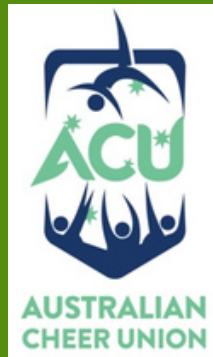


TEAM AUSTRALIA

All Abilities Athlete Information
2026



TEAM AUSTRALIA 2026

ATHLETE INFORMATION BOOKLET

ICU World Cheerleading Championships

📍 ESPN Wide World of Sports, Orlando, Florida


 22nd – 24th April, 2026

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Congratulations on your opportunity to represent **Australia** on the world stage!

This booklet provides key information about being part of **Team Australia for the 2026** season, leading up to the **ICU World Cheerleading Championships** in Orlando, Florida.



APPLICATIONS

To be considered for Team Australia, athletes must submit a video application.

- Applications open late August to early September 2025.
- Head Coaches will email choreography and skills to learn/include in your video.
- These help the coaching team assess your suitability and determine which team best matches your strengths.

➔ Keep an eye on your inbox for full application details.

2026 Teams

Adaptive Abilities (Unified Divisions):

These teams operate at a high-performance, All Star level.

- Unified Cheer
- Unified Pom
- Unified Hip Hop

These are elite teams made up of:

- 6–7 athletes with disability (minimum)
- All Star athletes without disability, selected for their advanced skills and leadership

What's involved? (subject to change)

- Weekly online tasks (fitness + choreography)
- Fortnightly virtual training sessions
 - Sundays, 9:30am – 11:30am (AEST)

UNIFIED



2026 Teams

For Unified Athletes without Disability

We are seeking high-level All Star athletes who demonstrate:

- Advanced technical skills
- Strong communication and leadership
- A team-first mindset and inclusive spirit
- Experience working with athletes with disability (preferred but not essential)

Highly desired but not required skills by Division:

➔ Pom

- Double and triple pirouette variations
- Leap combinations
- Connected turn sequences

➔ Hip Hop

- Kip-ups
- Tricking skills (e.g. aerials, headsprings, front/back handsprings)
- Head springs

➔ Cheer

- Level 3 tumbling (e.g. punch fronts, toe-touch back handsprings)
- Level 3 stunting (e.g. extended stunts, full twisting dismounts, basket tosses)

If you are passionate about inclusion and ready to perform at an elite level, we'd love to see you apply for a Unified Team role.





UNIFIED

2026 Teams

Assessment & Participation

Athletes with a Disability:

- Do not need to meet standard skill levels for their division.
- You will be assessed on the skills you can contribute to the team — even if those skills are not level-appropriate for traditional All Star divisions.
- We're focused on ability, potential, and team contribution, NOT limitations.

2026 Teams

Special Abilities / Special Olympics Teams:

These teams are composed entirely of athletes with an eligible impairment, in line with the guidelines for Special Abilities and Special Olympics divisions.

Special Olympics Teams – Intellectual Disability
Special Abilities Teams – All Disabilities

- Cheer
- Pom
- Hip Hop
- Jazz

What's involved? (subject to change)

- Weekly online tasks (fitness + choreography)
- Fortnightly virtual training sessions
 - Sundays, 4:00pm – 6:00pm (AEST)

In the event a **NATIONAL** team cannot be formed, a **STUDIO** or **STATE** team may be selected instead.

Disability Eligibility Requirements

To participate as an athlete with a disability in Unified Divisions or Special Abilities / Special Olympics Teams, you must have a registered disability.

✓ **Proof of Eligibility**

As part of your application, you will be required to provide evidence of your impairment to meet the eligibility criteria set by international governing bodies such as the ICU and Special Olympics.

🔍 **Accepted Impairment Categories**

Below is the list of eligible impairments:

1. Impaired Passive Range of Movement

- Permanent reduction in joint movement (e.g., due to arthrogryposis)
- Note: Joint instability, hypermobility, or acute conditions like arthritis are not eligible.

2. Limb Deficiency

- Total or partial absence of bones or joints caused by:
 - Trauma (e.g., car accident)
 - Illness (e.g., bone cancer)
 - Congenital condition (e.g., dysmelia)

3. Leg Length Difference

- Bone shortening in one leg due to congenital issues or trauma

4. Short Stature

- Reduced standing height due to abnormal bone development in limbs or trunk
- Examples: achondroplasia, growth hormone dysfunction

5. **Hypertonia**

- Increased muscle tension with reduced flexibility
- Caused by neurological conditions such as:
 - Cerebral palsy
 - Brain injury
 - Multiple sclerosis

6. **Ataxia**

- Lack of muscle coordination from neurological conditions such as:
 - Cerebral palsy
 - Brain injury
 - Multiple sclerosis

7. **Athetosis**

- Involuntary and unbalanced movements
- Often associated with neurological conditions such as:
 - Cerebral palsy
 - Brain injury
 - Multiple sclerosis

8. **Visual Impairment**

- Vision impacted by damage to:
 - Eye structure
 - Optical nerves or pathways
 - Visual cortex

9. **Intellectual Impairment**

- Limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior
- Must originate before the age of 18
- Affects conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills



10. Hearing Impairment

- Hearing loss of at least 5 decibels in the “better ear”
- Must not be corrected by hearing aids or other devices

11. Neurological Impairment

- Conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)
- Difficulty receiving and responding to sensory information

Any questions? Please be sure to reach out and ask!

CONTACT DETAILS AT THE END OF THIS INFORMATION PACK



Cost breakdown

BUDGET



Merchandise & Uniforms

- Merchandise – Approx. \$300 AUD
- Uniforms – Approx. \$250 AUD
- Sizing kits available at your first camp so you can get the PERFRECT size and SEE and FEEL the quality
- Orders placed via an online store
- ☒ Improved sizing, quality, and delivery

Training Fees

- Total: \$1,200 AUD (7-month program)
 - Includes:
 - Weekly virtual tuition
 - Fortnightly in-person sessions
 - Camp tuition
 - Support while in Orlando
- ➔ Just \$43/week for elite coaching and prep.

Cost breakdown

BUDGET



Flights & Accommodation

- Self-funded
- Airbnb options with teammates/families recommended to reduce costs
- You control your accommodation/travel budget

ICU Athlete Registration Pass

- Approx. \$850 USD
- Covers:
 - Competition entry
 - Access to ESPN Wide World of Sports
 - 3-day Park Hopper Pass for Walt Disney World

Leadership and **Staffing Structure**

Team Australia Director
Danelle Cooney

All Abilities Lead
Toni Altschwager

Head Coach

Assistant Coach

Associate Coach
Learning position

Inclusion Support Officer
ISO

Toni Altschwager **All Abilities Lead**

Toni Altschwager brings over 20 years of experience across the fields of teaching, disability support, cheerleading, and dance. She is a highly respected cheer and dance judge, having worked at events across Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and the UK.

Toni is passionate about working with people and helping them reach their full potential—both on and off the floor. In 2024, she became the founding leader of Australia's All Abilities Cheer and Dance Program, making history by creating the first fully inclusive pathway for athletes with disability to represent Australia at the elite international level.

Her vision and leadership have paved the way for meaningful inclusion, and her mission continues in 2026 as she expands the program, refines systems and protocols, and enhances the overall experience for athletes and their families.

Toni is deeply committed to the future of inclusive sport and is proud to be laying the foundation for what she hopes will one day see All Abilities Cheer and Dance included in the Olympic Games.



Team Culture **AND** **SUPPORT**

THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

Being selected for Team Australia is more than just joining a team — it's an opportunity to represent your country, grow as an athlete, and be part of something truly special.

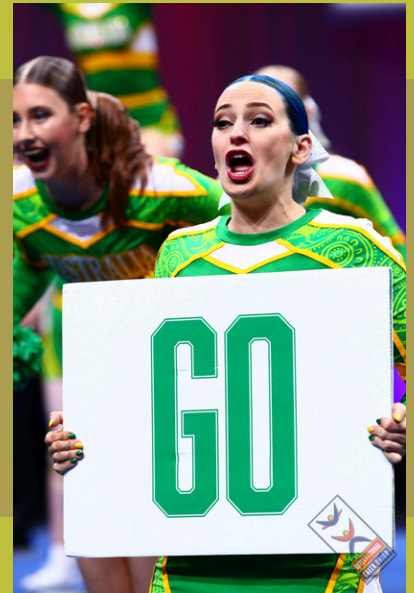
This will be the experience of a lifetime, where you'll perform at the elite international level in an inclusive, supportive environment.

What We're Looking For:

- Dedication
- Empathy
- A strong work ethic
- A team-first mindset

As a **Team Australia athlete**, you are expected to commit fully to your training, show respect for others, and bring a positive and inclusive attitude to every session and performance.

You won't be doing it alone — your coaching team and your Inclusion Support Officer will be with you every step of the way, providing the guidance, support, and encouragement you need to reach your goals and shine on the world stage.

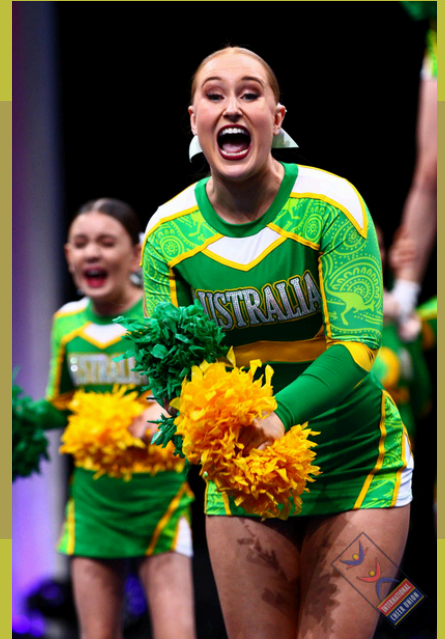


Inclusion Support Officer

ISO

You will be supported every step of the way!

- Three ISOs will support the All Abilities Program across all teams
- ISOs will not be assigned to just one team and may work across divisions
- ISOs will work closely with coaches, athletes, and families to ensure an inclusive, supportive experience





Training and Camp Commitments

If selected for a National Team, athletes must be available for:

- Three interstate training camps
- Final ACU Team Australia Showoff before departure

If teams are state-based, only one domestic trip will be required.
(MARCH CAMP ONLY)

Camp Dates

- 17–18 January 2026 (Adelaide, TBA)
- 28 February – 1 March 2026 (Sydney, TBA)
- 28–29 March 2026 (Melbourne, TBA)
 - (29 March = ACU Team Australia Showoff)

Camp locations are still to be finalised.

State locations selected on their ability to facilitate up to 18 Team Australia teams attending camps in the same state on the same weekend. All teams will have camps on the same weekend to minimise disruption to the All Star Cheer and Dance industry and promote inclusion and participation across the whole Team Australia Program. If your state is not selected it is because there is a logistical reason for why it was not selected.

Training and Camp Commitments



✈️ Orlando Travel Details

- Athletes must arrive in Orlando by 17th April 2026
- Training begins: 18th April
- Commitment concludes: Friday 24th April



AUSTRALIAN
CHEER UNION

Thank You

Whether you're a seasoned coach, aspiring associate, ISO, or enthusiastic volunteer – thank you for your passion and interest in creating an inclusive and empowering experience for Team Australia's All Abilities athletes in 2026.



Still Have Questions?

We're here to help!



Reach out to **Toni Altschwager**
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