

Amersfoort, 17 January 2025

To: the delegates of the General Assembly
of the IFSC

Dear Delegates, dear friends,

Sport climbing is at a pivotal moment in its history. As a rapidly growing global sport, its continued success relies on two essential pillars: athletes' dedication and the volunteers' passion. After nearly 15 years of active involvement as a volunteer within the Dutch Climbing Federation (NKBV) and the Dutch Olympic Committee, I am deeply motivated to contribute to the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) by championing the development of our sport and empowering the athletes at its heart.

As President of the Dutch Federation, I led a transformative journey for climbing in the Netherlands. Membership surged from 45,000 in 2012 to over 75,000 today, reflecting the growing appeal of our sport. However, my proudest achievement was elevating competitive climbing from a casual activity to a recognised competitive sport with full endorsement by the Dutch Olympic Committee. This transformation inspired a new generation of climbers and set the foundation for long-term growth and professionalism in our national climbing community. Commercial gyms and the NF both benefit from this growth and strengthen each other.

My experience extends beyond sports into the business world. Over the years, I have held CEO positions at major media companies, including in [Sanoma](#) and [Wolters Kluwer](#). My career has been defined by innovation, building new business models, driving organisational change, and delivering sustainable growth. In 2009, I launched my [own company](#), successfully growing it before selling it to investors in 2018. Today, I serve as a board advisor and interim executive, helping mid-sized firms navigate complex challenges and seize new opportunities. These experiences have equipped me with the leadership, strategic vision, and operational expertise necessary to help the IFSC evolve into a truly global and professional federation.

I firmly believe the IFSC is at a critical juncture, in the transition from the successful start-up phase to becoming a mature international sports organisation. My vision of how we could realise this evolution is built on three core pillars:

1. Athletes at the Core

- Empowering the Athletes' Commission to ensure their voices shape key decisions and policies.
- Allocating dedicated resources to athlete development, healthcare, prize money, and welfare programs.
- Expanding support for athletes, including mental health services, injury prevention, and post-competition career planning.

2. Growth and Global Reach

- Innovating competition formats to captivate global audiences and challenge athletes, including new business models to strengthen sport climbing also financially.
- Expanding climbing (commercial and competitions) into new regions through grants, mentorship, and support for emerging national federations.
- Strengthening youth programs to inspire the next generation of climbers and create clear pathways from grassroots to global stages.

3. Governance and Transparency

- Strengthening the role of continental federations to ensure localised representation and decision-making.
- Coach day-to-day operations within the IFSC in the transition from being a new Olympic Sport to the demands we must meet.
- Creating inclusive, transparent decision-making processes that involve all stakeholders, from athletes to national federations.

We want to be a collaborative, professional and inclusive organisation. By focusing on athlete welfare, growing global participation, and ensuring transparent governance, we can elevate sport climbing to its full potential as a globally recognised and respected sport.

I am confident that my leadership experience, innovative mindset and passion for climbing uniquely position me to contribute meaningfully to the IFSC as Vice President. Together, we can climb higher, faster, and stronger—united by our shared commitment to this incredible sport.

Thank you for your trust and support.

**Kind regards,
Joachim Driessen**

Appendices:

- Short resume
- Recommendation letter President Dutch Olympic Committee
- Draft program IFSC 2025-2028
- Nomination form
- Conflict of interest form IFSC