

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: CHEF DE MISSION – 2027 & 2029 SUMMER UNIVERSIADE

Overview

UniSport Australia invites applications for the role of Chef de Mission for the Australian teams attending the 2027 and 2029 Summer Universiade (World University Games). This senior volunteer role leads the Australian delegation and plays a key role in team culture, preparation, athlete experience and performance. Applicants must have a strong understanding of and experience competing at the highest level of sport, an understanding of the challenges and pressures of emerging and elite student-athletes, and multi-sport event environment.

Event Details

The Summer Universiade is held biennially under the International University Sports Federation (FISU). The Chef de Mission will lead the Australian Team at the respective events, with competition across multiple compulsory and optional sports. The 2027 Summer Universiade is being held in Chungcheong, South Korea from 1-12 August 2027. The 2029 Summer Universiade will be held in North Carolina, USA from 11 – 22 July 2029.

Role Purpose

The Chef de Mission is responsible for leading an inspirational, performance-focused team environment. Success in this role requires a deep empathy for the athlete journey, recognising the balance student-athletes must strike between academic commitments, emerging high-performance careers, and the demands of international competition.

Responsibilities include setting team culture, ensuring athlete well-being and safety, fostering stakeholder relationships, and representing UniSport Australia and the Australian Team. It is anticipated that the Australian team would compete in up to 18 sports.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the Australian Team and set performance-focused policies and procedures.
- Maintain liaison with athletes, officials, universities, NSOs, FISU and dignitaries.
- Build a culture of excellence and student-athlete focus.
- Support team preparation, logistics and daily operations.
- Attend ceremonies, Organising Committee HOD meetings, and official functions.
- Serve as the public spokesperson for the team.

Key Competencies

- Experience in international multi-sport or high-performance sport environments, ideally including firsthand experience competing, coaching, or managing at the elite level.
- A deep understanding of the athlete experience, particularly the developmental pathways, wellbeing needs, and on- and off-field challenges faced by emerging and high-performance student-athletes.
- Senior leadership experience (CEO, GM, Director or equivalent) with the ability to lead diverse teams under pressure.
- Strong interpersonal, communication and media capability.
- High emotional intelligence, sound judgement and resilience.
- The ability to unite, inspire and support athletes and staff while building a positive, performance-focused team culture.

Terms & Conditions

This honorary role includes full subsidy of major travel and event-related costs by UniSport. Time commitment includes pre-event planning, online and in-person meetings, and full availability during the Universiade event periods.



Appointment Process

Applications should be submitted by email to uniroos@unisport.com.au with the subject line: "Application – Chef de Mission 2027/2029". Closing date for applications is Thursday 30 April 2026.

The appointment of the Chef de Mission will be managed by the UniSport CEO and General Manager – International Program and National Leagues and will be ratified by the UniSport Board.

Applications must include:

- A cover letter outlining relevant experience, motivation, and understanding of the athlete experience/ international competition.
- A CV detailing leadership roles, involvement in high-performance or elite sport, and other relevant qualifications.



CHEF DE MISSION POSITION SUMMARY

Volunteers appointed by UniSport fill the Senior Management positions within the Australian team at the Summer Universiade. The chief responsibility of Senior Management officials is to provide a key link between the Senior Management team, headquarters staff, athletes and sport officials as well as assist with the preparation and management of assigned functional areas. As the overall head of the Australian delegation at the Summer Universiade, the Chef de Mission is the official representative of UniSport and the Australian Team. The Chef de Mission has the final responsibility for the conduct of the Australian Team during the Games.

Ideally this person would have experience of an international multi-sport event, extensive knowledge of the Australian sporting structure, have a positive profile within the Australian community and have a thorough understanding of the needs of high performance student-athletes and officials both before and during international competition and as such be a role model and mentor to the Australian team members by passing on their experiences of representing your country, living in an Athlete village, being a team-mate, representing Australia and competing on the world stage.

Purpose of the Position

The Chef de Mission is responsible for leading an inspirational, performance focused team environment. This includes:

- Leading the team at the Summer Universiade – build a culture of excellence and student-athlete focus, set the tone and philosophy of the team in line with the UniSport Australia strategic approach. Role modelling the UniRoos values at all times.
- Ensuring protocols are developed and activated for keeping the team safe and assisting all team members to represent Australia and the respective universities with honour and pride.
- Building strong relationships and linkages within relevant stakeholders such as FISU, event organisers and national sports organisations
- Playing a key leadership role in the planning, preparation and debriefing for the team, and fully supporting the athletes and support personnel at the Universiade.
- Being the spokesperson for the team and assisting with the overall team public relations and communications.
- Support team preparation, logistics and daily operations.
- Attend ceremonies, Organising Committee HOD meetings, and any official functions.

The Chef de Mission reports to the UniSport CEO and Board as required. They will work closely with UniSport staff in particular the General Manager – International Program and National Leagues, as well as key stakeholders.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership

- To lead the Australian team at the Universiade and to help set and follow policies and procedures relating to the effective functioning and performance of the team
- Assist UniSport and Team staff where required in maintaining effective liaison with all levels of the Australian team as well as Universities and peak bodies such as National Sporting Organisations, FISU, Australian Embassy and other dignitaries and stakeholders
- Be responsible for engendering an environment of excellence within the Team which enhances the opportunity for Australian student-athletes to excel; and take a lead in creating a vibrant, student-athlete focused culture recognised by Australian athletes and officials, as well as other nations, as leading the field
- Be comfortable, committed and confident operating in an intense environment
- Initiate team building and maintain good team morale

- Work with UniSport to ensure protocols are in place and followed to ensure keeping the athletes safe during the Universiade
- Attend all team inductions, orientations, meetings and activities
- Chair the daily team management meetings
- Attend and represent Australia at the Heads of Delegation meetings
- Attend ceremonies including village welcome ceremony, opening and closing ceremony and medal ceremonies

Media and Communications

Be the spokesperson for the team and work with UniSport staff in relation to team public relations, marketing and communications opportunities. This might include:

- partner meetings and speaking engagements
- media commitments
- educational opportunities
- team inductions
- UniSport functions and events

Heads of Delegation Meeting

Attend Heads of Delegations meeting as required to:

- build strong relationships with the Universiade Organising Committee, Australian Embassy and stakeholders
- gain understanding of the Universiade environment allowing for effective performance planning

KEY COMPETENCIES AND ATTRIBUTES

The successful applicant will have the following skills and attributes:

- Experience in international multi-sport or high-performance sport environments, ideally including firsthand experience competing, coaching, or managing at the elite level.
- High level manager of a multifaceted company: CEO, GM, Executive Director or equivalent with strong leadership qualities and high levels of credibility
- Driven to excel and embodies the UniSport and UniRoos values
- Excellent interpersonal and time management skills as well as high level of emotional intelligence therefore having the ability to manage the process of negotiation, mediation whilst recognising and handling conflict.
- Ability to make difficult decisions in response to high-pressure situations
- Quality presenter and communicator (including media)
- Ability to unite and inspire student athletes and team members to foster a collaborative, performance focussed team environment
- Personal characteristics of honesty, integrity, adaptability, resilience, confidence and relatability.

REPORTING/ WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chef de Mission works closely with the UniSport Chief Executive Officer and General Manager – International Program and National Leagues (Deputy Chef de Mission) in relation to all aspects of the team's preparation and management. All Senior Management staff report to the Deputy Chef de Mission however all officials and athletes on the Team are ultimately responsible to the Chef de Mission.

The Chef de Mission and UniSport staff involved in the Summer Universiade would also work closely especially in areas such as building and reinforcing a positive team culture, working to facilitate a positive performance-focused environment and team activities.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Full terms and conditions are set out in the team member's agreement, however in general terms the position will encompass the following:

Reporting to:	UniSport Chief Executive Officer
Position status:	Honorary
Period:	2027 and 2029 Summer Universiade
Event Period:	2027: depart Australia approximately <i>26 July and return 13 August 2027</i>
Hours of duty:	Pre-event: attend Heads of Delegation meeting (<i>April 2027 dates TBC</i>) Other involvement as required but on average a couple of hours per week During event: hours as required
Time in lieu:	Not applicable
Travel:	Interstate travel may be required in the pre-event phase International travel required during the event and for site-visit purposes
Remuneration:	nil
Participant Cost:	Subsidised by UniSport
Superannuation:	not applicable
Annual leave:	not applicable
Personal leave:	not applicable
Termination:	As per the UniSport team member's agreement

