



British Paralympic
Association



Guidelines for Paralympic Athlete Endorsement in the UK

Introduction:

Since London 2012 the Paralympic Games and movement has continued to grow in popularity and interest. At the same time the resources required by the British Paralympic Association ("BPA") to deliver the team and represent the movement domestically and internationally have increased dramatically. A core part of the BPA's income generation strategy is the ability to market the BPA, ParalympicsGB and Paralympic brands to commercial entities and other funding partners. As part of this, the BPA provides various contracted rights and benefits that are increasingly of value and which therefore need to be protected.

At ParalympicsGB we understand first-hand the important contribution that funding partners and sponsors make to sporting success; providing critical support for athletes' training, enabling world class team preparation, and helping to maximise the impact of the Paralympic movement here in the UK.

We also understand that the Paralympic Games is the pinnacle moment in an athlete's career, and the natural time to give recognition to all supporters, large and small, who have contributed on their personal journey to the Games. Therefore, it is important that there is a balance in how the athletes can acknowledge individual support that some athletes benefit from, and the role played by commercial partners who directly invest in the ParalympicsGB team.

Through consultation with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and in direct collaboration with the British Paralympic Association (BPA)'s Athletes' Commission, these guidelines have been developed to enable us to find such a balance in the UK. These guidelines are written to help ParalympicsGB athletes understand how they may benefit from individual endorsement opportunities, whilst also clarifying what non-ParalympicsGB sponsors, brands and commercial companies may and may not do when promoting their support for para athletes.

Key principles:

- All ParalympicsGB members are encouraged to embrace opportunities of personal sponsorship. Athletes are permitted to promote their Athlete Sponsors, and Athlete Sponsors are permitted to use Athletes in their Advertising, before, during and after the Paralympics Games Period (17 August – 8 September 2021) **providing that these guidelines are followed, the BPA is notified of the Advertising, and the Advertising does not directly or indirectly create or imply an association with the Paralympic Games, the Paralympic movement or the British Paralympic Association when no such association or relationship exists.**

- The BPA's objective is to protect our team and ensure they are best prepared. The step of notifying the BPA of Athlete Sponsor Advertising is not intended to place any new or additional restriction on Athlete Sponsor activity; rather the process has been put in place as a safeguard to ensure that this is managed in advance, thereby minimizing any potential distractions for Athletes during the Games Period itself.
- The BPA and all ParalympicsGB members have a responsibility to protect investment in, and the longevity of, the Paralympic movement, so that all athletes may enjoy opportunities to compete regardless of profile, sport or personal funding. In benefitting from the proposed relaxations, it is vital that athletes respect the rights of the BPA and its sponsors who fund ParalympicsGB's participation at the Games. Athletes must avoid entering into any concerted ambush marketing campaigns which are likely to undermine the BPA's ability to raise the necessary funds for present and future Paralympians.
- We recognise that independent, local businesses and community organisations will have relationships with local athletes and want to show their support. We also recognise the special relationship ParalympicsGB athletes have with their adaptive equipment suppliers who will want to showcase their support. We will encourage this as far as possible, providing the key principles are protected. As outlined in Section 2, all brands and businesses should notify the BPA of planned Advertising which uses Paralympic athletes in advance: brand@paralympics.org.uk. The BPA's commercial team are here to help and are happy to receive questions and provide advice in advance of submitting your Advertising.

Definition of Advertising

In the context of these guidelines, Advertising is recognised as any form of commercial advertising, marketing campaigns or events designed to promote the goods and/or services of a company or brand, including social media, paid-for advertising (such as press adverts, billboards and television and radio adverts), direct advertising, PR, product promotion, on-product and in-store promotions.

Section 1: I am an athlete, what can I do?

- You may include a description and images of your Paralympic achievements as part of a balanced biography of your personal and sporting achievements, and blog or post about your personal experience of the Paralympic Games at any time through your personal channels or website, providing this is not shown alongside overt sponsor Advertising or endorsement.
- You may feature in Advertising for your sponsors, whether through your personal web/social media channels, personal appearances or licensing your image rights, **provided that the activity does not suggest there is any association between the Athlete Sponsor and the Paralympics and complies to all of the guidelines laid out under Section 2.** If you are unsure whether Advertising implies an association with the Paralympics please contact the BPA team: brand@paralympics.org.uk

- Such Advertising will be allowed to continue during the Paralympic Games Period, **provided that your Athlete Sponsor complies to all of the guidelines laid out under Section 2 and notifies the BPA of Advertising that will be live during the Games Period.** The step of notifying the BPA is not intended to place any new or additional restriction on your sponsors' activity; rather the process has been put in place to ensure that this is managed in advance, thereby minimizing any distractions for the athlete during the Games Period itself.
- You may give recognition to your Athlete Sponsor(s) during the Paralympic Games Period by **posting one message of thanks that references your Athlete Sponsor(s), providing:**
 - a) it does not give any impression that the sponsor and its products or services enhanced your performance;
 - b) it does not suggest that there is any association between the Athlete Sponsor and the Paralympics;
 - c) The image used is clean of Paralympic Properties and therefore does not, for example, feature the Athlete in ParalympicsGB team kit;
 - d) it shall not contain or be linked to any Advertising, including through use of any hashtags, pre-rolls or other similar functionality, and should not have any promoted (paid) spend behind it; and
 - e) this is limited to **one message of thanks per Athlete Sponsor to a maximum of 3 posts during the Paralympic Games Period (subject to the exception of (f) below)**; a single identical message, posted at the same time across multiple social media platforms, will count as one message for these purposes;
 - f) an additional 2 posts during the Paralympic Games Period will be granted for messages of thanks for an Athlete's personal adaptive equipment supplier (to a maximum of 5 posts during the Paralympic Games Period).
- All athletes are encouraged to repost or share content from the IPC, Tokyo 2020 or ParalympicsGB's official social media accounts, providing that you do not tag or otherwise add references to your Athlete Sponsors.

Section 2: I sponsor a ParalympicsGB athlete directly, what can I do?

- Non-Paralympic partners/brands who sponsor an athlete directly (i.e. not via National Governing body sponsorship) are permitted to use an athlete in advertising at all times, including during the Games Period (17 August to 8 September 2021) if:
 - a) They have consent of the Athlete;
 - b) They do not refer to, or include any **Paralympic Properties**, including;
 - Paralympic terminology as [summarised by the IPC](#) which includes the words, Paralympic and Paralympian
 - Paralympic symbols, including official logos belong to the IPC, BPA or other Paralympic organisation, be that stand alone, or printed on medals or team kit,
 - any other mark or symbol belonging to a Paralympic organisation (including the team name ParalympicsGB, the company name British Paralympic Association, logos or emblems);
 - The official ParalympicsGB team uniform from past or present Games
 - The official Tokyo 2020 or Beijing 2022 Games wording, emblem or mascot

- Any content from the Paralympic Games such as film, music, artwork, designs or graphics;
 - c) The Advertising is in market by 30 July 2021 (subject to the exception of (e) below) and providing that there is no **material change in the Advertising (including changes to content, messaging, frequency or places of publication)**. Note that Advertising to be published after this date, or with a material change in the Advertising during the Paralympics Games Period (whether such change is to content, messaging, frequency or places of publication) will be deemed to imply an association with the Paralympics.
 - d) They have notified the BPA of its intended Advertising prior to **30 July 2021** by email to brand@paralympics.org.uk. The BPA will operate a model of deemed consent, meaning notified advertising will be recognised to comply with these guidelines unless the BPA ask for any specific details or changes. Early notification is encouraged to avoid possible issues and to minimize any distraction for Athletes as we approach Games time.
 - e) There will be some leniency granted for athletes who are selected after July 30 2021, and Athlete Sponsors should contact the BPA to discuss options.
- Athlete Sponsors are also permitted to repost, share or like their Athlete's thank you message (see above) once during the Paralympic Games Period. This is provided they do not alter or add to the original thank you message. You may not otherwise issue any congratulatory messaging or new Advertising that features an Athlete during the Paralympic Games Period. Non-Paralympic partners are not permitted to interact with or share posts from the IPC or ParalympicsGB channels at any time.
 - The BPA will consider exemptions on a case-by-case basis and athletes, agents and brands are encouraged to contact the BPA at brand@paralympics.org.uk to discuss these. Whilst we will always endeavour to respond quickly please raise all queries in good time and allow a minimum of 5 working days to receive a reply.

I sponsor a ParalympicsGB athlete and the International Paralympic Committee / International Olympic Committee, what can I do?

Where athletes have sponsorship deals with brands who are International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Sponsors, or International Olympic Committee TOP Sponsors, some of the restrictions mentioned in Section 2 above do not apply. However, unless the Sponsor also has a direct relationship with the BPA, there are national restrictions which include the use of ParalympicsGB name, logo, team kit, and Advertising that is specifically targeted at the UK market. To ensure compliance with all guidelines, those Paralympic sponsors should contact the BPA to discuss their plans via brand@paralympics.org.uk

FAQ: I am an athlete, what happens if I do not comply with these guidelines?

As part of their selection for ParalympicsGB, all team members subscribe to a Team Member's Agreement and associated Team Charters, which outline various expected standards of behaviour including compliance with these guidelines.

Should a Commercial breach arise, the BPA will usually endeavour to speak to the business or brand involved in the first instance to seek resolution without compromising athletes' ability to focus on their performance. However, if resolution is not possible through that avenue, the BPA will then attempt to resolve any disciplinary matter through discussion involving the Athlete and the relevant ParalympicsGB Team Leader. The Disciplinary Procedure set out in the Team Member's Agreement will only be followed in the event of a failure to resolve any disciplinary matter through amicable means.

Contact details at the BPA

For any further guidance please contact the BPA Commercial Team:
brand@paralympics.org.uk