WOMEN’S EXCEL PROGRAM:
A GUIDE FOR PLAYERS AND THEIR PARENTS
As part of the Canada Soccer Pathway, the Women’s EXCEL Program is designed to ensure more of Canada’s exceptional young players find their way into the best competitive environments, so that our Women’s National Team is provided with a steady stream of players meeting high standards to keep us competitive on the world stage. In other words,

The program aims to develop more Sinclairs, more often. By design and not by chance.

Whether they dream of playing for Canada’s National Teams or simply want to achieve their own personal performance goals, taking the right approach with the country’s most advanced players during their crucial development years will help them maximize their potential.

Canada Soccer believes every young person deserves the best possible soccer experience.
WHAT IS EXCEL?

The Women’s EXCEL Program is a new approach being adopted by Canada Soccer to unite and strengthen the ways that we identify and develop our most promising young athletes from across Canada to help drive elite women’s soccer forward. It has three primary goals:

**GOAL 1**
To achieve consistent podium performances by our Women’s National Team.

**GOAL 2**
To create an aligned talent structure and system that progresses more top players to the Women’s National Team and more often.

**GOAL 3**
To align community, regional and provincial/territorial talent development programs with the EXCEL talent pathway.

Underpinning the Women’s EXCEL Program is a constant drive to achieve the highest international standards, which can be understood as a series of world-class player and team attributes that provide a guiding framework to continually assess, monitor and track performance. These standards provide coaches and administrators with clear guidelines for developing talented Canadian players.

THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS UNDERPINNING EXCEL ARE COMPRISED OF TWO ELEMENTS:

1. **COMPETENCIES**, which define the set of skills and behaviours characteristic of high performing soccer players

2. **PERFORMANCE MEASURES** which objectively assess players’ performance through testing and analysis.
While the Women’s EXCEL Program is still in its early stages, the result will be a research-based, coordinated system that focuses on achieving technical perfection while developing the whole player across four corners of development: physical, mental, technical/tactical, and social/emotional. This “four corner” approach is one of the Women’s EXCEL Program’s guiding principles. It is built around:

**PHYSICAL**
Physical development, which emphasizes soccer-specific fitness so that players can meet the physical demands of every position at the highest levels of the game, while at the same time preventing injuries.

**MENTAL**
Mental development, which allows a player to directly impact their personal performances in training and matches by learning to cope effectively under pressure.

**TECHNICAL/TACTICAL**
Technical/tactical development, which takes a process-oriented approach to developing players who can execute technical skills proficiently under pressure and with the tactical flexibility to adapt to any top opposition.

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL**
Social/emotional development, which has an indirect impact on a player’s performance and the performance of others through leadership, communication and other skills that promote a culture of growth and high performance.
WHERE WILL THE WOMEN’S EXCEL PROGRAM TAKE ME?

The Women’s EXCEL Program provides a clear and continuous pathway for Canada’s most promising players, beginning with:

WOMEN’S REGIONAL EXCEL CENTRES

Licensed by Canada Soccer and delivered through Provincial/Territorial Member Associations and partners, Women’s Regional EXCEL Centres provide talented U-13 to U-18 players with a year-round, comprehensive program based on a standardized national curriculum. This allows them to accumulate high-quality training hours on a par with leading European nations and begin to develop world-class attributes in the four corners of development.

WOMEN’S NATIONAL EXCEL PROGRAM presented by Bell

Players within a Women’s Regional EXCEL Centre who demonstrate their ability to meet the highest standards may move into the Women’s National EXCEL Program, presented by Bell. Designed around two phases—U-14 to U-17 and U-18 to U-20—the six-year Women’s National EXCEL Program is intended to maintain a “conveyor belt” of players demonstrating the program’s highest standard attributes towards the Women’s National Team. While youth FIFA World Cup competitions are not the objective of the program, the FIFA Women’s U-17 and FIFA Women’s U-20 World Cups represent important opportunities for learning and benchmarking, so the two phases of the Women’s National EXCEL Program are structured with these in mind.

EXCELERATION

Along the way, top players may be targeted for EXCELERATION activity to help refine their skills with supplemental training prior to being called to the Women’s National Team.

UNIVERSITIES

Others may pursue additional training at the university level, ideally at an EXCEL school. Only players who achieve “four-corner” standard attributes—the best of the best—are chosen for the Women’s National Team and presented with opportunities to qualify and participate in the FIFA Women’s World Cup and Women’s Olympic Football Tournament. Ultimately, they will have been exposed to the program’s comprehensive four-corner programming throughout their EXCEL development with the goal of helping every player reach and maintain their maximum potential.
THE WOMEN’S EXCEL PROGRAM:

DEVELOPS A NEW CANADIAN SOCCER DNA
The Women’s EXCEL Program will help develop a new Canadian soccer DNA, where players demonstrate a perfect blend of control, precision and power that culminates in consistent winning performances at pinnacle events.

ALLOWS FOR CONTINUOUS GROWTH
The Women’s EXCEL Program delivers consistent contacts both regionally and nationally for players meeting the program’s standards from the age of 13 until they reach the Women’s National Team or exit the program having attained their optimal potential, allowing for continuous growth, support and monitoring of future Women’s National Team players.

PUTS THE BEST WITH THE BEST
The Women’s EXCEL Program puts the best with the best, allowing the most talented players regionally and nationally to train with each other and be challenged by their peers, while giving them access to the best youth talent specialists in Canada.

A PLAYER-CENTRED APPROACH
The Women’s EXCEL Program takes a player-centred approach to coaching, empowering players to become responsible for their own development, and encouraging them to become self-aware, self-sufficient and able to make informed decisions around their individual growth.

GIVING CANADA’S BEST SOCCER PLAYERS EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO REACH THEIR PERFORMANCE POTENTIAL
is at the heart of achieving consistent success on the world soccer stage. The systematic and coordinated approach to talent development provided through the Women’s EXCEL Program will help us get there.