

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION, VISION AND VALUES



### 1 WELCOME

- 1.1 Welcome to Virtus: World Intellectual Impairment Sport
- 1.2 Virtus enables talented athletes from across the world to participate and enjoy sport to the highest possible levels. Through sport we break down barriers, we overcome discrimination and we create role models for others to follow.
- 1.3 The organisation was founded as the International Association for Sport for Athletes with a Mental Handicap (INAS-FMH) in 1986 and exists to provide a platform for athletes with intellectual impairments who wish to perform their sports:
  - a) in a competitive way
  - b) in open competition as at the Olympics and Paralympics
  - c) according to the rules of the International Federations.
- 1.4 In 2019, as part of a major organisational rebrand, the organisation became Virtus: World Intellectual Impairment Sport.
- 1.5 Virtus is a democratic organisation that belongs to its member organisations.

### 2 VIRTUS VISION

- 2.1 The Virtus vision is *“that athletes with an intellectual impairment across the world have the opportunity to achieve excellence in sport and high-level competition”*

### 3 VIRTUS OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The Virtus Objectives are to:
  - a) To manage an annual programme of high quality Regional and World competition
  - b) To maintain rigorous and transparent systems of governance, organisation and administration
  - c) To apply a fair, consistent and transparent approach to the registration and classification of athletes with intellectual impairment
  - d) To promote and contribute to the development of sporting opportunities across all member nations
  - e) To promote and celebrate sport and sporting success for people with an intellectual impairment across the World
  - f) To uphold and promote the principles of fair play and drug-free sport
  - g) To operate without discrimination for political, religious, economic, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or race.

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#### 4 VIRTUS VALUES

4.1 The Virtus values and emblem comprise four elements that represent the characteristics of all athletes with an intellectual impairment:

- **Character** - Athletes display incredible strength of character both on and off the field of play. They work hard, overcome set-backs and never give-up. They are important ambassadors for sport for people with intellectual impairments, showing others what can be achieved and breaking down barriers.
- **Excellence** - Athletes strive to reach the top of the podium, to improve themselves and their performances with every sprint, swim, throw, shot and move. Through this they change perceptions and push the boundaries of what was previously thought possible.
- **Courage** - It takes great courage to train and perform, to put yourself and your body on the line to reach the best in your sport. With their immense achievements, athletes change perceptions.
- **Integrity** - Athletes with integrity play honestly and fairly, always respecting the rules and results.

And four elements that represent our role and purpose:

- **Promotes** - We strive to ensure that as many people as possible know about high performance sports for athletes with intellectual impairments and the opportunities that exist to compete at an international level.

We also aim to ensure that everyone knows about the amazing achievements of the athletes, so that they can enjoy better support and recognition.

- **Advocates** - We ensure that the rights of athletes with intellectual impairments are recognised and considered in the global sports landscape.

We also work with sports governing bodies to ensure athletes with intellectual impairments have the opportunity to compete under their banner.

- **Governs** - We oversee the development and growth of elite sport for people with intellectual impairments at the highest level. This includes setting rules and ensuring fair play in areas such as anti-doping.

- **Organises** - We work with our member countries to organise major international events for athletes with intellectual impairments such as world and regional Championships in 14 sports, supported by global governing bodies. This ensures athletes can compete regularly at the highest levels against the best in the world.

We also take care of eligibility, ensuring that those athletes who compete at our events have a recognised impairment. For some, this is their first step towards the Paralympic Games. Our role for eligibility also includes training and education for national officers so that countries can develop their own pool of competitors.