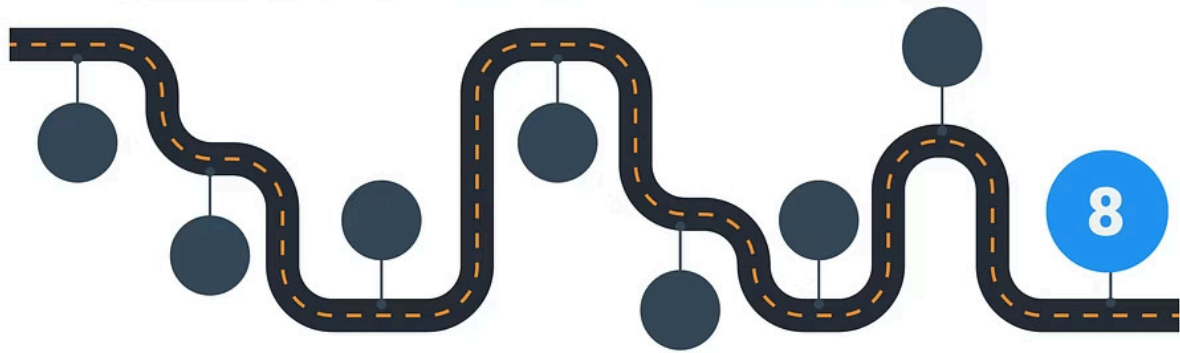
EMPOWER AND EDUCATE

Empower members by providing ongoing education and resources. For instance, roll out an online portal where members can access toolkits on fundraising, governance, or transformation best practices (much like SiMODiSA created a portal for startups to learn about policies). The more knowledge and tools stakeholders have, the more they can independently advance transformation in their domains, which multiplies impact.

HANDLE RESISTANCE AND COURSE-CORRECT

Be prepared to face some resistance or setbacks – perhaps a federation that is slow to change or a political shift that affects sports funding. Approach resistance with inclusion: listen to concerns, show empathy for those who feel threatened, and find compromises that still move forward. For example, if some sports bodies fear losing autonomy, assure them that SASSIC decisions are non-binding and meant to assist, not dictate. Incorporate feedback to refine strategies. The steering committee or a dedicated change manager can develop mitigation plans for major risks (like if initial funding runs low or if there's public criticism).

ROADMAP TO ESTABLISH SASSIC



STEP 8: ONGOING CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADAPTATION (CONTINUED) LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Plan for leadership renewal to keep energy high and ideas fresh. As SASSIC grows, new leaders (especially from underrepresented groups) should be nurtured to take on roles. A succession plan for key positions (Chairperson, CEO of SASSIC, etc.) will ensure continuity **beyond individual personalities**, maintaining stability even as people come and go – this addresses the "constant flux" often seen in sports leadership by providing a steady structure.

MEASURE IMPACT AND ADAPT

Continuously measure the impact of SASSIC's initiatives against its goals (e.g., increase in youth sports participation by X%, number of federations with improved governance scores, amount of new investment in sports, etc.). Use data from the sports Data Lake and member reports to gauge what's working or not. Adapt programmes accordingly – for instance, if the investment conference draws interest but no deals, refine the approach by adding mentorship to help sports entities become "investment-ready." Maintaining a learning orientation keeps the movement effective and relevant.

A person wearing a grey beanie and a dark t-shirt is operating a gimbal-mounted camera on a sports field. The camera is a professional DSLR with a large lens, mounted on a black gimbal. The person is holding the gimbal with both hands, and the camera is pointed towards the right. In the background, there is a large stadium with blue and yellow seats, and a green field with some people playing soccer. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION

The media is a powerful ally in any social movement, and sports transformation is no exception. In the context of SASSIC, **media engagement serves multiple purposes**: raising awareness, shaping public perception, holding stakeholders accountable, and providing channels for advocacy.

Here's how media can be strategically involved without causing undue controversy:



AMPLIFYING THE VISION

Including media partners from day one to ensure the message reaches the public



POSITIVE FRAMING AND NARRATIVE

Focussing on hope, opportunity, and national pride rather than criticism



PLATFORMS FOR DIALOGUE

Hosting round-table discussions or talk shows to create a national conversation



SOCIAL MEDIA AND ATHLETE INFLUENCERS

Leveraging influential athletes' personal platforms to champion the cause



MEDIA AS WATCHDOG

Welcoming accountability function of independent media



CAMPAIGNS AND RECOGNITION

Creating awards or campaigns that incentivise positive action

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

AMPLIFYING THE VISION

INCLUDE MEDIA PARTNERS

From day one, SASSIC should include media partners in its network.

ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

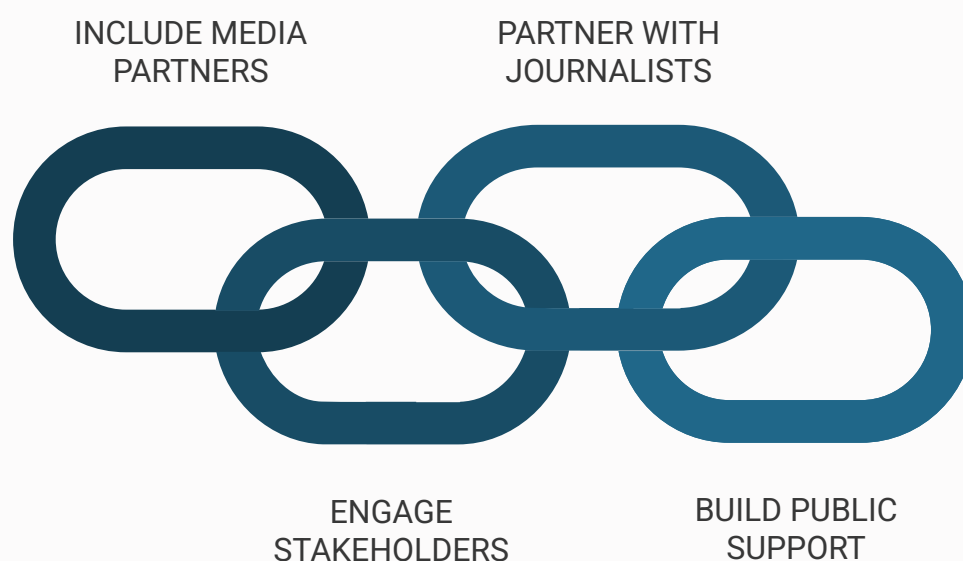
Project Invictus identified media as a key stakeholder to engage alongside government, federations, and investors.

PARTNER WITH JOURNALISTS AND BROADCASTERS

By partnering with respected sports journalists and broadcasters, SASSIC can ensure its message reaches the public in a coherent, positive way.

BUILD PUBLIC SUPPORT

This steady drumbeat of coverage keeps transformation on the national radar and builds public support.



ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

POSITIVE FRAMING AND NARRATIVE

AVOID COMBATIVE FRAMING

Avoid framing SASSIC's efforts as combative or threatening.

FOCUS ON HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY

Frame the transformation story around hope, opportunity, and national pride.

HIGHLIGHT SOLUTIONS

Focus on what's being done to fix issues and the benefits that will result.

ENCOURAGE COOPERATION

Encourage stakeholders to cooperate by highlighting solutions and success stories.

SUPPLY STORY ANGLES

SASSIC's communications team should actively supply the media with story angles and human-interest pieces.

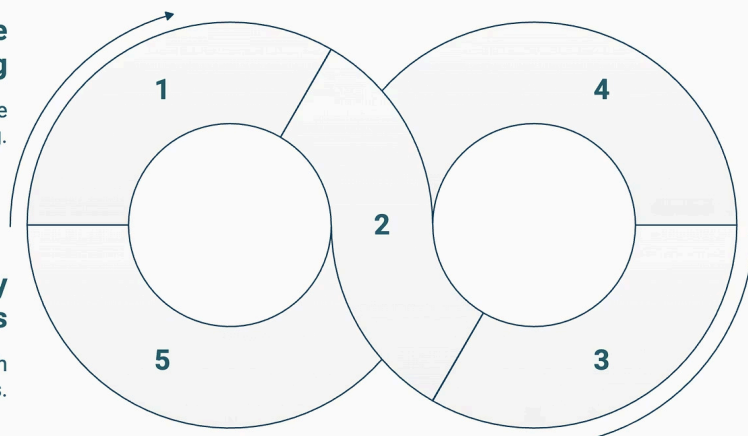
SASSIC's Communication Cycle

Avoid Combative Framing

Ensure messages are not seen as threatening.

Supply Story Angles

Provide media with engaging content ideas.



Encourage Cooperation

Promote collaboration among stakeholders.

Highlight Solutions

Emphasize actions taken to resolve issues.

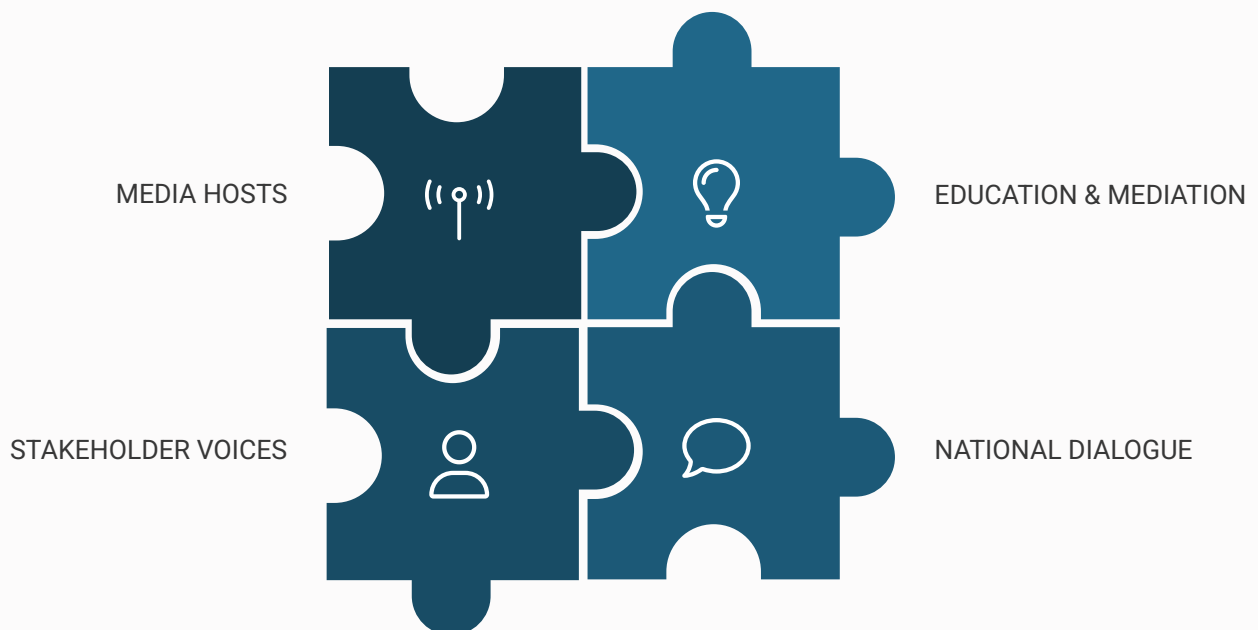
Focus on Hope and Opportunity

Highlight positive aspects and future potential.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORT TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

PLATFORMS FOR DIALOGUE

Media outlets (TV, radio, print, and digital) can host **round-table discussions or chat shows** featuring SASSIC representatives, athletes, and officials to discuss sport transformation openly. These dialogues, broadcast to the nation, can mirror the internal stakeholder dialogues but on a public platform, creating a national conversation. It's important that these discussions include influential voices – e.g., a famous coach or athlete speaking about why school sport matters, or a business leader talking about sport's economic potential – to draw viewers and lend weight. Moderated well, these discussions can clarify SASSIC's intentions and dispel misunderstandings. The media essentially becomes an **educator and mediator**, helping different perspectives be heard while rallying everyone around the common love of sport.

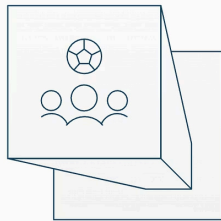


ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORT TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

Athlete Influence and Message Alignment

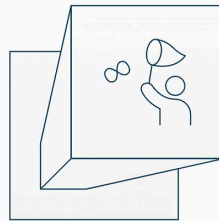
General supportive message

General message aligns well but lacks influence.



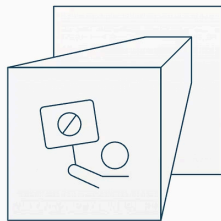
Influential athlete supporting SASSIC

Influential athlete effectively promotes SASSIC's goals.



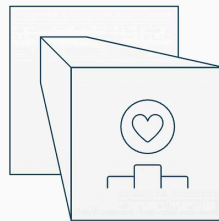
Critical message with low influence

Critical message ineffective due to low influence.



Influential but misaligned message

Influential athlete's message doesn't align with SASSIC.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND ATHLETE INFLUENCERS

In today's landscape, traditional media is complemented by social media. SASSIC can encourage and coordinate with **influential athletes to use their personal platforms** (Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to champion the cause. Many athletes have large followings and when they talk about positive change (e.g., "Proud to support @SASSIC's drive to get every child on the field #SportForAll"), it resonates with fans. To avoid conflicts with employers, active athletes can keep their messages general and supportive, rather than critical – focusing on what they love about sport and the opportunities they want others to have. These messages can be co-crafted with SASSIC's media team to ensure they align with the movement's goals and don't cross any line that might upset clubs or sponsors.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

MEDIA AS WATCHDOG

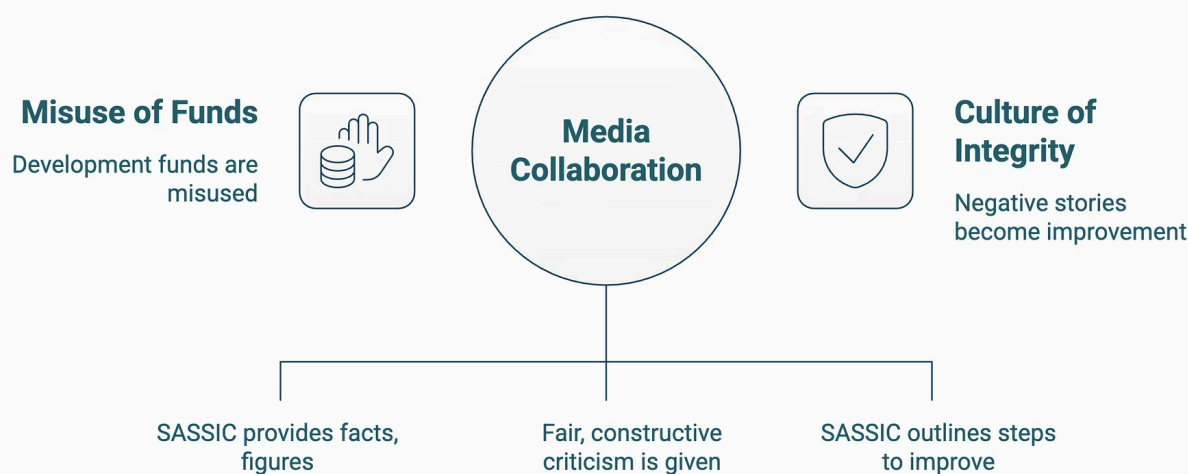
While supportive media is crucial, an independent media also serves an accountability function, which SASSIC should welcome. For example, if certain federations resist change or if funds meant for development are misused, investigative sports journalists bringing these issues to light actually reinforce why SASSIC's role is needed. By collaborating with media, SASSIC can provide facts and figures (thanks to its data monitoring) that enable responsible reporting. A relationship of **mutual respect with journalists** means that when criticism is due, it's fair and constructive. SASSIC can respond through the media by outlining steps it will take to address any shortcomings. This openness can turn potentially negative stories into case studies of improvement, further cementing a culture of integrity.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN DRIVING SPORTS TRANSFORMATION (CONTINUED)

CAMPAIGNS AND RECOGNITION

SASSIC, with media help, could institute **awards or campaigns** that incentivise positive action. For example, a media-partnered "Sport Transformation Awards" annual programme could recognise federations, schools, sponsors, or individuals making exceptional progress in inclusivity, development, or good governance. Televising or publicising these awards not only rewards those doing right, but also sets benchmarks for others. Media love covering awards and success stories, so it's a win-win: content for them, encouragement for the movement.

Fostering Integrity Through Media Collaboration



In summary, media's role is to **shine a spotlight on the transformation journey**, keep the public informed and supportive, and at times nudge stakeholders by asking tough questions. By proactively working with media allies, SASSIC can create an environment where supporting sports transformation is seen as the **socially and reputationally smart thing to do** for all involved. This makes resistance less attractive and participation more appealing, smoothing the path for the changes ahead.

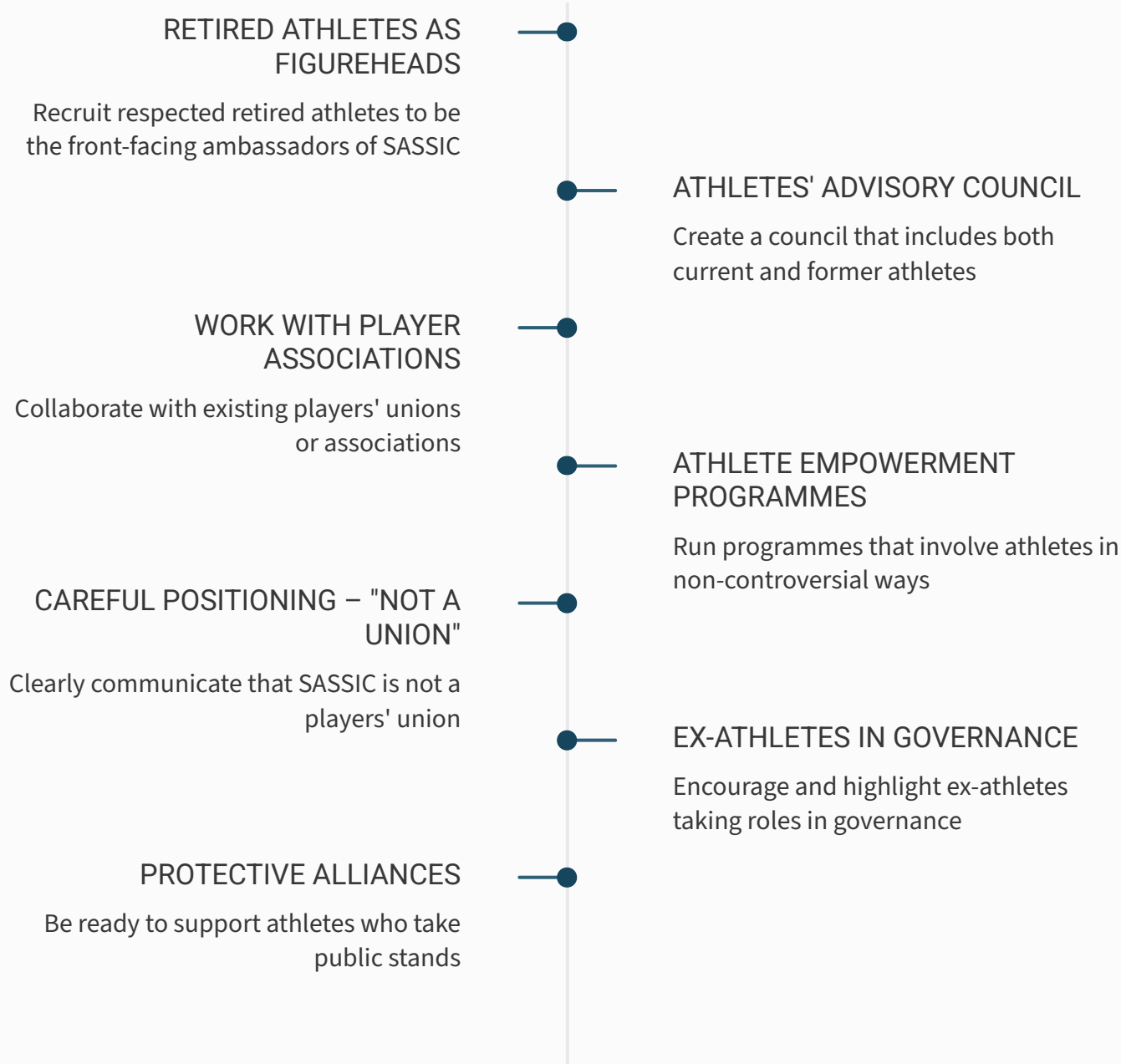


INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS WITHOUT EMPLOYER BACKLASH

INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS WITHOUT EMPLOYER BACKLASH

Active athletes are at the heart of sports, and their voices carry immense moral authority with fans and communities. However, as noted, many athletes fear that publicly pushing for change could be viewed by their teams or employers as adversarial (akin to unionising or dissent). The key is to **involve athletes in a manner that leverages their influence but protects their careers.**

Here are strategies for doing so:



INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS (CONTINUED)

RETIRED ATHLETES AS FIGUREHEADS

One immediate way is to recruit a cadre of **respected retired athletes** to be the front-facing ambassadors of SASSIC. These could be sports legends who no longer have contractual ties that restrain their speech – for example, a retired Springbok rugby captain, a legendary Bafana Bafana (football) player from the past, or an Olympic gold medallist. Such individuals often remain passionate about their sport and country and are looking for ways to give back. They can safely speak out about the need for transformation and better opportunities for the youth, without any club owner or federation able to penalise them. As **public champions**, they can attend SASSIC events, meet with government or sponsors, and be quoted in media supporting SASSIC's initiatives. This provides star power and credibility to the movement. It also creates a buffer, so that **active players can stand slightly back while still benefiting** from the momentum generated.

ATHLETES' ADVISORY COUNCIL

ATHLETES' ADVISORY COUNCIL

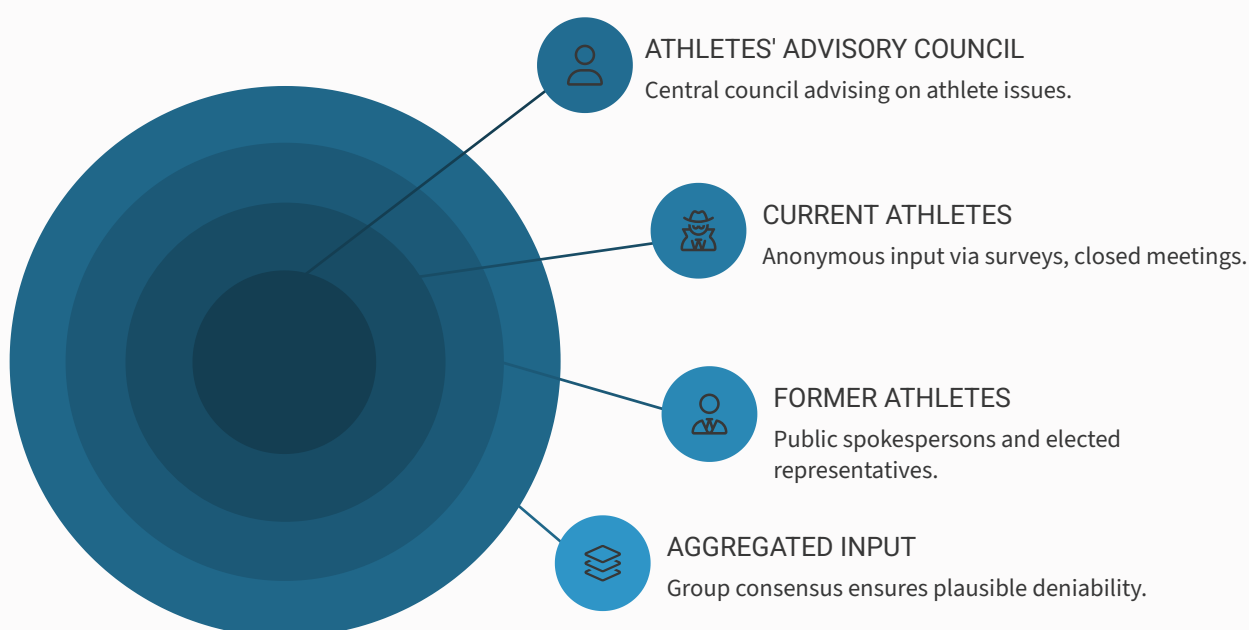
Comprised of current and former athletes to advise the SASSIC board on athlete-related issues.

AGGREGATING ATHLETE INPUT

Gather feedback anonymously or off-the-record to include athlete perspectives.

PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY

Allows active athletes to contribute without a public stance or protest.



INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS (CONTINUED)

WORK WITH PLAYER ASSOCIATIONS

1

IN SPORTS WITH PLAYERS' UNIONS OR ASSOCIATIONS:

SASSIC should collaborate quietly with them.

2

SHARED GOALS:

Many players' associations aim for player welfare and development.

3

ALIGNING EFFORTS:

Associations can support SASSIC's programmes, such as career transition training and grassroots coaching.

4

BENEFICIAL APPROACH:

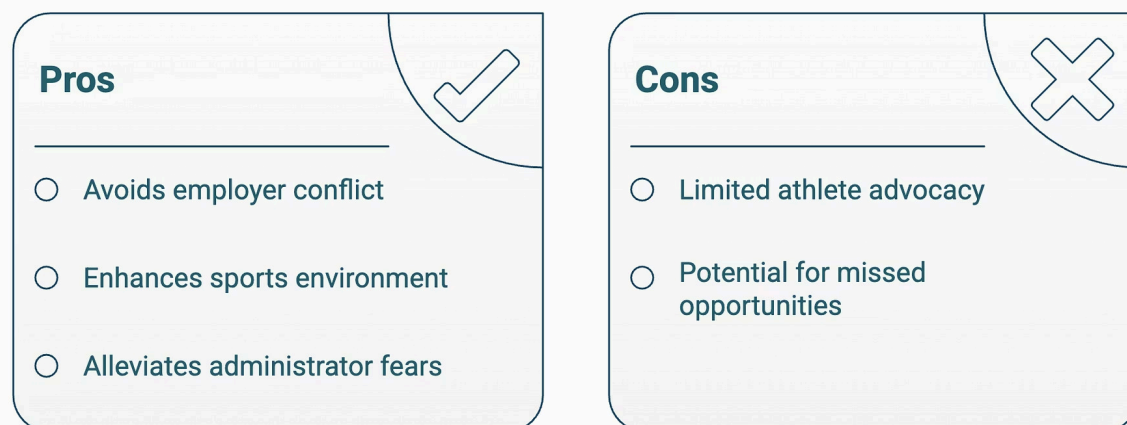
Current athlete participation is viewed as development work or community outreach.

ATHLETE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

SASSIC could run programmes that involve athletes in non-controversial ways. For instance, a Mentorship Programme where star athletes mentor youth or junior athletes in disadvantaged areas – employers cannot object to their players doing community service or mentorship, especially if it's coordinated with the federation's blessing. Similarly, leadership workshops for athletes (teaching them governance, financial literacy, etc., possibly in partnership with their clubs) can be framed as helping athletes prepare for life after sports. While these have the side benefit of creating future leaders who might advocate change, they are innocuous on the surface. If questioned, a club can hardly oppose their player gaining leadership training. Over time, these empowered athletes might take on formal roles in SASSIC post-retirement, creating a pipeline of athlete leaders.

INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS (CONTINUED)

SASSIC's role



CAREFUL POSITIONING – "NOT A UNION"

It should be a mantra in SASSIC communications that it is *not a players' union* and does not deal with wages, contract disputes, or strikes. Reiterate that SASSIC's focus is industry development – which includes better conditions for athletes as a byproduct of a healthier sports ecosystem (e.g., more funds into sport could mean higher salaries eventually, but that's not SASSIC's direct lobbying point). By **staying in the lane of policy and development**, SASSIC avoids stepping on the toes of employers or existing labour frameworks. This should alleviate fears amongst sports administrators that SASSIC will lead to player unrest. In fact, SASSIC can position itself as helping sports bodies by enhancing the whole environment rather than fomenting disputes.

EX-ATHLETES IN GOVERNANCE

- 1 ENCOURAGE EX-ATHLETES IN GOVERNANCE**
 SASSIC and partners help ex-athletes transition to coaching, management, and administrative roles.
- 2 INTERNAL CHANGE AGENTS**
 Ex-athletes bring athlete-centric perspectives to decision-making tables within clubs and federations.
- 3 LEGITIMIZING TRANSFORMATION**
 Former athletes advocating for change from within the system are perceived as more credible.

INVOLVING ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS (CONTINUED)

PROTECTIVE ALLIANCES

If an active athlete does take a public stand (some might be brave enough, especially if they feel secure in their career), SASSIC and its partners should be ready to support them. This could mean legal support if they face any retaliation (though unlikely if everything is above-board), or media support to ensure their message is heard accurately. By having **legal and PR frameworks in place**, SASSIC can reassure athletes that they won't be left isolated if they speak up for the cause. Often, just knowing that a structure has their back can encourage more athletes to lend their voice gradually.

In implementing the above, the key is *gradualism and voluntariness*. Athletes' involvement will likely start with a few pioneers (mostly retired stars) and, as trust in SASSIC grows, more current athletes will feel comfortable being associated. Over time, as the movement becomes mainstream and clearly non-adversarial, active athletes might openly serve on SASSIC committees much like players serve on union executives in other industries. The end goal is a scenario where **athletes are fully integrated stakeholders in shaping the future of their sports**, without any stigma – but reaching that point requires careful initial steps to avoid conflict with the existing sports establishment.

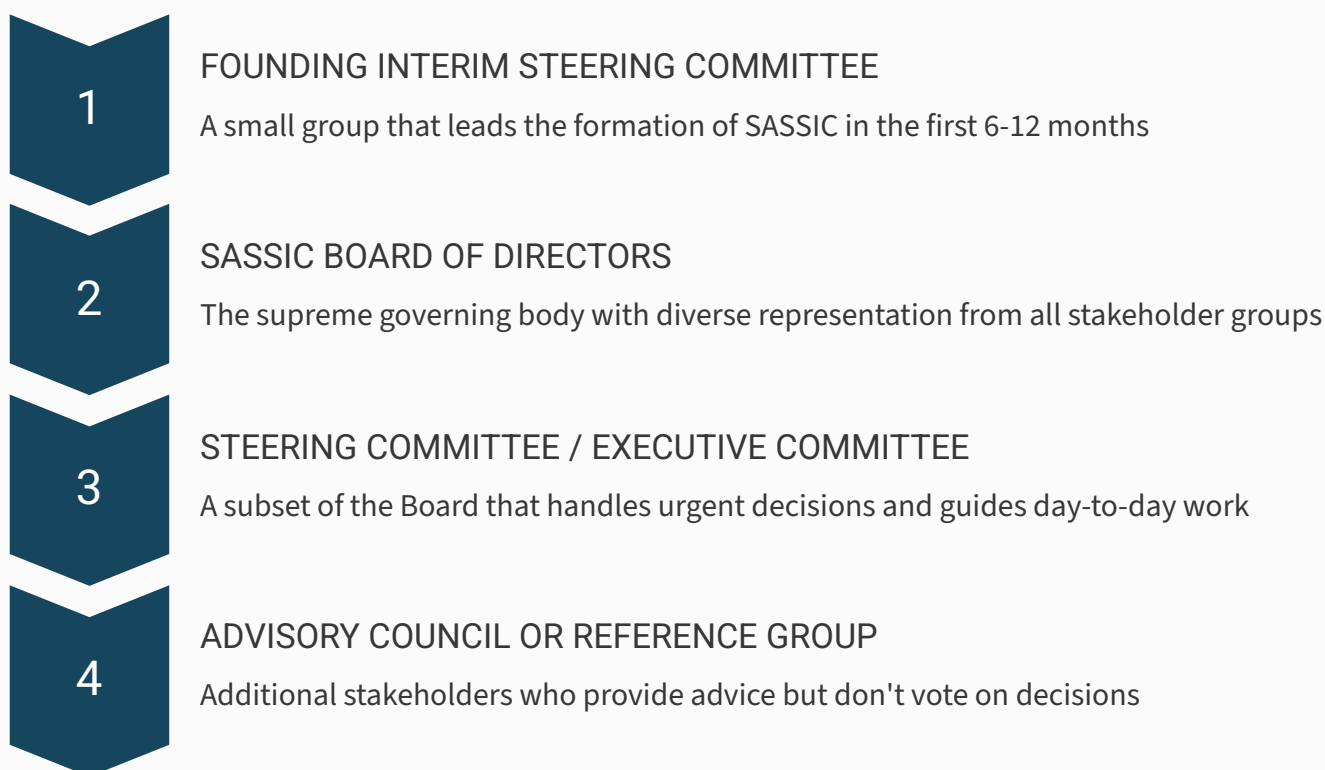
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE:

BOARD, STEERING COMMITTEE, AND INTEGRITY MEASURES



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE: BOARD, STEERING COMMITTEE, AND INTEGRITY MEASURES

A strong governance structure will ensure SASSIC is effective, credible, and true to its values. Drawing from both SiMODiSA's model and best practices in corporate governance, the following outlines the composition and roles of SASSIC's leadership bodies and how integrity and accountability are built in.



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

FOUNDING INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE

As discussed in the roadmap, an interim steering committee leads the formation of SASSIC. This small group (say 5–7 individuals) is essentially a *task team* that works intensively in the first 6-12 months. Their job is to establish the council's foundations: they refine the strategy, recruit initial partners, and guide the launch. Ideally, the steering committee members are **well-connected and respected** in their fields (sports, business, government, etc.) to open doors quickly. They may transition into the formal board or take advisory roles once the board is constituted, depending on what's appropriate. Importantly, this group operates under agreed terms of reference, with clear deliverables (e.g., produce a constitution, secure X funding, convene first AGM) and a limited time frame so that authority smoothly passes to the formal governance structures.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Refine strategy and organisational design
- Recruit initial partners
- Guide the launch process
- Secure initial funding
- Produce founding documents



IDEAL QUALITIES

- Well-connected in their fields
- Respected by stakeholders
- Committed to transformation
- Able to dedicate significant time
- Diverse in expertise and background



TIMELINE

- Operates for 6-12 months
- Has clear deliverables
- Works under agreed terms of reference
- Transitions authority to formal board
- Members may join board or advisory roles

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

SASSIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board is the supreme governing body of SASSIC once it's up and running. To embody the multi-stakeholder nature of the council, the Board's **composition should be diverse**. A possible composition (with perhaps 9 to 12 members for manageability) might include: The Board should operate with **transparency and democratic principles**. Members could be appointed for fixed terms (e.g., 2 or 3 years) with a staggered rotation so the board constantly refreshes. The mix of appointed vs. elected seats can be tailored – e.g., sports bodies might elect their rep, corporate partners could nominate a rep, while others are co-opted for skills. This hybrid ensures both representation and competency. All board members must sign up to the SASSIC code of ethics and declare any conflicts of interest, setting an example for the industry. Regular board meetings (quarterly, for instance) will steer the organisation, approve major plans, and oversee finances.

INDEPENDENT
CHAIRPERSON

GOVERNMENT
REPRESENTATIVE

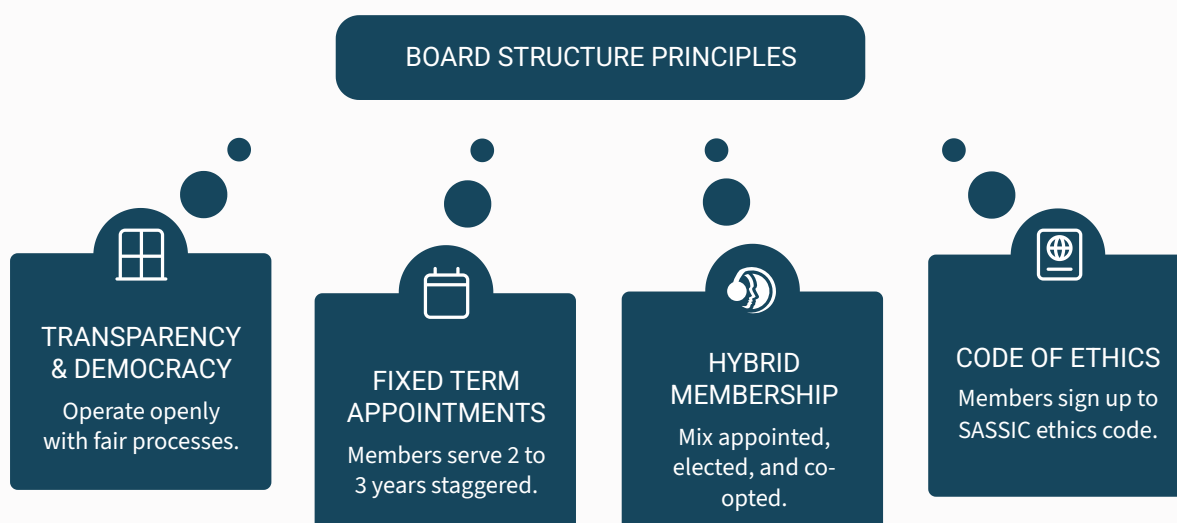
SASCOC/SPORTS
FEDERATION
REPRESENTATIVES

ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

PRIVATE SECTOR
REPRESENTATIVES

EXPERTS/INDEPENDENT
MEMBERS

EX OFFICIO (CEO OF SASSIC)



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

SASSIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS (CONTINUED)

INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON

An eminent individual, possibly from outside day-to-day sport administration, who is trusted across sectors. This could be a retired judge, a senior business figure who loves sport, or a renowned former athlete known for leadership. The Chair's neutrality and stature will help navigate any territorial issues among stakeholders.

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE

A seat for a DSAC nominee or sport commission official, to ensure alignment with national policy. This person provides insight into government plans and can carry SASSIC's recommendations back into the government. (If not a voting director, they could be an observer to maintain independence.)

SASCOC/SPORT FEDERATION REPRESENTATIVES

One or two seats could be reserved for representatives elected by the collective of national sport federations (perhaps through SASCOC's forum). This ensures the traditional sport bodies have a say and feel included. These reps would voice the concerns of various sport codes and relay information back to them.

ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE

A distinguished former athlete (or an elected rep from the Athletes' Council if one exists) to bring the athletes' perspective. Having a voting ex-athlete on the board symbolises commitment to athlete-centric development. This person would also liaise with active athletes behind the scenes.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

SASSIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS (CONTINUED)

PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Two or more seats for individuals from the commercial side – e.g., a corporate sponsor executive, a sports marketing or media company CEO, or an investor in sports ventures. They bring business acumen and focus on financial sustainability. Notably, **SiMODiSA's board included venture fund managers and entrepreneurs** to drive a business-friendly approach. SASSIC can mirror that by including those who understand investment and can connect sports to markets.

EXPERTS/INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

A couple of seats might be filled by independent experts in areas like sports law, finance, or education. For example, a top sports lawyer or governance expert to guide ethical compliance, or an academic specialising in sports development to ground strategies in research. These members ensure decisions are well-informed by evidence and global best practices, and they can chair key committees (like audit or ethics).

EX OFFICIO (CEO OF SASSIC)

Once SASSIC hires an operational CEO or Executive Director, that person might sit on the Board ex officio (without a vote if necessary) to report on operations and execute the board's strategy.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

STEERING COMMITTEE / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Post-launch, SASSIC may institute an **Executive Committee (ExCo)**, which could be akin to a subset of the Board or a continuation of the steering committee concept. SiMODiSA had an Executive Committee (ExCo) with roles like Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, etc., held by key industry figures. SASSIC could do similarly: the Board elects an ExCo (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary for example) to handle urgent decisions and guide the day-to-day work with the CEO. The ExCo would meet more frequently (monthly, perhaps) and ensure the council's strategy is being implemented between full board meetings. It's crucial that the ExCo remains accountable to the full Board and communicates transparently about its actions to avoid any concentration of power.

TYPICAL EXCO COMPOSITION

- Chair (elected from Board)
- Vice-Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- CEO (ex officio)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Handle urgent decisions between Board meetings
- Guide day-to-day work with the CEO
- Meet more frequently (monthly)
- Ensure strategy implementation
- Report transparently to full Board

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

ADVISORY COUNCIL OR REFERENCE GROUP

Beyond the formal Board, SASSIC might maintain an Advisory Council of additional stakeholders who provide advice but don't vote. This could include, say, representatives from each province's sports council, youth representatives, etc. or international advisors. SiMODiSA had a Board of Advisers including various entrepreneurship champions. Likewise, SASSIC's advisory council can enrich the discussion with a broader array of voices and expertise. They can be consulted on major initiatives and serve as ambassadors in their domains.



INTERNATIONAL ADVISERS

Representatives from successful sports councils or transformation initiatives in other countries



PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

Members from each province's sports council to ensure regional perspectives



YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES

Young voices to ensure future generations' needs are considered



ACADEMIC EXPERTS

Researchers and professors specialising in sports development and policy



NGO LEADERS

Representatives from organisations working in grassroots sports development



INDUSTRY SPECIALISTS

Experts in specific areas like sports marketing, facility management, or event organisation

INTEGRITY MECHANISMS



INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

To **hold leaders accountable with integrity and honesty**, SASSIC must model the governance reforms it preaches.

Key measures include:



AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

A **strong committee** will oversee budgets, spending, and financial reporting. Annual external audits and public financial statements will build trust and ensure proper use of funds.

ETHICS OR GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

This committee will **monitor adherence to the code of conduct**, handle internal disputes, review complaints, and ensure ethical decisions, including enforcing recusal rules for conflicts of interest.

MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Robust **M&E systems** will set KPIs for SASSIC's work and track industry transformation outcomes. Regular reports reviewed by the Board will ensure mission focus and accountability, allowing for strategy adjustments when targets are not met.

MEMBER DEMOCRACY

SASSIC is accountable to its members through an **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. Members can vote on resolutions, elect board positions, and scrutinise reports, ensuring leadership alignment with membership approval and fostering ownership.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

SASSIC may issue **public annual impact reports** or hold open public meetings. This transparency sets a new standard in sports administration, inviting external feedback and demonstrating full openness.

INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS (CONTINUED)

In building its governance structure, SASSIC should draw from principles in the **King IV Report on Corporate Governance** (widely used in South Africa) – which **emphasises** ethical leadership, stakeholder inclusivity, and transparency. It should also incorporate the values of the **National Sports and Recreation Plan** and **Transformation Charter**, reinforcing that its own leadership meets the transformation ideals (e.g., having a diverse board in terms of race, gender, and backgrounds to reflect South Africa's demographics). By walking the talk internally, SASSIC's governance can be a beacon that inspires sports bodies to reform their own governance as well.

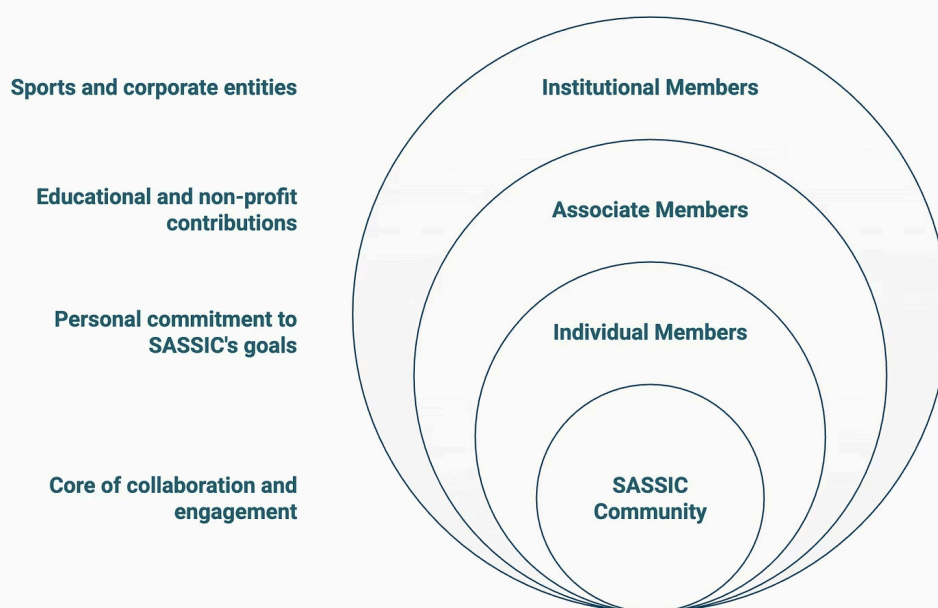


MEMBERSHIP MODEL

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION

For SASSIC to truly unify the sports sector, it needs an inclusive yet structured membership model. This defines who can be part of the council, how they participate, and what benefits and responsibilities come with membership.

SASSIC Membership Structure



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS (SPORTS BODIES)



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS (SPORTS BODIES)

These are the **national and provincial sports federations, leagues, and clubs**. Essentially, any formally **organised** sports body (from big entities like Cricket South Africa or the Premier Soccer League, to smaller national federations like swimming or gymnastics, and even associations of eSports or indigenous games) should be eligible to join as institutional members. Their membership likely comes with voting rights on certain matters, as they are primary stakeholders. However, to manage voting power fairly, the governance can ensure that no single sport dominates (for example, votes could be weighted or issues decided by consensus in clusters if needed).

Institutional members benefit by having **access to SASSIC's resources** – such as consulting on commercial deals, governance training, inclusion in data and marketing initiatives – and by having a say in shaping industry-wide policies that affect them. In return, they are expected to **adhere to the standards** set by SASSIC (like adopting the governance code, reporting data for the data lake, and actively pursuing transformation targets). This reciprocal arrangement ensures everyone is pulling their weight. A symbolic but important aspect is a public pledge or **membership charter** that each member signs, affirming commitment to integrity and transformation.



NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

Cricket South Africa, Rugby South Africa, Football Association, etc.



PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES

Premier Soccer League, Currie Cup, Netball Premier League, etc.



PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS

Provincial sports councils and regional federations

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL MEMBERS

MEGAPRO
Holdings (Pty) Ltd



The Wanderers Club
| Inspiring Those Who Aspire To Be |

Virgin
active

BIOGEN
FOR THE RESULTS YOU WANT

betway



HOLLYWOOD
bets

LULABET **PalaceBet**

bet.co.za

Sun Bet

Gbets.co.za
Powered by goldrush

SUPABETS

sportingbet



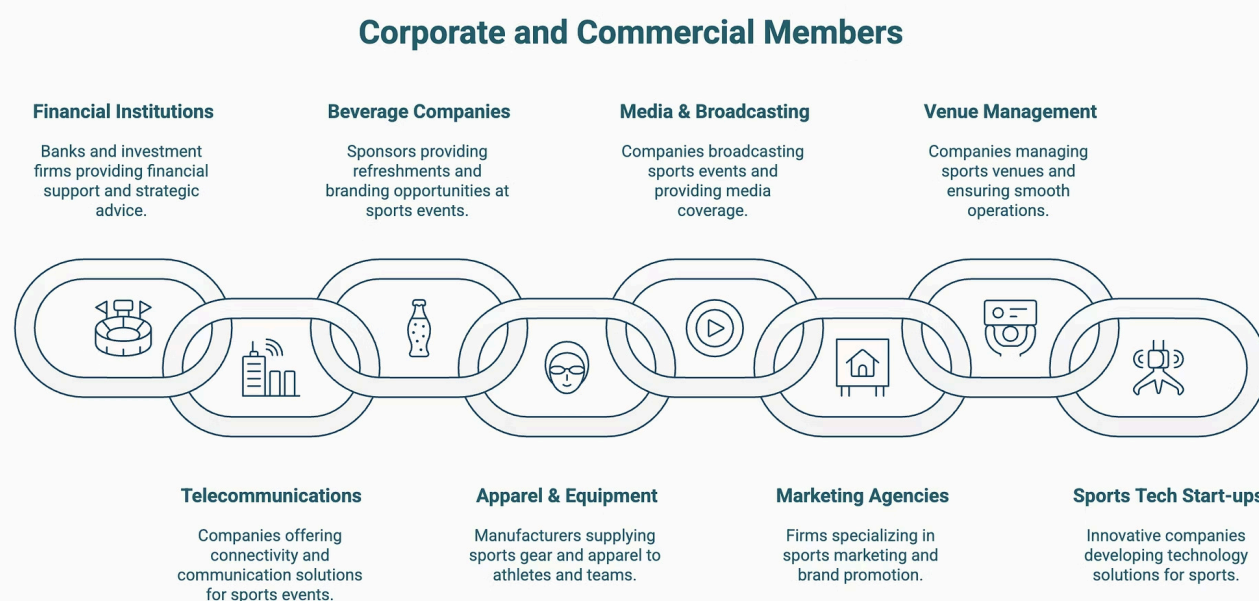
PLAYA

YesPlay



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL MEMBERS



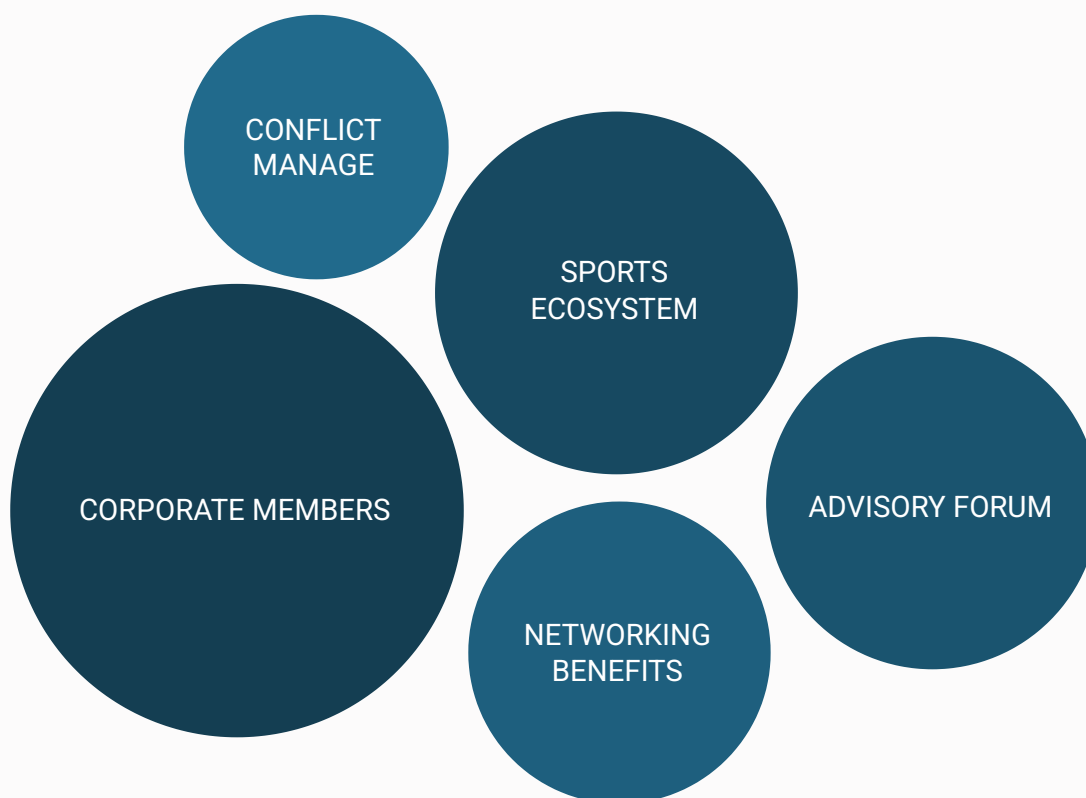
This category includes **businesses and organizations deeply integrated into the South African sports ecosystem**, such as major sponsors (e.g., FNB, Vodacom, SAB), sports apparel and equipment manufacturers, broadcasting companies (e.g., SuperSport), sports marketing agencies, and sports tech start-ups.

While they may not hold voting rights on core sporting matters, these members will play a crucial advisory role, potentially forming a dedicated **Corporate Advisory Forum** within SASSIC. Their value lies in unparalleled networking opportunities, direct engagement with national sports federations, and the ability to influence industry standards and investment strategies, aligning their brands with national sports development and transformation.

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL MEMBERS

SASSIC benefits from their expertise (a broadcaster can advise on maximising media rights, a tech firm can help with digital initiatives) and from their financial support (corporates often pay membership fees or sponsor events). It's important to manage any conflicts of interest: for example, if SASSIC advocates on media rights regulations, having media companies as members could be tricky – so transparency and balanced representation are key to avoid any one corporate interest steering the agenda.



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

NON-PROFITS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, NGOS



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

NON-PROFITS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, NGOS

Many organisations are connected to sport but are not commercial players or official sports bodies – e.g., sports science institutes, youth development NGOs, university sports councils, schools sports associations, or international bodies operating in SA. SASSIC can offer an **associate membership** category for such entities.

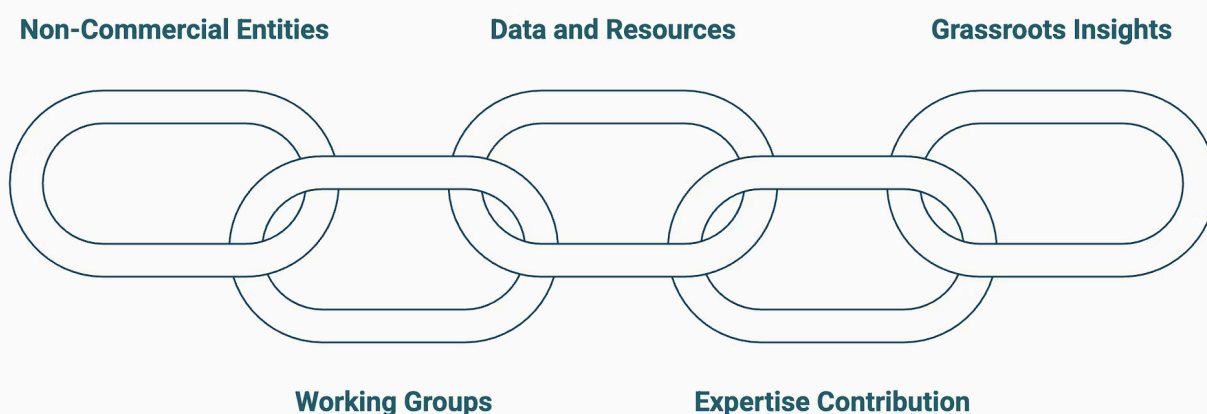
These members might not vote on core decisions but can join working groups, access data and resources, and contribute their expertise. For instance, an NGO running after-school sports programmes in townships could join to align with national efforts and share grassroots insights. An academic research centre might join to help SASSIC measure impact.

The benefit to associates is being part of a larger platform that can amplify their work and connect them to funding or policy influence. For SASSIC, it enriches the coalition with ground-level knowledge and social perspective, ensuring the council's work remains people-centred, not just profit-centred.

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

SASSIC's Associate Membership



NON-PROFITS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, NGOS



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Universities, sports science institutes, coaching academies



DEVELOPMENT NGOS

Youth sports programmes, community development organisations



INTERNATIONAL BODIES

International sports federations operating in South Africa

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND CHAMPIONS



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND CHAMPIONS

While SASSIC is mainly an institutional coalition, it could allow **individual memberships** for notable persons or professionals in sport who want to contribute (and who aren't representing an organisation). These could be coaches, referees, sports medicine professionals, or even just passionate individuals with expertise (like a retired sports journalist or a former administrator). They might form part of committees or task teams rather than having formal votes.

Another way to involve individuals is through a **"Friends of SASSIC" network or volunteer programme**, where anyone supportive can sign up to receive newsletters, volunteer at events, or provide pro bono services. This builds a community around the cause, extending influence. However, care should be taken to keep decision-making to those directly accountable (institutions), while still harnessing individuals' contributions in advisory capacities.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER CATEGORIES

- Coaches and technical experts
- Referees and officials
- Sports medicine professionals
- Sports journalists and commentators
- Former administrators
- Sporting academics and researchers

"FRIENDS OF SASSIC" ACTIVITIES

- Receiving regular newsletters
- Volunteering at SASSIC events
- Providing pro bono professional services
- Participating in public forums
- Advocating for SASSIC in their networks
- Contributing to working groups

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

Different classes of membership can have different fee structures. For example, **larger federations and corporations might pay annual dues** (which could be tiered by size/turnover) to fund SASSIC's operations. Smaller or non-profit members might pay minimal or no fees to encourage broad participation. Alternatively, SASSIC might be funded primarily through a few big sponsors or grants, allowing it to keep membership free – but some buy-in fee, even if symbolic, can ensure commitment.

Balancing Membership Fees for SASSIC Funding



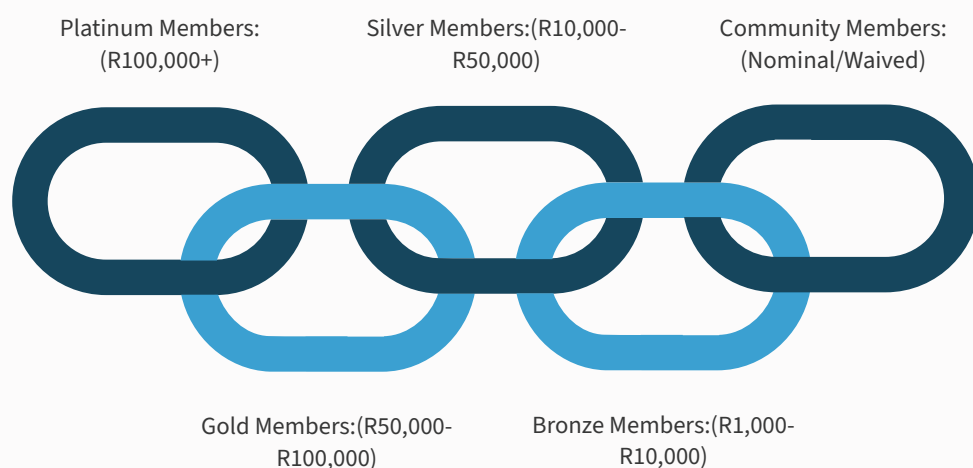
The **start-up movement** led by SiMODiSA likely involved contributions from partners like venture capital associations and companies (the SiMODiSA **partners' list** includes corporate and industry bodies, implying they supported the cause). SASSIC can emulate this, where industry players see it as in their interest to fund the collective effort. Transparency in how membership funds are used will of course be necessary, as part of the accountability measures.

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

SASSIC's funding will primarily come from a tiered membership fee structure, complemented by alternative funding models to ensure sustainability and broad participation.

SASSIC Membership Tiers and Contributions



MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

Beyond membership fees, SASSIC will diversify its funding through several strategic alternative models to ensure long-term financial stability and independence.

Diversifying SASSIC's Funding Streams



Founding Sponsors

Securing multi-year commitments from anchor corporate partners



Project-Based Funding

Attracting targeted funding for specific projects



Government Grants

Leveraging grants from the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture



Service Fees

Generating revenue through premium services



Event Revenue

Organizing high-profile events for income

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

Beyond membership fees, SASSIC will diversify its funding through several strategic alternative models to ensure long-term financial stability and independence.

1 — FOUNDING SPONSORS

Secure commitments from **major South African corporations** in sectors like finance (e.g., Standard Bank, FNB), telecommunications (e.g., MTN, Vodacom), or mining (e.g., Anglo American). These foundational partnerships will cover SASSIC's initial setup and critical core operational costs, including administrative overhead, essential research, and key advocacy initiatives for the first 3-5 years.

2 — PROJECT-BASED FUNDING

Initiate specific programs and seek targeted funding from relevant stakeholders. Examples include: securing corporate social investment (CSI) funds from companies like ABSA or Sasol for **grassroots youth sports development programs** in townships, or partnering with sports brands (e.g., Adidas, Nike) and specialized trusts to fund **high-performance athlete training and talent identification academies**.

3 — GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Apply for grants from the **Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC)** for initiatives directly aligned with national sports policies and objectives. This could include funding for a nationwide sports participation census, programs promoting inclusivity in sport, or contributions towards developing a comprehensive national sports strategy.

4 — SERVICE FEES

Generate revenue by offering specialized services to sports organizations, federations, and clubs. This includes charging for **tailored workshops** on modern sports governance, financial management, digital marketing strategies, or providing expert consulting services on athlete welfare, anti-doping education, and ethical leadership within sport.

5 — EVENT REVENUE

Organize and host high-profile events that attract diverse participants and generate income. This includes an **annual SASSIC Sports Innovation Summit** (with ticket sales and exhibitor booth fees), specialized workshops on emerging sports technologies or data analytics (via registration fees), and networking events designed to foster collaboration across the South African sports ecosystem.

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

ENGAGEMENT CHANNELS FOR MEMBERS

Membership isn't just a label; SASSIC should actively engage members through various channels. There could be periodic **Members' Forums** – e.g., quarterly meetings or webinars where all members can hear updates, share challenges, and provide input on upcoming plans. Topic-specific workshops can be held (like a session on "Developing Women's Sport" or "Navigating Sponsorship Deals in the new era") leveraging expertise within the membership. SASSIC might also facilitate **peer learning groups** – for instance, grouping federations to learn from each other's development programmes. All these interactions increase the value members get and create peer accountability (nobody wants to be the only federation not participating or lagging behind).

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

A regular newsletter or portal updates members on progress, opportunities, and calls to action (similar to how SiMODiSA kept the startup community informed of policy changes and events). Moreover, a feedback mechanism (surveys, suggestion platforms) allows members to voice concerns or propose ideas to SASSIC's leadership. By listening to its members, SASSIC stays responsive and maintains legitimacy as their representative voice.



MEMBERS' FORUMS

Quarterly meetings or webinars for updates and input



TOPIC WORKSHOPS

Specialised sessions on key areas like women's sport or sponsorship



PEER LEARNING GROUPS

Federations learning from each other's development programmes



REGULAR NEWSLETTER

Updates on progress, opportunities, and calls to action



FEEDBACK MECHANISM

Surveys and suggestion platforms for member input



MEMBER PORTAL

Online platform for resources, discussions, and collaboration

MEMBERSHIP MODEL AND PARTICIPATION (CONTINUED)

In summary, SASSIC's membership model aims to **bring every part of the sports ecosystem into one tent** – from the highest offices to grassroots implementers, and from profit-driven sponsors to social change-driven NGOs. This inclusivity ensures that when SASSIC speaks or acts, it carries the weight of a broad consensus. It also means solutions devised are more holistic, as input comes from all angles. By carefully balancing the influence and obligations of each member category, SASSIC can avoid dominance by any single group and instead foster a collaborative spirit where each sector sees value in the other.

Crucially, membership in SASSIC should come to be seen as a **badge of commitment to integrity and transformation**. Much like companies pride themselves on belonging to ethical business forums, sports entities should feel proud to say "We are a SASSIC member" – signalling that they are part of the future of South African sport. SASSIC can encourage this by highlighting member achievements, offering member-exclusive benefits (like being featured in investment prospectuses or receiving consultancy help), and by diplomatically applying pressure on those who stay outside (e.g., government could favour members for grants, or sponsors might prefer working with federations aligned with SASSIC values). Over time, the aim is that **virtually all significant players in the sports industry are either members or closely collaborating**, making SASSIC synonymous with the sports sector's collective will.



IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

No sports transformation can succeed without a strong foundation at the school and community level, nor can it last without nurturing new leaders. SASSIC's initiatives will therefore extend to schools and local leagues, and it will actively work to create an **"improved mix" of sports offerings and leadership diversity** across the country.

Here's how:

- REVITALISING SCHOOL SPORTS
- SUPPORTING LOCAL LEAGUES AND CLUBS
- DIVERSIFYING SPORTS CODES ("IMPROVED MIX OF SPORTS")
- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
- ACCOUNTABILITY AT EVERY LEVEL
- ROLE MODELS AND CHAMPIONS

IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

REVITALISING SCHOOL SPORTS

The neglect of physical education (PE) and organised sports in many public schools, especially in underserved areas, has been a major setback for transformation. SASSIC will treat this as a priority area (as highlighted in Project Invictus's Pillar 4) by **advocating and facilitating the full implementation of the School Sport Policy**. Concretely, this means partnering with the Department of Basic Education to ensure every school has some form of sports programme.

SASSIC can help mobilise resources for this – for example, coordinating donations of equipment to schools, linking schools with local clubs for coaching assistance, and lobbying for specific budget allocations to school sports. A special task team might focus on "**1,000 Schools Project**" where the goal is to equip and activate sports in a thousand disadvantaged schools over 5 years (just as an illustrative target).

Through such efforts, the base of the sports pyramid will widen, bringing in talent from all communities and increasing overall participation rates. This addresses transformation in multiple ways: more youth engaged in sport (better health and social outcomes), more diverse talent feeding into high performance, and breaking the historical exclusion that saw some communities with rich sports opportunities and others with none.

1000

SCHOOLS TARGET

Equip and activate sports programmes in disadvantaged schools over 5 years

100%

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of the School Sport Policy across all schools

3X

PARTICIPATION GROWTH

Target to triple youth sports participation in underserved communities

IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

SUPPORTING LOCAL LEAGUES AND CLUBS

Beyond schools, community clubs and local leagues are crucial. Many townships and rural areas have informal leagues that struggle for support, while urban areas have clubs that may be segregated by socio-economic status. SASSIC can launch a **"Community Sport Empowerment" initiative** to strengthen these grassroots structures.

This could involve micro-grants or equipment to community leagues, training for volunteer coaches and referees, and creating linkages between corporate sponsors and local tournaments. Another idea is to set up a **national youth league structure** in partnership with federations, so that talented kids from anywhere can compete and be scouted (for example, a national U-15 tournament that every district sends a team to).

By ensuring talent pathways are open and well-resourced at the bottom, the composition of elite teams down the line will naturally become more inclusive (since selection will be from a truly national pool, not just a few privileged schools or clubs). SASSIC can measure progress by tracking the participation rates and demographics in these leagues, aiming for an "even and low dropout rate" – meaning kids of all backgrounds stay in sport through their teens, which is often not the case currently.

MICRO-GRANTS PROGRAMME

Financial support for community leagues and clubs to cover basic operational costs

COACH TRAINING INITIATIVE

Certification programmes for volunteer coaches to improve quality of instruction

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

Structured competition pathway for talented youth from all communities

CORPORATE LINKAGE PROGRAMME

Connecting local tournaments with corporate sponsors for sustainable support

IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

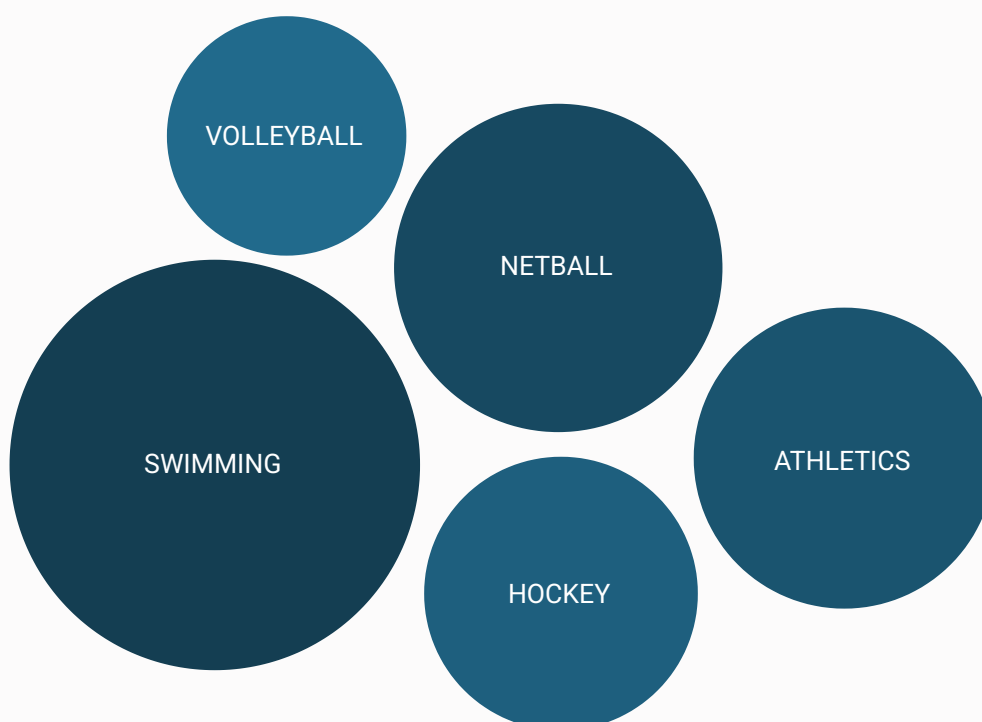
DIVERSIFYING SPORTS CODES ("IMPROVED MIX OF SPORTS")

Transformation isn't only about who plays traditional sports, but also about **broadening the range of sports that get attention and resources**. In SA, football, rugby, and cricket have long dominated, with others in the shadows. SASSIC can push for an improved mix by spotlighting and supporting **neglected sports codes**.

This could be done through an "Emerging Sports Incubator" – a **programme** where each year a handful of smaller sports (say, swimming, hockey, volleyball, or newer sports like skateboarding) get special assistance. Assistance might include help in crafting development plans, finding sponsors, or **organising** national competitions.

By raising the profile of these sports and making them viable career options, more youth might choose them, and sponsors might spread support beyond the big three. Also, culturally, it's transformational to break the notion that certain sports are only for certain groups; for instance, encouraging black participation in swimming or tennis, and white participation in **football** or athletics, etc., which historically had divides.

SASSIC's unified platform allows cross-pollination – rugby's commercial expertise could aid a sport like netball in packaging its league, while netball's success in gender inclusion could inform rugby, for example. In short, **no sport left behind** should be a motto, diversifying the sports landscape.



IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

A critical aspect of transformation is developing **new leaders who are diverse, ethical, and skilled**. SASSIC can address this through dedicated leadership development initiatives:

SPORTS MANAGEMENT ACADEMY

As hinted by Project Invictus, there is a potential for a dedicated academy to train sports administrators. SASSIC could partner with universities or international programmes to offer certifications or diplomas in sports management, targeting young professionals from underrepresented groups. Scholarships could ensure inclusion of women, black South Africans, and people from smaller provinces. Over time, this builds a pipeline of qualified candidates to take up roles in federations, clubs, and even within SASSIC itself.

MENTORSHIP AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Pair emerging talent with seasoned administrators or executives. For instance, a young township club manager might be mentored by the CEO of a major sports federation for a year, learning governance and strategic planning. Similarly, promising former athletes who want to go into coaching or administration could apprentice under experienced coaches/managers. SASSIC can facilitate these pairings, breaking old boys' clubs by intentionally opening doors for those who historically had fewer opportunities.

YOUTH SPORTS LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

Encourage youth voice by establishing councils or committees of young athletes and sports enthusiasts (e.g., high school or university students). These councils can advise on what the youth need and also serve as a training ground for future leadership. Giving them a platform shows a commitment to generational change and ensures SASSIC's work remains relevant to the upcoming generation.

INTEGRITY AND GOVERNANCE CLINICS

Recognising that one of the problems in sports leadership has been unethical practices, SASSIC might collaborate with bodies like the Ethics Institute or Transparency International to run workshops specifically on integrity in sports management. Training people not just in skills but in values – emphasising honesty, accountability (perhaps through real-case studies of scandals and how to avoid them) – will help instill a new ethos. And since SASSIC will hold members accountable with monitoring, those trained will know that there is oversight and expectation of ethical conduct.

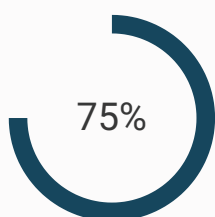
IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

ACCOUNTABILITY AT EVERY LEVEL

Holding people accountable starts from the grassroots. SASSIC can introduce simple accountability measures at school and league level as well – for example, if a school gets equipment via SASSIC, they must commit to running X number of matches or practices (no locking away gear in a storeroom), and report back. If a local league gets funding, it must include teams from all communities in the area (no exclusive leagues). By setting these conditions and following up, SASSIC ensures **integrity filters down**. In addition, encouraging community involvement – such as school sports committees including parents and local leaders – can create local oversight that people are using resources honestly and fairly.

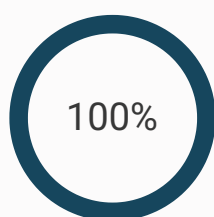
ROLE MODELS AND CHAMPIONS

Throughout schools and leagues, having role models is key to inspiring participation. SASSIC can coordinate **visits by star athletes to schools**, talks by successful administrators to young volunteers, etc. When a child from a rural village sees a national sports hero come encourage them and say "I was once playing barefoot on a pitch like this," it can spark belief and dedication. Likewise, a small club's volunteer coach hearing from a top coach about how important their work is can boost morale. These intangible impacts build a culture that values development and integrity from bottom up.



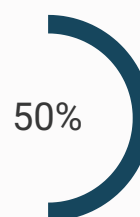
COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT

Target for local sports committees with parent and community representation



RESOURCE UTILISATION

Goal for equipment and facilities being properly used and maintained



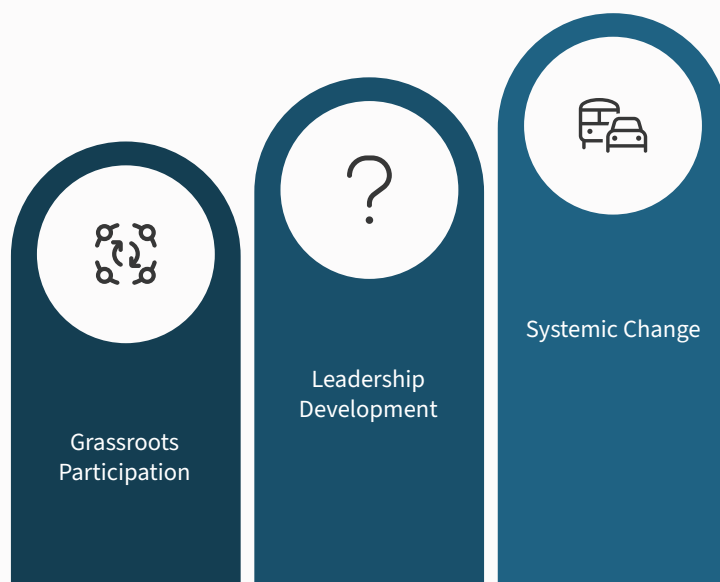
ROLE MODEL REACH

Target for schools receiving visits from sports stars and leaders

IMPACT ON SCHOOLS, LEAGUES, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

By focusing on schools and local leagues, SASSIC addresses the **pipeline problem** in South African sport: true transformation means not only changing the top (national teams, federation boards) but changing who gets to play and lead at every stage. The improved mix of sport and leadership will manifest in a few years as we see more young people from all walks of life excelling in various sports, and more diversity in coaching staff, referee panels, and administrative offices.

Importantly, SASSIC's oversight and coordination ensures this isn't left to chance. It will **track participation and leadership diversity data** as part of its data-driven approach, providing evidence of improvement or areas needing more effort. If, for example, the data shows a certain province still has very low female sport participation, SASSIC can intervene with targeted programmes there. If another data point shows that even after training, few trainees are getting leadership jobs, SASSIC can investigate and address barriers (maybe an entrenched network blocking newcomers, which could be raised with the federation or even the minister if needed). Through such active management and accountability, SASSIC will help develop a **new generation of sport leaders who carry integrity and transformation forward** as a norm, not an exception.



CONCLUSION:

A NEW ERA FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT

The establishment of SASSIC marks the beginning of a **new era for South African sport – one where all stakeholders unite to drive both high performance and social transformation in tandem**. By learning from the success of SiMODiSA in the tech sector, SASSIC emphasises *collaboration first*: breaking down silos and forging partnerships among government, sports bodies, investors, media, and athletes. This collaborative foundation is already being laid through dialogues and steering efforts, ensuring that when capital and resources flow, they do so into a well-organised, transparent system.

We have outlined how SASSIC's comprehensive strategy – from **policy advocacy and governance reform to grassroots development and investment mobilisation** – can systematically address the long-standing challenges in our sports domain. With a clear vision and mandate, SASSIC will complement existing structures like DSAC and SASCOC by focusing on what they alone cannot achieve: providing a *unified industry voice and a professionalised, data-driven approach* to growing the sports sector. This unified voice is crucial to influencing policy (such as tax incentives for sports or more inclusive school sport mandates) and attracting the funding needed to uplift all sports, not just the traditional giants.

Critical to SASSIC's success is maintaining the **integrity and trust** that have been woven into its design – from an inclusive governance structure to stringent accountability measures. By holding itself and its members to high standards, SASSIC sets the tone for an ethical sports culture. Stakeholders who commit to SASSIC's charter are committing to honesty, fairness, and the national interest in sport. Over time, as those values permeate sports management, the unfortunate headlines of past mismanagement or exclusion should give way to stories of fair play both on and off the field.

The **role of media and athletes** in this journey cannot be overstated: they are the storytellers and champions who will carry the message of transformation into every home and locker room, rallying public enthusiasm and participant morale. Through careful engagement strategies, SASSIC ensures that media coverage remains a constructive spotlight and that athletes can lend their voices safely to the cause, often through the vanguard of ex-players leading the charge. This balanced approach helps avoid confrontation and instead builds a narrative of *shared vision* – that everyone, from fans to officials, wants to see South African sport thrive and reflect our diverse talent.

CONCLUSION: A NEW ERA FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT (CONTINUED)

In the coming years, as SASSIC's initiatives take root, we anticipate tangible outcomes: **more kids playing sports in school yards; more equitable funding across sporting codes; new businesses and jobs emerging in sports tech, events, and services; stadiums filled with a broader fan base; and national teams drawing from a truly national pool of excellence.** The sports economy, once fragmented, could become a significant contributor to GDP and a source of innovation, much like the tech sector did following SiMODiSA's interventions. Moreover, the social fabric will strengthen – sport has a unique power to unite a nation, and a transformed sport system means every community can partake in that unity and pride when our teams win, or even just when local derbies are played in good spirit.

Finally, the ripple effects may well extend beyond South Africa. Just as the Startup Act movement has spread across African countries, a successful SASSIC model could inspire other nations in Africa to establish their own sports industry councils. South Africa can lead in showing how sport, when approached with innovation and inclusivity, becomes more than a game – it becomes an engine for empowerment and economic upliftment across the continent. Policies and best practices developed here could be shared, making SASSIC not just a national leader but a continental thought leader in sports development.



In conclusion, the task ahead is challenging but profoundly worthwhile. By methodically setting up SASSIC with the steps and principles detailed above, and by remaining committed to change management that brings everyone along, we can ensure this movement does not falter. The ongoing dialogues with influential people, which kickstarted this effort, must continue as **open conversations translating into action** – keeping the spirit of collaboration alive. With each stakeholder held accountable in honesty and each success built upon with integrity, SASSIC can indeed be the catalyst for a **sustainable, transformed sports sector** that honours South Africa's past sacrifices and propels its future potential.

The whistle has blown to start this new game – and every player across the field of South African sport is invited to play their part in **Project Invictus** of sports, turning our shared vision of transformation into a triumphant reality. The legacy of this movement will be measured not just in trophies, but in the enduring opportunities and unity it creates for generations to come.

CONTACT DETAILS

Wesley Gabriels CA(SA)

082 339 5484

Wesley@sportsgroup.co.za

SOURCES

- Proposal for Project Invictus (2023) – **A Think Tank to Commercialise and Transform South African Sport**
- Invictus Sports Think Tank (2025) – *LinkedIn post: "Project Invictus: A New Era for South African Sports Investment"*
- SiMODiSA (2013–2025) – *SiMODiSA Association and SA Startup Act Movement*
- SASSIC (2025) – *South African Sports Services and Industry Council website*

This document outlines the establishment of the South African Sports Service and Industrial Council (SASSIC) as a transformative movement for the sports sector, drawing on lessons from SiMODiSA's success in the tech industry and providing a comprehensive roadmap for implementation.