



INTRODUCTION

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and the United States Para-Equestrian Association (USPEA) are seeking existing equestrian training facilities to serve as Para-Equestrian Dressage Centers of Excellence (COE), which will be at the heart of the development of Para-Equestrian Dressage throughout the United States.

The objective of a COE is to serve as a foundation for High Performance Para Dressage athlete development. The USEF/USPEA are committed to work with COEs to develop recognized hubs of excellence that not only attract new riders to the sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage but also work in partnership with the USEF High Performance Programs to mature athletes to a level where they can represent the U.S. at International and Paralympic Games level and ultimately win medals.

It is intended that these COEs will also be the focus for Para-Equestrian Dressage trainer/coach identification and development programs to expand the availability of quality Para-Equestrian sport programs and services offered such as FEI/USEF Classification, Human Sports Science & Medicine (Human SSM) and Equine SSM. The COEs will be the primary hubs for delivering the USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage High Performance Programs.

One of the aims of the USEF Sport Department is to bring Dressage and Para-Equestrian Dressage closer together and to see more Dressage coaches, competitions and training facilities embracing both Dressage and Para Dressage.

AIM

Over the next 5 years, the aim of the USEF and USPEA Para-Equestrian High Performance Department is to increase the pool and ability of eligible Para-Equestrian athletes in the United States by enhancing the quality, consistency, and volume of education and training available to developing high-performance athletes, ensure greater success in international competition while attracting new sponsors and owners to the sport, as well as raising public awareness of Para-Equestrian sport in the U.S.

Over the next 8 years it is the aim of the USEF and USPEA to grow the reach of Centers of Excellence so they reach into the local community and link through other organizations working with riders with disabilities thus linking the riding establishments with a pathway from grass root athletes to High Performance that provides competitive riding opportunities.

IDENTIFICATION OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

The COEs will be identified through a tender process that will happen in two phases;

Phase I: Approve the first tranche of USEF/USPEA International Para-Equestrian Centers of Excellence. As an International COE, coaches from these centers will be mentored by the USEF Para-Equestrian Chef d'Equipe and earn their USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Coach Certification. The target is to identify up to 5 COEs by the end of 2016, but the focus will be on accrediting the "right" COEs rather than meeting "targets"

Phase II: Evaluate the success of Phase 1 and develop additional COEs through 2017 / 2018.



APPLICATION AND COST

An application to be designated for this prestigious designation will begin August 21, 2015 and end on November 15, 2015 for Phase I. A Selection Committee will review each application and may conduct a site visit/interview with the leading facilities. The designation of the first COEs will be announced no later than January 3, 2016. Annex A is a Statement of Requirement for COEs.

Centers that choose to participate in the program will submit an application for accreditation. Once a center has been granted accreditation status, there will be a \$3000 affiliation fee paid in equal installments over a three year period. 75% of the affiliation fee will be allocated to the USEF with 25% being allocated to USPEA. At the end of three years, the facility will complete a reaccreditation process, which will be outlined in detail with the USEF/USPEA accreditation agreement.

DEVELOPMENT OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

The National framework that COEs will become part of will act as the foundation on which the USEF will develop a large portion of the Para-Equestrian Dressage programs. The partnership between COEs and the Federation will be at the very heart of the athlete and coach development of Para-Equestrian Dressage in the U.S. As such, the USEF and USPEA will work in partnership with COEs to;

- Develop and deliver a Business Plan that will achieve the key objectives of growing the numbers of athletes and improving the performance of athletes to a level that can ultimately achieve medal winning success for the U.S.
- Run USEF/USPEA funded courses and training at COEs, less for training linked to specific competitions or prior to Championships or Games.
- Work together to build athlete/coach participation.
- Develop Para-Equestrian personnel, sport programs and services offered such as Classification, Human Sports Science & Medicine (Human SSM) and Equine SSM
- USEF will seek to assist with the identification of sponsors, and through the USET Foundation, donors.
- Promote the concept of COEs to PATH International (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International), Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) and other groups who serve (or educate, or work with, or promote) equestrians (or riders) with disabilities to foster talent identification of potential competitive riders.

PATH. In time it is perceived that COEs will grow their own network of Regional Centers that can in turn link with other riding organizations; for example those registered with PATH International. It is emphasised that COEs do not have to be registered with these organizations but these centers provide an excellent opportunity to identify riders already enjoying the therapeutic benefits of riding who MAY wish to pursue competitive riding opportunities.



USOC Paralympic Sport Club. The USEF will work with COEs to enable them to be recognized as a Paralympic Sports Club. This network of recognized Clubs operates across 48 States in the U.S. and more information can be found at <http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics/Community/Paralympic-Sport-Clubs>. These Clubs are licensed by the USOC and the benefits are numerous and include: Marketing – logo / links to & postings on the USOC Paralympic & Team USA website / hosting opportunities: Resources – Excellence program, applications for grants / Newsletters / tuition scholarship opportunities: Recognition – annual awards / features on social media & digital media / occasional national partner & local level sponsorship opportunities.

It is also the aim of the USEF to monitor the progress of the COE concept and extend the COE program to include the provision of training and development for Para-Equestrian Reining and Para-Equestrian Driving. A separate process will be initiated for this once the Para-Equestrian Dressage COEs are up and running.

DEVELOPMENT OF A U.S. PARA-EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE COACHING STRUCTURE

In parallel with developing COEs, the USEF and USPEA seek to develop coach certification and a U.S. Para-Equestrian coaching network across the U.S. COEs will play an important part in this development and will act as centers where Coach Development can be run. Coach development and helping coaches to expand their expertise to working with the Para-Equestrian athlete will also be important aspects of the USEF High Performance coaching programs.

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF USEF / USPEA CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

In addition to the prestige of becoming a USEF/USPEA recognized COE, there are a variety of rights and benefits offered to COEs including, but not limited to the following (these will be formalized in an Agreement between USEF and each COE):

- Recognition and promotion of COEs through media outlets, online hyperlinks from USEF and USPEA to COEs;
- USEF/USPEA Centers of Excellence logo for use by COEs on stationery / websites / signage etc.;
- Permission to use the USEF and USPEA logos.
- Eligibility to host High Performance Para Dressage clinics and promote Para Dressage coach certification;
- International presence of athletes and clinicians;
- USEF to assist with access to physical therapists, classifiers, FEI Dressage trainers, equine nutritionists, saddle fitters, veterinarians, farriers.

SPONSORSHIP / PRIVATE DONORS

The USEF will work with the US Equestrian Team Foundation (USET) to promote COEs in order to attract private donor contributions to COEs.

SUMMARY

This is an exciting opportunity for Equestrian Training Centers to be part of the drive for the U.S. to ultimately win Para-Equestrian Dressage medals. Centers of Excellence will be at the very heart of this target: It is fully recognized that not all Training Centers will necessarily be able to fully fulfil all the criteria out the onset; the most important aspect is that COEs have the vision, drive and determination to identify new and talented athletes with disabilities and then help them develop in partnership with the USEF High Performance Programs.



APPLICATION

Online applications may be found on the USEF website or through Austyn Erickson, COE Coordinator, 859-225-6929 or aerickson@usef.org.

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ANNEX A

PARA-EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

COE Requirements

- Business Plan – USEF will work with each COE to develop a comprehensive business plan;
- Fully accessible facilities;
- An affiliated Head Coach (agreed by USEF) who must be able to be present for all primary training and courses held at the COEs. USEF approval of the coach will be one of the cornerstones of the affiliation process;
- 60m x 20m all-weather arena with quality footing that would meet FEI competition standards;
- Covered or indoor Arena (depending on local climate) of a minimum of 40 x 20m;
- An ability to run competitions in a 60m x 20m (i.e. warm up facilities and Judging Box options);
- Stables that meet FEI standards and additional stables for visiting athletes/horses. (type of stabling to be specified);
- Horse wash down area;
- Access to horses that are sound and healthy, (As part of the business plan, the USEF would wish to discuss COEs access to horses for clinics and method of procurement);
- Arena seating for approximately 20 or more auditors;
- Room for Human SSM / Classifier personnel;
- Horse Inspection area where horses may be accessed, including an area for a veterinary jog;
- Access to an FEI approved Veterinarian;
- Equine SSM assessments utilizing a USEF approved Veterinarian;
- Local hotels with ADA compliant rooms;
- Catering facilities on site, or ability to bring in caterers.

COE Bonus Essentials

- Parking human/trailer;
- PA system for Clinicians/Announcers;
- Meeting space to accommodate up to 20 individuals with Power Point capabilities.

Programs

- Host a minimum of one USEF funded Para-Equestrian Dressage clinic annually for Developing and High Performance athletes and coaches. Clinicians to be approved by USEF;
- Host Para development/educational courses, i.e. Para Dressage coach education, USEF Para Dressage officials' education, equine nutritional courses, SSM and ESM programs arranged and funded by USEF/USPEA.