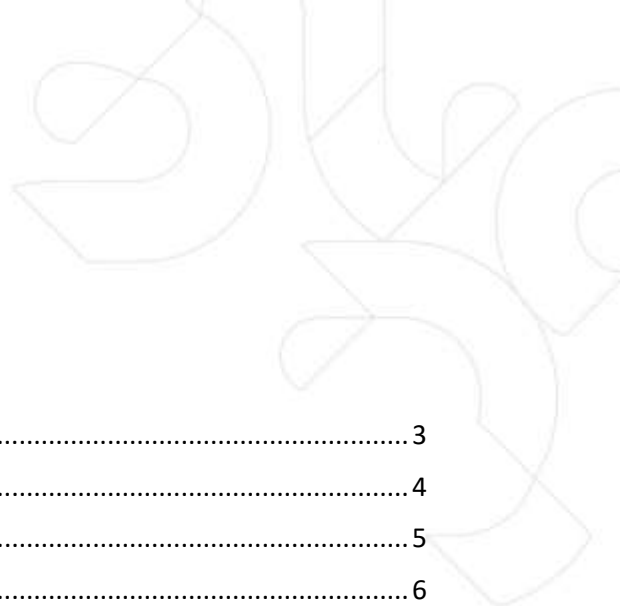


# INTERACT+ Label and Certification Standards

## Applicant Guidelines





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## 1. Introduction

These guidelines are designed to help applicants understand the INTERACT+ Certification process, including eligibility, application procedures, evaluation criteria, and the benefits of achieving the certification. They serve as a comprehensive resource for organisations seeking to demonstrate their commitment to high standards in Sport for All initiatives.

The INTERACT+ Certification system is a global initiative developed by the INTERACT+ Consortium, supported by the European Union's Erasmus+ program. This certification aims to enhance the quality, accessibility, and impact of Sport for All initiatives worldwide. These guidelines provide applicants, International Sports Organization's (ISOs) and National Sports Federations (NSFs), with detailed instructions on how to apply for and achieve the INTERACT+ Label.

The advantages for International Sports Organisations (ISOs) and National Federations (NFs) in joining the INTERACT+ Certification Program are:

- a) **Enhanced Credibility and Recognition.** Achieving the INTERACT+ Certification is a mark of excellence, enhancing the credibility and recognition of ISOs and NFs. It demonstrates a commitment to high standards in Sport for All initiatives, boosting the organisation's reputation among stakeholders, partners, and the public.
- b) **Quality Assurance.** The certification provides a structured framework for ensuring that Sport for All initiatives meet established quality standards. This includes programming, safety, accessibility, and inclusivity. By adhering to these standards, organisations can deliver high-quality experiences for participants.
- c) **Increased Visibility.** Certified organisations gain increased visibility and recognition both nationally and internationally. The INTERACT+ Label is a promotional tool that helps organisations stand out and attract more participants, partners, and sponsors.
- d) **Promotion of Inclusivity.** The certification encourages and recognizes initiatives that promote inclusivity, providing opportunities for participation regardless of age, gender, ability, socioeconomic background, or other factors. This fosters a more inclusive environment in sports.
- e) **Health and Well-being Promotion.** Certified organisations are recognised for their efforts in promoting physical, mental, and social well-being through sport and physical activity. This focus on health and well-being enhances the impact of Sport for All initiatives on individuals and communities.
- f) **Sustainability.** The certification encourages environmentally sustainable practices within sport initiatives, recognising and rewarding organisations that prioritize sustainability in their facilities and operations. This helps organisations contribute to broader environmental goals.
- g) **Capacity Building.** INTERACT+ Certification provides access to training, resources, and support, enhancing the capacity of ISOs and NFs to deliver effective Sport for All programs. This includes improving policies, practices, and outcomes over time.
- h) **Global Standardization.** By adhering to the INTERACT+ standards, organisations contribute to the global standardization of Sport for All practices. This facilitates knowledge sharing, collaboration, and consistency across regions and contexts.
- i) **Continuous Improvement.** The certification process fosters a culture of continuous improvement by providing feedback, guidance, and opportunities for learning and

development. Organisations are encouraged to reflect on their practices and strive for ongoing enhancement.

- j) **Community Engagement.** Certified organisations are better equipped to engage with stakeholders and communities, ensuring that their initiatives reflect diverse groups' needs, priorities, and perspectives. This leads to more effective and responsive Sport for All programs.
- k) **Access to Funding and Partnerships.** Certification can enhance an organisation's ability to secure funding and establish partnerships. The recognition and credibility that come with certification make it easier to attract public and private sector support.
- l) **Strategic Advantage.** Participating in the INTERACT+ Certification program provides organisations with a strategic advantage by aligning their operations with international best practices. This alignment helps in achieving long-term goals and enhances overall organisational effectiveness.
- m) **Benchmarking and Performance Measurement.** The certification process includes rigorous assessment and evaluation, enabling organisations to benchmark their performance against established criteria. This helps in identifying strengths, addressing weaknesses, and setting goals for future improvement.

By joining the INTERACT+ Certification Program, ISOs and NFs can significantly enhance their impact, ensuring that their Sport for All initiatives are of the highest quality, inclusive, and sustainable. This benefits the organisations and contributes to the broader goal of promoting health, well-being, and social cohesion through sport.

## 2. Eligibility for INTERACT+ Certification

To be eligible for the INTERACT+ Certification, organisations must meet the following general criteria:

- a) Be Recognised by TAFISA

Organisations seeking certification must be officially recognized by The Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA). This recognition ensures that the organisation aligns with TAFISA's mission and values, promoting sports and physical activity for all.

- **TAFISA Recognition:** Organisations should have formal acknowledgement or membership with TAFISA, demonstrating their commitment to the principles of Sport for All.
- **Alignment with TAFISA Goals:** The organisation's objectives and activities should align with TAFISA's goals of promoting health, well-being, and social cohesion through sports and physical activity.

- b) Operate at Either the National or International Level

Eligible organisations must operate on a national or international scale, allowing them to significantly impact the promotion and development of Sport for All initiatives.

- National Level Operations: Organisations that work within a single country, implementing programs and initiatives that benefit local communities and regions.
- International-level operations: Organisations with a broader scope, working across multiple countries to promote and develop Sport for All initiatives. These organisations should demonstrate the ability to coordinate and manage programs that reach diverse populations internationally.

c) Promote and Develop Sport for All Initiatives

Organisations must be committed to actively promoting and developing Sport for All initiatives, ensuring that their programmes are inclusive, accessible, and designed to benefit diverse populations, considering the 14 target groups outlined in the INTERACT project: Children, Youth, Women & Girls, Elderly, LGBTQ+ Community, Homeless Persons, Indigenous Groups, Inhabitants of Emergency Areas, Refugees and people facing situations of human mobility, Orphans, People with disabilities, Slum dwellers, and Veterans.

### 3. Application Process

#### Step 1: Registration

Contact TAFISA to request access to the INTERACT+ Label Digital Platform: [www.sportforallcertification.org](http://www.sportforallcertification.org). Register your organization on the platform and provide the required information.

#### Step 2: Self-Assessment

Conduct a self-assessment using the criteria provided in the platform.

Gather verifiable evidence for each criterion, such as plans, reports, and other documentation.

#### Step 3: Submission

Submit the completed self-assessment and supporting documents via the digital platform.

Ensure all submissions are made within the nine-month timeframe.

#### Step 4: Evaluation

The INTERACT+ evaluators will review the submitted materials.

Evaluators will provide feedback and may request additional information if necessary.

#### Step 5: Feedback and Adjustment

Organisations have one month to respond to the evaluation feedback.

Adjust and resubmit documentation as required.

#### Step 6: Labelling

The INTERACT+ Team will award the appropriate label level based on the evaluation.

Labels range from Certified Bronze to Certified Diamond, depending on the total score achieved.

#### Continuity

Certification takes place in two-year cycles. In the second year after starting the certification process, the ISO/NF is audited, and the label is confirmed, which is valid for two years. The label maintenance process repeats itself in this logic of cycles.

## 4. Evaluation Criteria

Organisations are evaluated based on three main domains:

#### Policy, Strategy and Management

- Establishment of Policies: Develop and implement policies that integrate the approach into the organisation's overall policies and strategies for sport for all.
- Strategic Planning: Incorporate goals and objectives into the organisation's strategic planning processes, ensuring alignment with broader organizational objectives.
- Resource Allocation: Allocate resources, including funding, staff, and time, to support the implementation of initiatives and activities.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and strategies, making adjustments as needed to achieve desired outcomes.

#### Spaces and Sport Facilities

- Accessibility and Inclusivity: Ensure that sport facilities are designed, constructed, and maintained to be accessible and inclusive for all individuals.
- Safety and Quality Standards: Implement safety measures and quality standards in the design, maintenance, and operation of sports facilities to ensure the well-being of participants.
- Environmental Sustainability: Promote environmental sustainability in the management of spaces and sports facilities, including energy efficiency, waste management, and use of eco-friendly materials.

#### Programmes, Events and Initiatives

- Development of Programmes: Design and implement sport for all programmes, events, and initiatives that incorporate the principles focusing on inclusivity, accessibility, and community engagement.
- Participant Engagement: Engage participants in the planning, development, and evaluation of programmes, events, and initiatives to ensure their needs and preferences are addressed.
- Partnership Building: Collaborate with stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organisations, and local communities, to develop and deliver programmes, events, and initiatives.

- Promotion and Communication: Promote programmes, events, and initiatives through effective communication strategies, raising awareness and encouraging participation among target audiences.

## 5. Confidentiality and Equal Treatment

All data and documents provided during the certification process are confidential. The INTERACT+ Certification process ensures equal treatment for all applicants, maintaining fairness and transparency.

### Confidentiality

- Secure Data Handling: All information submitted by organisations, including sensitive documents and evaluation results, is securely handled and stored to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure.
- Non-Disclosure Agreement: Evaluators and committee members involved in the certification process are bound by non-disclosure agreements to ensure that all data remains confidential.
- Purpose of Data Use: The data provided by applicants is used solely for the purpose of evaluating eligibility and compliance with the INTERACT+ Certification standards. No information is shared with third parties without explicit consent from the organisation, namely the dissemination of good practices, which must always be authorized.
- Confidential Communication: All communications between the applicants and the INTERACT+ team are treated with strict confidentiality, ensuring that sensitive discussions remain private.

### Equal Treatment

- Standardized Evaluation: Every applicant is assessed using the same standardized criteria and procedures, ensuring a fair evaluation process for all.
- Impartial Assessment: Evaluators are trained to provide unbiased assessments based solely on the evidence and documentation, without favouritism or prejudice.
- Transparent Process: The certification process is transparent, with clear guidelines and criteria provided to all applicants. Feedback and evaluation results are communicated openly, allowing organizations to understand their performance and areas for improvement.
- Grievance Mechanism: A formal grievance mechanism is in place to address any concerns or disputes that may arise during the certification process. Organisations can raise issues and expect a fair review and resolution.
- Consistent Application: The principles of fairness and equal treatment are consistently applied across all stages of the certification process, from initial application to final certification and beyond.

## 6. Certification Levels

The certification levels are determined based on the overall score achieved:

- Certified Bronze: 30-50 points
- Certified Silver: 51-70 points
- Certified Gold: 71-90 points
- Certified Platinum: 91-110 points
- Certified Diamond: 111-150 points

## 7. Labelling Committee

The INTERACT+ Labelling Committee, composed of designated TAFISA members, oversees the certification process. The committee is responsible for assigning and, if necessary, cancelling the labels. The following eligibility criteria outline the nomination process for committee members:

- TAFISA Membership: Nominees must be current members of TAFISA and demonstrate a commitment to the organisation's mission and values.
- Relevant Expertise: Nominees should possess relevant expertise in areas such as sports management, certification processes, quality assurance, and Sport for All initiatives.
- Experience: Preferably, nominees should have substantial experience working with international or national sports organisations and a deep understanding of the standards and criteria used in the INTERACT+ Certification.

## 8. Fees

Participation in the INTERACT+ Certification programme is free of charge. The INTERACT+ programme is funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ program.

### No Participation Fees

- Free Certification: Organisations do not need to pay any fees to participate in the INTERACT+ Certification program. This ensures that all eligible organisations, regardless of their financial resources, have the opportunity to apply for certification and benefit from the program.
- Inclusive Access: By eliminating participation fees, the program promotes inclusivity and accessibility, encouraging diverse organisations to pursue certification and improve their Sport for All initiatives.



### Erasmus+ Program Funding

- Erasmus+ Support: The INTERACT+ program is supported by the Erasmus+ program, a European Union initiative aimed at enhancing education, training, youth, and sport across Europe.
- Financial Backing: Erasmus+'s funding covers all aspects of the certification process, including the development and maintenance of the INTERACT+ Label Digital Platform.
- Sustainability and Development: Erasmus+ funding ensures the sustainability and continuous development of the INTERACT+ program, allowing for ongoing improvements and the expansion of support services for certified organisations.

## 9. Gap Integration and Review

The INTERACT+ Certification program is committed to maintaining a high standard of quality and relevance in its regulations and standards. The INTERACT+ Labelling Committee will promptly review and address any gaps or unforeseen situations that arise. Additionally, the standard document and regulations are systematically reviewed and updated every four years to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with best practices.

### Addressing Gaps and Unforeseen Situations

- Continuous Monitoring: The INTERACT+ Labelling Committee continuously monitors the implementation of the certification process to identify any gaps or unforeseen situations.
- Prompt Review: When a gap or unforeseen situation is identified, the committee thoroughly reviews its impact on the certification process and participating organizations.
- Stakeholder Input: The committee may seek input from stakeholders, including the expert label committee, certified organizations, applicants, and other relevant parties, to gather comprehensive feedback and insights.
- Resolution and Adjustment: Based on the review, the committee develops and implements appropriate measures to address the identified gaps. This may include revising existing criteria, adding new guidelines, or adjusting the certification process to ensure clarity and effectiveness.

### Regular Review and Update of Standards

- Four-Year Review Cycle: The standard document and regulations governing the INTERACT+ Certification program are reviewed and updated every four years. This systematic review ensures that the standards remain current, relevant, and aligned with evolving best practices in the field of Sport for All.
- Comprehensive Evaluation: During the review cycle, the committee conducts a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the certification standards, including criteria, procedures, and documentation requirements.
- Best Practices and Innovations: The review process incorporates the latest best practices, innovations, and research findings to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the certification programme.

- Stakeholder Consultation: The committee engages with a wide range of stakeholders, including certified organizations, industry experts, and community representatives, to gather diverse perspectives and ensure the standards reflect the needs and priorities of the Sport for All community.
- Transparency and Communication: Any updates or changes to the standards and regulations are communicated transparently to all stakeholders. The updated documents are available on the INTERACT+ Label Digital Platform, ensuring that organisations can access the most current information.

#### Feedback Mechanism

- Ongoing Feedback: A formal feedback mechanism allows organizations and stakeholders to provide ongoing feedback on the certification process and standards. This feedback is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that the program continues to meet the needs of its participants.
- Responsive Adjustments: The committee reviews feedback regularly and makes responsive adjustments to the certification process as needed. This dynamic approach ensures that the programme remains flexible and responsive to the changing landscape of Sport for All.

#### Documentation and Reporting

- Documenting Changes: All changes and updates to the standards and regulations are meticulously documented. This documentation provides a clear record of the evolution of the certification program and ensures consistency in its application.
- Annual Reports: The committee publishes an annual report summarising the changes made, the reasons for those changes, and the impact on the certification process. These reports are shared with all stakeholders to maintain transparency and accountability.

Implementing a robust gap integration and review process, the INTERACT+ Certification program ensures continuous improvement, relevance, and effectiveness in promoting high standards in Sport for All initiatives by implementing a robust gap integration and review process. This proactive approach helps maintain the integrity and trustworthiness of the certification, benefiting all participating organisations and their communities.

# Thank you!

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**TAFISA OFFICE**

c/o Commerzbank / Filiale Höchst  
Hostatostraße 2  
D-65929 Frankfurt am Main  
Germany  
Email: [info@tafisa.org](mailto:info@tafisa.org)  
Tel: +49 (0) 69 973 935 990  
Fax: +49 (0) 69 973 935 995

