

# NAHC 2026



# BID MANUAL

**CONTENTS**

National Aboriginal Hockey Championship 2026 ..... 3

About the NAHC..... 3

About the ASC..... 3

Bid Invitation and Conditions for Eligibility..... 4

    Invitation to Bid..... 4

    NAHC Event Dates..... 4

    Bidder Eligibility and Requirements..... 4

    Host Community Requirements..... 6

Roles and Responsibilities..... 6

    Aboriginal Sport Circle Roles and Responsibilities..... 7

    ASC Selection Committee ..... 7

    ASC Hockey Committee Roles and Responsibilities..... 7

    Host Society Roles and Responsibilities..... 8

NAHC 2026 BID TIMELINE ..... 9

    Bidding and Selection Schedule ..... 9

Submitting a Bid ..... 10

    Acquiring the Bid Package..... 10

    The Letter of Intent and Bid Fee ..... 10

    The Bid Submission Form..... 11

    The Bid Submission Guide..... 12

    Bid Deadline ..... 12

    Bid Contact and Questions..... 12

    Bid Review and Host Selection..... 12

    Letter of Undertaking..... 13

    Hosting Agreement ..... 13

Bid Package Checklist..... 14

Appendix A: Sample Letter of Intent ..... 15

APPENDIX B: PTASB CONTACT LIST..... 16

# NAHC 2026

## Bid Manual

### SECTION ONE

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

The Aboriginal Sport Circle is seeking a Host Community to serve as the location for the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships in May 2026.

#### ABOUT THE NAHC

The Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC) established the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships (NAHC) in 2002 to serve as the premier competition for young Indigenous hockey players in Canada. The ASC owns the event and annual co-hosts with a Host Community.

An exciting blend of sport and culture, the NAHC provides a forum for elite Bantam/Midget aged Indigenous youth to not only compete for sport glory, but to also come together in ceremony and comraderies. This annual event fosters cultural unity and pride as it celebrates Aboriginal athletes from across the country.

Many NAHC players, both female and male have gone on to notable careers in hockey and sport. Below are a few:

- Ethan Bear (AHL Current Team: Hershey Bears)
- Sydney Daniels (US Hockey, Former Pro Scout – Winnipeg Jets)
- Bridgette Laquette (Team Canada, Pro Scout – Chicago Blackhawks)
- Jocelyne Larocque (PWHL Current Team: Toronto Sceptres, Team Canada Olympic Gold Medalist)
- Jamie-Lee Rattray (PWHL Current Team: Boston Fleet, Team Canada Olympic Gold Medalist)
- Zach Whitecloud (NHL Current Team: Las Vegas Golden Knights)
- Brandon Montour (NHL Current Team: Seattle Kraken)

#### ABOUT THE ASC

Acting as a national voice for Indigenous sport, recreation and physical activity since 1995, the ASC is a member-based organization with representative members in each province or territory. As well as annually hosting the NAHC, the ASC also is the Canadian Domestic Steward for the North American Indigenous Games and manages the Tom

Longboat Award, which annually recognizes the country's most outstanding male and female Indigenous athletes. The ASC works with its members, the PTASBs, on delivery of the nationwide Aboriginal Coaching Program, as well as Indigenous athlete development programs. <https://www.aboriginalsportcircle.ca/>

## **SECTION TWO**

### **BID INVITATION AND CONDITIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY**

The information and bid process outlined below provides guidance to those interested in hosting this prestigious event.

#### **Invitation to Bid**

The ASC is seeking bids from communities or organizations (Host Societies) interested in hosting the 2026 National Aboriginal Championships.

To be eligible, the submitted bid must be endorsed by the local Provincial or Territorial Aboriginal Sport Body (PTASB). See Appendix B: PTASB Contact List for listing of provincial and territorial PTASBs and designated contact.

More than one bid per province or territory will be considered, with the endorsement of the PTASB.

#### **NAHC Event Dates**

As a Hockey Canada-sanctioned event, the NAHC typically takes place in the first two weeks in May. This ensures that the NAHC tournament does not conflict with Hockey Canada Branches Provincial / Territorial U15 and U18 Championships, Hockey Canada's U18 Telus Cup and the Esso Cup National Championships.

#### **Bidder Eligibility and Requirements**

##### **Commitment to Create a Host Society**

The Host Society must be a local, insurable, incorporated and not-for-profit entity, often created prior to NAHC event and dissolved within 6 months post-event.

The Host Society's role is to stage the NAHC. It will typically have volunteer directors and numerous volunteers, although salaried employees in leadership roles are not uncommon.

The Society is responsible for staging the event in accordance with the Hosting Agreement, Event Guidelines, Technical Package Requirements and in cooperation with

the ASC and the ASC Hockey Committee. For the role and responsibilities of the Host Society please see Section Three.

The Host Society is strongly encouraged to include, but not necessarily be limited to, representation from the following groups:

- Local Indigenous communities
- Local government
- Local businesses
- Fundraisers or potential local sponsors
- Experts in risk management, security, finance and event production
- Representatives from local major/minor hockey organizations

At times, the Host Society will be required to include, or certain matters and on a non-voting basis, at it's meetings:

- ASC staff or board representatives
- Local PTASB representatives

The Host Society cannot include individuals who are directly employed by or who volunteer with a provincial or territorial team competing in the tournament.

#### Cultural Representation

First Nations, Métis and Inuit representation on the Host Society is strongly encouraged wherever possible. The Host Society should commit to building capacity among Indigenous businesses, organizations, artists and volunteers.

#### Host Society Organizational Structure

Each Host Society must create an organizational structure that demonstrates a comprehensive and efficient approach to event planning and staging.

The Host Society should include in its organizational structure a number of committees, led by volunteer or paid experts in the relevant area, which will be responsible for key aspects of the event.

#### Host Society Location and Contact Information

The Host Society must have a primary physical address acting the central office. The Host Society must also provide stakeholders with email addresses and phone numbers by which to received and disseminate information. Proprietary email addresses are highly recommended.

#### Commitment to Enter a Hosting Agreement

The Host Society must be willing to and legally able to enter a Hosting Agreement with the ASC. While some aspects are negotiable, the responsibility to meeting the hosting

requirements outlined here and in other event documents, to ensure the venue and other event aspects, and to indemnify the ASC is non-negotiable.

### Host Community Requirements

When preparing the bid, the following needs to be seriously considered:

#### Conflicting Events

The ASC will only entertain bids from communities that can guarantee no other major event will be locally staged at the same as or potentially overlap with NAHC Event Dates.

#### Flight Access

The Host Community is strongly preferred to be within 150 kilometers of a regional airport offering daily flights from major airlines.

For bidding communities outside of that radius, a detailed travel plan, outlining logistical and financial support for the participating teams, should be submitted with bids.

#### Event Venue

The event venue **must** have a minimum two quality ice surfaces, with at least one being National Hockey League regulation size (85' x 200') with seating for a minimum of 500 spectators.

#### Bid Value Adds

The following will be considered an asset when included in initial bids:

- Publicly accessible online streaming
- Organized social events for participants, particularly athletes
- Exclusivity of the venue
- Athletic Therapists on site
- The use of Coach buses
- The use of university dorms and meal hall

## **SECTION THREE**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The roles and responsibilities of the three key organizational entities involved with staging of the NAHC are listed below.

These three entities work cooperatively and collaboratively together to ensure the success of the event and the safety of the participants. Constructive and regular communication via meetings, emails and calls occurs regularly during the planning stages,

the event and after the competition is complete. These three entities are expected to identify any emerging risks or issue and address them in a timely manner.

### Aboriginal Sport Circle Roles and Responsibilities

The ASC acts as the guardian and steward of the NAHC. The NAHC is a key ASC asset and is one of most public ways it realizes its mandate to increase the number of and expand the capacity of Indigenous athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers as well as create health and well-being in Indigenous communities.

The ASC's roles and responsibilities can include:

- Invites and reviews hosting bids for NAHC
- Organizes and attends Host Community site and venue inspections
- Enters into a Hosting Agreement with Host Society
- Assists and supports Host Society with preparations for upcoming NAHC
- Leads monthly pre-event planning meetings with PTASBs
- Oversees registration of teams for tournament and helps review rosters
- Acquires the letter of sanction from Hockey Canada
- Promotes and supports local and national marketing and promotion of NAHC
- Keeps and protects NAHC logo, marks and other intellectual property
- Attends the Championships and performs various functions related to accreditation, dispute and harassment resolutions, and on-ice scheduling and results tracking
- Distributes post-event survey, conducts analysis, develops recommendations and improves planning and staging processes for upcoming events

### ASC Selection Committee

The ASC Selection Committee is a separate committee tasked with completing tasks in order to award host location, including:

- Review, score and rank incoming bid packages, post deadline
- Host virtual interviews with the top 3 bid locations
- Complete site visits in collaboration with the top 3 bid locations
- Final scoring of the top 3 bid locations
- Selection of the 2026 NAHC Host Location

### ASC Hockey Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Although it performs other functions, regarding NAHC, the ASC Hockey Committee's role is as an agent of the ASC. Often acting in shared leadership, the ASC Hockey Committee plays a key role pre-, during and post-event, including:

- Assists in review and selection of Hosting Location
- Determines tournament schedule
- Develops technical package
- Supports logistical planning
- Receives and reviews progress reports and plans, as submitted and to schedule
- Participates in monthly pre-event planning meetings with PTASBs
- ASC Hockey Committee Chair is responsible for managing and overseeing tournament on-ice competition, including but not limited to, scheduling, result tracking, technical rules, disputes and issues, and risk mitigation

### Host Society Roles and Responsibilities

The NAHC is a week-long event that requires months of planning. The Host Society is responsible for the overall planning and staging of the NAHC with the exception of on-ice play and sport tournament management which is undertaken by the ASC or their agent, including:

- Establishes and maintains event offices, workers (paid or volunteers) and budget
- Raises funds to support the staging of NAHC
- Creates and oversees the committees, select and meet with committee leads and ensures meetings of key milestones and deadlines
- Undertakes responsible and transparent financial management and accounting practices
- Provides regular and accurate information (public, operational, and technical) via an effective communications plan
- Promotes, markets and creates local excitement for the tournament while maximizing the local economic, social and community impact
- Utilizes proprietary marks and logo, as well as other intellectual property, in respectful and compliant manner
- Secures the care, comfort, physical and emotional safety of NAHC participants regarding accommodation, meals, social gatherings as well as standards for off-ice conduct
- Injects the event with cultural spirit and ceremony, in particular by creating and staging opening and closing ceremonies, visual pageantry, and cultural authenticity
- Designs and produces medals and other awards
- Applies strong environmentally-friendly practices with the goal of reducing the event's climate impact
- Tracks opportunities for best practices as well as emerging risks and threats, and addresses in post-event report to the ASC
- Enhance and protect the reputation of the event, its participants, the Host community and the sport of hockey



- Ensures that safe change rooms, toilets and other facilities are accessible to all gender non-conforming individuals (as outlined in ASC’s Gender Policy)

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **NAHC 2026 BID TIMELINE**

#### **Bidding and Selection Schedule**

Communities or organizations interested in hosting the NAHC are required to prepare and submit a formal bid. The bid must provide the required information and be submitted by deadline. Below are the key dates and deadlines required related to the bid and selection process. For more detail, see Section Five.

Date	Action	Notes
December 9, 2024	Bid Process Declared Open	Bid package available by request @ <a href="mailto:rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca">rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca</a>
<b>January 10, 2025</b>	<b>Deadline: Letter of Intent and Bid Fee Submission</b>	Electronic or mail submission, accompanied by \$1,500 bid fee (non-refundable). NOTE: Bids cannot proceed if this step is not complete
<b>January 24, 2025</b>	<b>Deadline: Bid Submission</b>	All bids must include supporting letters, as well as a letter of endorsement from PTASB
January 27 – 30, 2025	Bid review and clearing	Completed by ASC non-voting staff. Incomplete bids will not move forward
February 3 – 7, 2025	NAHC Selection Committee Review	Individual members confidentially score bids
February 10 – 14, 2025	Non-voting ASC Staff compile scores and rank bids	Bids ranked 1 <sup>st</sup> through 3 <sup>rd</sup>
February 17 – 21, 2025	Virtual interviews with top three bidders	Conducted by NAHC Selection Committee
February 24 – 28, 2025	Site visits undertaken	Conducted by ASC Staff
March 3 – 7, 2025	Final Scoring and submission to NAHC Selection Committee	By ASC Staff
<b>March 10, 2025</b>	<b>Selection of, and offer to, 2026 Host (CONFIDENTIAL)</b>	Presented to the selected Host Society
<b>March 14, 2025</b>	<b>Letter of Undertaking Completed</b>	Selected Host and ASC sign letter of undertaking. Preliminary planning and agreement negotiations begin
March 17 – May 5, 2025	Pre-Planning Period	Logistics, workplans, event planning, announcement communication preparation
<b>May 5-10, 2025</b>	<b>Announcement: NAHC 2025</b>	Public Announcement during NAHC 2025
<b>September 30, 2025</b>	<b>Deadline: Hosting Agreement Executed</b>	Execution of Agreement will be dependent of submission of certain event plans

<b>November 30, 2025</b>	<b>Deadline: Progress Report</b>	Progress report must accompany certain detailed event plans. Details will be outlined in the Hosting Handbook
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## **SECTION FIVE**

### **SUBMITTING A BID**

There are multiple steps and parts to submitting a bid:

#### **Acquiring the Bid Package**

The Bid Package will be available on December 10, 2024. Please email the NAHC Bid Coordinator at [rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca](mailto:rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca) to receive the Bid Package.

The Bid Package will consist of 3 documents:

**The Bid Manual:** Please review prior to sending in a Letter of Intent.

**The Bid Submission Form:** Please review prior to sending in a Letter of Intent, as this shows the format in which the bid is to be submitted as well as the information expected. It also shows what level of detail is required at bid time, with notes on when further detailed plans are due.

**The Bid Guide Submission Guide:** This form provides more information regarding what to consider when writing your bid.

#### **The Letter of Intent and Bid Fee**

**NOTE: Only bids from and to be hosted within Canada will be considered.**

A sample of a Letter of Intent can be found in Appendix A.

#### **Letter of Intent**

To be eligible to bid, the bidder must provide a “Letter of Intent” to bid. The letter should outline your Host Society name (if applicable) and/or the Host Community in which you want to host NAHC 2026.

The Letter of Intent should be addressed to the NAHC Bid Coordinator and sent to [rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca](mailto:rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca) . Alternatively, the Letter of Intent can be mailed to:

Attn: NAHC Bid Coordinator  
 Aboriginal Sport Circle

c/o House of Sport RA Centre  
2451 Riverside Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1H 7X7

### Bid Fee

The bid fee is non-refundable.

If the Letter of Intent is sent by mail, the letter must be accompanied by a non-refundable cheque of \$1,500 made out to the Aboriginal Sport Circle.

If the Letter of Intent is sent via email it will not be considered until a non-refundable cheque of \$1,500 made out to the Aboriginal Sport Circle is received via mail. The cheque should be sent to:

Attn: NAHC Bid Coordinator  
Aboriginal Sport Circle  
c/o House of Sport RA Centre  
2451 Riverside Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1H 7X7

### PTASB Endorsement

The Letter of Intent must be accompanied with a letter of PTASB endorsement. The ASC will not review bids that do not have the endorsement of the PTASB from the bidder's province or territory. See **Appendix B** for PTASB contact information.

### Authority to Provide Notice

The Letter of Intent must be signed by a person who has been granted the authority to do so by the organization or society they represent.

### The Bid Submission Form

Accompanying this package is the **Bid Submission Form**. This is the form to be filled to submit a bid.

The Bid Form must be signed by a person granted the authority to do so.

If the bidder wishes, they can use their own standalone document for their Bid Document, but that document **must mirror the format of the Bid Submission Form** and provide the same information asked for in that form. This will allow for fair comparison at the bid review stage.

Supporting documents can accompany a bid; such cases, the bidder should clearly note in the Bid Submission form that there are other forms to be referred to.

The key goal at the initial bidding stage **is to demonstrate that the Host Society is capable of staging the NAHC and that the Community has the infrastructure and desire to host the Championships.**

The PTASB must provide a Letter of Support for the final bid and that letter must accompany your Bid Submission. The bid, therefore, must be provided to the PTASB for review. It is highly recommended that communication be well-managed between the Host Society and the PTASB as the bid is being built.

### The Bid Submission Guide

To help with filling out the Bid Submission Form, this bid package includes the “Bid Submission Guide”. This guide provides section-by-section guidance on what to consider when filling out the “Bid Submission Form” and submitting a bid.

### Bid Deadline

All bids must be received by 11:59PM Eastern Standard Time (EST) on January 24, 2025.

**No bids will be accepted after the deadline has passed.**

### Bid Contact and Questions

Any questions regarding the bid can be directed to the NAHC Bid Coordinator at [rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca](mailto:rfp@aboriginalsportcircle.ca).

Any questions will be answered as promptly as possible.

All bid-relevant questions and answers will be shared with all entities that have qualified and are actively bidding in the form of an NAHC 2026 Bid FAQ format. Questions and answers will be added as they are received during the bid phase. It is important to ensure that your contact information is correctly registered with the NAHC Bid Coordinator.

### Bid Review and Host Selection

#### Ranking the Bids

After the bid deadline occurs, non-voting ASC staff reviews all bids for completeness. Complete bids, along with scoring sheets, are then distributed to each individual on the NAHC Selection Committee.

Each NAHC Selection Committee member confidentially and independently scores each bid and then return the scores to the non-voting ASC staff.

ASC staff compile all the scores for each bid and identify the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest scoring bids.

### Interviews with Bidder

Each of the top three proponents are interviewed by the NAHC Selection Committee. This allows each bidder to provide more information and also lets the NAHC Selection Committee receive answers to any questions they may have.

The interviews are then scored and added to the previous ranking scores.

### Site Visits

After the interviews, bidders will be informed of a site visit by an NAHC Selection Committee representative(s). At this stage, a tour of the community, venues and facilities takes place.

*NOTE: A site visit may not be determined as needed if Host Community is a location already familiar to representatives on the NAHC Selection Committee.*

The representatives then return and submit the sites visit score to the ASC staff person. The bid, all previous scores, and the site visit results are all packaged and given a final ranking. The bids are provided to the NAHC Selection Committee.

### Selection of Host

NAHC Selection committee conduct a final review of the rankings and officially select the bid to which the offer to host will be sent.

Once the offer to host is accepted, the ASC will present a “Letter to Undertake” for the Host Society’s signature.

### Non-Disclosure of Selection

The Host Community selection remains non-public at this time until the announcement is made during the closing ceremonies of NAHC 2025.

### Letter of Undertaking

The Letter of Undertaking outlines the activities that need to take place and the planning that needs to be developed before the selected Host Society and the ASC can enter into a hosting agreement. At this stage the standard ASC Hosting Agreement is provided to the Host Society for review, response, discussion and negotiation.

### Hosting Agreement

To ensure the security of the bid and the event, the Hosting Agreement must be executed by **September 30, 2025**. The ASC can only enter into a Hosting Agreement with a not-for-profit entity that can attain insurance and is willing to indemnify the ASC.

## SECTION SIX

### BID PACKAGE CHECKLIST

Use the checklist below to ensure the bid submission is complete:

#### Step One

- Letter of Intent – emailed or mailed
- PTASB Letter of Endorsement – emailed or mailed
- \$1,500 non-refundable bid fee cheque – mailed or submitted electronically. Please contact Bid Coordinator for additional information

#### Step Two

- Bid Submission Form
- Venue Floorplans
- PTASB Letter of Bid Support
- Other Letters of Support (Government, local Indigenous communities, businesses, organizations)
- Optional: Notice of Incorporation for Host Society

## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT

**Note: <<>> symbols represent information that is required to be inserted**

<<DATE>>

RE: Intent to Bid for NAHC 2026

Dear NAHC Bid Coordinator

Please accept this letter as notification that <<HOST SOCIETY NAME and/or HOST COMMUNITY/CITY in << Province/Territory>> intends to bid for the NAHC 2026 tournament. I confirm that I am authorized to submit this Letter of Intent on the behalf of this <<Organization and/or Community>>

I have attached the Letter of Endorsement from <<PTASB Name>>, which has been signed by <<PTASB Signatory and Title>>

A \$1,500 cheque accompanies this letter. I am fully aware that this Bid Fee is not refundable.

OR

A \$1,500 cheque has been mailed, under separate cover, to the Aboriginal Sport Circle. I am fully aware that this Bid Fee is not refundable.

OR

A \$1,500 payment has been made electronically. I am fully aware that this Bid Fee is not refundable.

Should this Letter of Intent be accepted, you can contact me throughout the bid process at:

Email:<<INSERT>> Phone:<<INSERT>>

Mailing Address:<<INSERT>>

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have.

<<SIGNATURE, name typed>>

## APPENDIX B: PTASB CONTACT LIST

Province/Territory	PTASB	Contact Person	Email Address
Alberta	Indigenous Sport Council Alberta	Jaclyn Guenette	<a href="mailto:j.guenette@isportab.com">j.guenette@isportab.com</a>
British Columbia	Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity, & Recreation Council	Rick Brant	<a href="mailto:rbrant@isparc.ca">rbrant@isparc.ca</a>
Manitoba	Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council Inc.	Mel Whitesell	<a href="mailto:mel.whitesell@masrc.com">mel.whitesell@masrc.com</a>
New Brunswick	Aboriginal Sport and Recreation New Brunswick	Cathy Ward	<a href="mailto:cathy.ward@asrnb.ca">cathy.ward@asrnb.ca</a>
Newfoundland & Labrador	Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Circle of Newfoundland and Labrador	Valentina Nolan	<a href="mailto:valentinanolan@asrcnl.com">valentinanolan@asrcnl.com</a>
Northwest Territories	Indigenous Sports Circle Northwest Territories	Aaron Wells	<a href="mailto:aaron@iscnwt.ca">aaron@iscnwt.ca</a>
Nova Scotia	Mi'kmaw Sport Council of Nova Scotia	Terry Bernard	<a href="mailto:Terry@kinu.ca">Terry@kinu.ca</a>
Nunavut	Sport and Recreation – Government of Nunavut	Jeff Seeteenak	<a href="mailto:jseeteenak@gov.nu.ca">jseeteenak@gov.nu.ca</a>
Ontario	Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario	Stephen Kwinter	<a href="mailto:venga@rogers.com">venga@rogers.com</a>
Prince Edward Island	PEI Aboriginal Sports Circle	Lynn Anne Hogan	<a href="mailto:lahogan@mcpei.ca">lahogan@mcpei.ca</a>
Quebec	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission	Geneviève Voyer	<a href="mailto:genevieve.voyer@cssspnql.com">genevieve.voyer@cssspnql.com</a>
Saskatchewan	Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations	April Tipewan	<a href="mailto:april.tipewan@fsin.com">april.tipewan@fsin.com</a>
Yukon	Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle	Gaël Marchand	<a href="mailto:ed@yasc.ca">ed@yasc.ca</a>