



MEMO 25-2026

DATE: Wednesday, April 15th
TO: NPLW & Premier Competition Clubs
FROM: General Manager Football Operations
SUBJECT: Applications for NPLW / PYL / JDL 2027 Competitions

For Information or Action	Action required	Action completed by	NNSWF Contact	Total Pages
Information	N/A	N/A	Mitchell O'Keefe	4

Dear All,

As there is a significant amount of detail in this memo, the key points can be summarised as follows:

- Northern NSW Football will continue the annual application process for entry into NPL Women's, Premier Youth League (Boys & Girls) and Junior Development League competitions for the 2027 season.
- The application process introduced in 2025 for the 2026 season will remain in place for 2027.
- Applications will open on April 15th, 2026, and close May 31st, 2026, for entry into the 2027 season.
- Competition structures will be confirmed following the application and assessment process.

Prior to the public announcement made across NNSWF website and social media channels, I wanted to provide you with the full details of the principles that this application process will continue to be based on:

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process implemented for the 2026 season will continue for the 2027 season.

Key principles of this process include:

- Annual opportunity for clubs to apply for entry into Premier Competitions
- Clear and consistent timelines for all competitions
- Transparent assessment criteria published
- Consideration of competition integrity and sustainability



All applications must:

- Be submitted within the defined application window
- Meet the published competition criteria
- Include a letter of support from the relevant Member Zone, whether the club is currently a premier club or a community club

Applications will be assessed based on:

- Club capability and readiness
- Governance and operational capacity
- Facility access and suitability
- Impact on competition structure
- Geographic spread and long-term sustainability

NPL WOMENS

Applications for entry into the NPL Women's competition will follow the same timelines and process as other Premier Competitions.

Competition expansion will be considered in line with:

- The number and quality of applications received
- The ability to maintain a competitive and sustainable competition
- Overall impact on the women's football landscape in Northern NSW

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GIRLS (PYLG)

The focus of the PYLG competition will remain on sustainable growth through the inclusion of additional clubs where appropriate.

Key considerations include:

- Expanding the number of participating clubs to improve accessibility and geographic reach
- Supporting the development of new programs through manageable entry points
- Ensuring facility capacity aligns with competition demands
- Maintaining an appropriate workload for club volunteers and staff
- Supporting strong development outcomes for players

The age group structure of Under 13's, 15's & 17's is currently in place, and whilst our initial priority is to expand club participation rather than increasing age group offerings within existing clubs, new applicants should be aware of potential extra age groups added in the short to medium term future.

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE BOYS (PYLB)

Northern NSW Football will continue to provide clubs with the opportunity to apply for entry into the Premier Youth League Boys competition for the 2027 season.

Application criteria and assessment will align with those applied to the Premier Youth League Girls competition.



All applications will be considered in the context of overall competition impact and sustainability.

JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE (JDL – BOYS & GIRLS)

Clubs outside the current Premier Competition structure will continue to be eligible to apply for entry into the Junior Development League for the 2027 season.

All applications must meet the minimum entry standards as outlined in the competition criteria.

These clubs will be required to meet the minimum standard of Bronze before being accepted for entry into the JDL. Full details on the requirements for entry into JDL can be found [HERE](#).

Clubs with an existing boys' JDL program seeking to enter the girls' program, or vice versa, will be considered new applicants.

APPLICATION INTO PREMIER COMPETITIONS TIMELINE

To ensure consistency across all applications for entry into these competitions, all application will follow the same timelines outlined below:

Event	Date
Announcement of Application Opportunities	14 th April
Applications Open for NPL Womens, PYL Girls, PYL Boys and JDL (Boys & Girls).	15 th April
Application Period Closes	31 st May
Application Assessment Period	2 nd June – 22 nd June
Confirmation of New Clubs for 2027	By 31st July

The process for expressions of interest will be managed by Northern NSW Football's Football Operations & Compliance Coordinator, Mitchell O'Keefe. Mitchell will be happy to meet with any prospective clubs and assist them in their applications. Mitch can be contacted on:



NORTHERN NSW FOOTBALL

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If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Mitch or I.

Regards,

Liam Bentley

General Manager Football Operations

Northern NSW Football

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