



# Creating a Place for Women in Sport

A gender equity self-assessment for sport and recreation clubs

## Creating a Place for Women in Sport

The following gender equity self-assessment was developed by Inspiro, Yarra Ranges Council and EACH, 2018 and updated in 2022.

This tool was based on the audit developed as part of the 'Our Codes, Our Clubs: Changing the Story to Promote Gender Equity Together', implemented by Maroondah City Council, Yarra Ranges Council and Knox City Council and funded by Municipal Association of Victoria.

For more information about the development of this tool, contact Yarra Ranges Council.

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# Creating a Place for Women in Sport

## Introduction

Developed in 2018 and recently updated in 2022, the Creating a Place for Women in Sport tool is a practical self-assessment tool used by sporting clubs to help identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in promoting gender equality.

The Creating a Place for Women in Sport Tool and associated Pre-Tool and Evaluation Survey resources enable clubs to assess their club environment across six key areas from the perspectives of both the internal committee and broader membership and participation base.

There are no right or wrong answers; the tool and associated resources are to be used as a ‘temperature check’ at a moment in time. This feedback can provide opportunities for clubs to learn and discuss ways to create environments where women and men can participate equally and better understand how welcoming and inclusive the club is for women and girls.

Sport in Australia is not gender equitable. In community sporting clubs, gender inequality is often reflected in the make-up of club committees, club culture, differing gender balance in participation numbers and opportunities, and the availability of appropriate facilities for women and girls.

There are compelling reasons for clubs to value gender equality. Along with the health and wellbeing benefits from gender equity, evidence indicates significant value in considering issues from a wide range of demographically diverse viewpoints. A clear correlation also exists between gender equitable environments, better organisational performance and increased club membership and participation.

Research also tells us that by promoting gender equality and creating equal opportunities in life for women and men, violence against women can be prevented. It is important for all members of the community, including sporting clubs to encourage gender equality and promote family friendly, inclusive environments for everyone.

To learn more about the benefits of creating equal environments for women and men, refer to the ‘Why Take Action’ fact sheet, which can be found at: <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Support-for-community-groups/Leading-the-change-promoting-gender-equality>

Disclaimer: All resources are limited by the use of specific language relating to gender.

*We would like to acknowledge that the Creating a Place for Women in Sport self-assessment, pre-tool survey and evaluation survey use the language women and girls and men and boys throughout. We recognise that these terms are binary and do not reflect or capture all genders. These resources were developed to create environments where women and girls feel safe, valued and welcomed to participate equally. It is important to acknowledge that the binary nature of the language acts as a limitation of these resources.*



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# Before you Complete the Self-Assessment

## Who should use this tool?

This self-assessment has been designed for Australian sport and recreation clubs that:

- Are male dominated and lack active participation of women and girls.
- Have an equal gender balance of members but are looking to create more inclusive environments for women and girls in all aspects of their club.

## Tool outline & scale

There are six different sections of the tool. As you answer each question, consider the evidence and feedback provided by club cohorts to support your answer. You will be asked to respond to each question based on the following scale.

*We do this well:* Our club consistently achieves this and has evidence to support this.

*Needs more work:* Our club sometimes achieves this, but more work is needed.

*We don't do this yet:* Our club is not doing anything at the moment to support this.

*N/A:* This statement is not applicable to our club.

## Glossary

The tool and associated resources use terminology such as equity, equality and gender. Many of us have heard the terms gender equality and gender equity but often we may not know what these terms mean or the difference between them. Similarly, we may not understand the difference between gender and sex. To learn more about these terms, refer to the 'Why Take Action?' fact sheet which can be found at:

<https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Support-for-community-groups/Leading-the-change-promoting-gender-equality>

## How to complete the self-assessment

- We encourage clubs to share the Pre-Tool survey with their broader membership base to gain a greater understanding of club experiences and insights from the perspective of various club cohorts.
- We recommend your club completes the self-assessment as a group during a club committee meeting.
- Consider inviting representatives from your playing group to be a part of the process.
- The self-assessment will take approximately 1 hour to complete; however, we encourage committees to allow as much time as possible to enable robust discussion.
- We recommend you complete all sections of the tool to ensure all areas of your club environment are considered.
- Following the Self-Assessment tool, we invite committee and club members to complete the Club Evaluation Survey. Access to the survey can be found on page 15 of this resource.

## Action planning

Throughout the tool, you will be guided to develop key actions to address areas for improvement. These actions will help form a club action plan. When the time comes to develop your plan, refer to the resource 'Next Steps: Action Planning for Gender Equity' on page 13 onwards of this document.

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault or family violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 (24/7). In an emergency, dial triple zero (000).

## Section 1: Club Information

This section provides an opportunity for your club to record the number and gender breakdown of volunteers and staff in key club roles. This will be useful information for your club to recognise the different positions that women and men currently play within your club. Some sport and recreation clubs have had limited female participation in the past, particularly in leadership or as coaches or trainers. Research shows great benefit of having “women at the table” in leadership to represent diversity in views. It is important to identify areas where you may have an unequal gender balance in certain roles and recognise opportunities to engage more women and men in club positions.

Some of the club areas included in the table below may not be relevant to your club. A space has also been provided if you wish to add more roles.

| Area of club   | Number of people involved and gender breakdown |
|--|--|
| Committee members  | E.g. 4 women, 5 men                            |
| Coaches or trainers  |  |
| Members aged over 18   |  |
| Members aged under 18  |  |
| Support roles (team managers, referees, judges, scorers, runners, umpires, canteen etc.) |  |
| Other roles you wish to record   |  |



## Section 2: Leadership

Sporting clubs are in a unique position to model respectful relationships and promote equal opportunities for women and men. Having an equal gender balance in leadership allows both women's and men's voices, opinions, and experience to be considered in important club decision making and planning.

| Statement  | We do this well | Needs more work | We don't do this yet | N/A |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Our club strives and has a written commitment to have a gender balance in our leadership positions.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 2. Our club ensures women are actively involved in all planning and decision making.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 3. Our club has a strategy or plan to recruit, retain and train women for leadership roles such as president, coach or trainer.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 4. Our club provides position descriptions, so every member understands the responsibilities for each club role.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 5. Our club looks for opportunities to promote the great work we are doing to be welcoming and inclusive of women and girls through local marketing and social media.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 6. When sexist behaviour is observed (such as sexist language, derogatory comments and unfair treatment relating to gender), all our leaders would know how to and feel confident to take action.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 7. Our club has policies relating to gender equality and acceptable behaviour and policies outlining proposed action to be taken if required. Policies cover <u>all</u> of the following situations: use of unacceptable language, verbal abuse, sledging, display of inappropriate images or materials and sexual harassment. |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 8. The leaders within our club are good role models and regularly communicate the club's stance on gender equality. Club leaders <i>call out</i> <u>all</u> use of unacceptable language, verbal abuse, sledging, display of inappropriate images or materials and sexual harassment.  |                 |                 |                      |     |

### Actions

Based on your responses to the questions above, what are three key steps or actions that your club might take to:

- Improve on
- Celebrate and promote what you're doing well

1.

2.

3.

## Section 3: Club Culture

Sport and recreation clubs play a natural leadership role in the community and can provide a positive culture to create safe and welcoming environments. Clubs have a unique opportunity to address barriers that lead to negative attitudes and behaviours towards women and provide an environment where both women and men are respected, valued, and accepted. Creating positive club cultures and environments will in turn assist in building club membership and increasing participation of women and girls in physical activity.

| Statement   | We do this well | Needs more work | We don't do this yet | N/A |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Our club is continually and actively working to improve its culture to be a welcoming place for all genders.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 2. All club events (social, official etc) encourage respectful relationships between women and men of all ages.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 3. Our club values our women players and teams and provides equal allocation to the best facilities or to prime playing time.   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 4. Our women's senior and girl's junior trophies and team photos are displayed around the club room in equally clear view.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 5. Our club has <u>either</u> a written policy or guideline that coaches or trainers use to ensure equal playing time regardless of gender  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 6. Our club has a feedback process which is regularly reviewed to ensure accessibility to all members. We encourage members to provide feedback.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 7. Our club ensures we act on complaints and provide feedback to those involved.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 8. Our club uses images that reflect our broad membership, including women, people of all genders, diverse cultures, people with a disability and/or people who belong to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities. |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 9. Our club takes action to provide information in other languages as needed.   |                 |                 |                      |     |

### Actions

Based on your responses to the questions above, what are three key steps or actions that your club might take to:

- Improve on
- Celebrate and promote what you're doing well

1.

2.

3.



## Section 4: Membership & Engagement

It is important for the whole community that sport and recreation clubs consider barriers that may prevent members of the community from engaging. For some women, there may be a mix of different factors that need to be considered for equal participation, such as age, disability, finances, language, or culture. For ways to improve club membership and engagement, your club could consider; does our club membership reflect the diversity of our local community? If not, what can we do to engage new members and support them to be involved?

| Statement   | We do this well | Needs more work | We don't do this yet | N/A |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Our club aims to recruit more women and girls, both on and off the field.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 2. Our club reduces barriers and encourages women to be equally involved in all club related activities and roles, such as considering the time activities are held.                              |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 3. To ensure equal access, our club provides payment plans for membership, fees and other costs.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 4. Our club has a person responsible for welcoming and ensuring all new members are provided with membership information, including policies and procedures.                                      |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 5. Our club regularly survey's the broader membership base to identify and understand barriers and develop strategies to address such barriers, e.g., finances, language, uniforms and equipment. |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 6. Our club provides a range of social sporting options that considers the following groups:  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Girls   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Women   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Older female adults   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Women with a disability   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Women from culturally diverse backgrounds   |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Women who belong to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| • Participants who identify as gender diverse   |                 |                 |                      |     |

### Actions

Based on your responses to the questions above, what are three key steps or actions that your club might take to:

- Improve on
- Celebrate and promote what you're doing well

1.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 5: Volunteers & Employees

Increasing participation of women and girls in sport and recreation provides numerous opportunities to build respectful relationships between women and men. Providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for both women and men will support your club to increase membership, volunteers and employees.

Sport and recreation clubs provide great opportunities for members to develop new skills and try different roles. When allocating club roles, it is important to select individuals based on their skill level or interest, rather than assuming positions based on gender, e.g., having women in the canteen, or to cook at club events.

| Statement   | We do this well | Needs more work | We don't do this yet | N/A |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----|
| 1. Our club aims to increase the gender balance in all club roles.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 2. Our club provides equal amounts of training, development and mentoring for both our women and men volunteers and/or paid employees.                  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 3. When our club is planning for next season's club roles, we actively tap women on the shoulder to be involved and provide encouragement and support.  |                 |                 |                      |     |
| 4. Our club strives to ensure that the allocation of volunteer/paid positions doesn't reinforce gender stereotypes e.g., only women are in the canteen. |                 |                 |                      |     |

| Actions  |
|--|
| Based on your responses to the questions above, what are <u>three</u> key steps or actions that your club might take to: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve on</li><li>• Celebrate and promote what you're doing well</li></ul>      |
| 1.   |
| 2.   |
| 3.   |



## Section 6a: Internal Facilities

A sport or recreation club's facilities can limit the participation and engagement of women and girls. Community spaces that are responsive to, respectful and supportive of the needs of women will assist in making women feel safe, valued, and included in a club.

| Statement  | Yes | Don't know | No | N/A |
|--|-----|------------|----|-----|
| 1. We have a process where we check if women feel safe using our facilities  |     |            |    |     |
| 2. The change rooms and toilets have clear signage to indicate the user, including universal symbols that cater for low or no literacy |     |            |    |     |
| 3. Our change room and toilets including public toilet facilities are clean and tidy, and:   |     |            |    |     |
| • Toilet paper is always refilled  |     |            |    |     |
| • Soap dispensers are available  |     |            |    |     |
| • Sanitary bins are available in every cubicle   |     |            |    |     |
| 4. Our facility has baby change and feeding areas that both men and women can access   |     |            |    |     |
| 5. All our facility lights are currently working and there is a process for reporting and replacing globe outages                      |     |            |    |     |
| 6. Our facility has change rooms with lockable toilet cubicles and that can be allocated to women players, umpires, and coaches        |     |            |    |     |
| 7. Our facility has change rooms with lockable shower facilities and that can be allocated to women players, umpires, and coaches      |     |            |    |     |
| 8. Our facility has women's toilets with sanitary bins available for the public to use   |     |            |    |     |
| 9. Our facility has an accessible toilet which is regularly cleaned and free from storage  |     |            |    |     |
| 10. Our facility promotes a family friendly environment  |     |            |    |     |
| 11. The bar area is not the focal point of the club and can be closed off as required  |     |            |    |     |

### Actions

Based on your responses to the questions above, what are three key steps or actions that your club might take to:

- Improve on
- Celebrate and promote what you're doing well

1. 

---
2. 

---
3. 

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# Section 6b: External Facilities

A sport or recreation club’s facilities can limit the participation and engagement of women and girls. Community spaces that are responsive to, respectful and supportive of the needs of women will assist in making women feel safe, valued, and included in a club.

| Statement  | Yes | Don't know | No | N/A |
|--|-----|------------|----|-----|
| 12. Our car park has designated disability parking   |     |            |    |     |
| 13. Our facility is free from vandalism  |     |            |    |     |
| 14. Our car park and access pathways are well lit and maintained   |     |            |    |     |
| 15. All our facility lights are currently working and there is a process for reporting and replacing globe outages |     |            |    |     |
| 16. There is a designated pick up and drop off area which is well lit and maintained                               |     |            |    |     |
| 17. There is provision of a playground area close to amenities   |     |            |    |     |

Actions

Based on your responses to the questions above, what are three key steps or actions that your club might take to:

Improve on

Celebrate and promote what you’re doing well

1.

2.

3.

---

Next Steps

# Action Planning for Gender Equity



# Part 1: Planning for Action



This guide should be used once your club has completed their gender equity self-assessment.

This supporting resource has been designed to support your club to identify and implement key actions to promote gender equality and respectful relationships for women.

Your gender equity self-assessment should have highlighted key strengths and areas for improvement relating to gender equality and respectful relationships for your club. We recommend your club use these findings to design a plan to make steps towards creating a more gender equitable and respectful culture. Depending on your assessment

## Actions could include:

- Encourage active participation of women in all levels of your club, including the game, on committees and in leadership positions.
- Create a safe place for women to participate. Safely step in and respond appropriately to inappropriate discussions about women and girls.
- Break down gender stereotypes. Encourage both women and men to take on roles outside of those traditionally associated with their gender e.g., have more men in the canteen and more women coaches.
- *Call out* the use of gendered language or insults such as, “be a man” or “you kick like a girl”.
- Encourage all club leaders to model respectful relationships and respectfully challenge sexist comments.
- Include a commitment statement to model gender equitable behaviours in club policies, codes of conducts or position descriptions, etc.
- Reward respectful behaviour and manage disrespectful behaviour appropriately including on all social media platforms.
- Identify and encourage leaders in your club to lead this work.
- Discuss this topic regularly at club meetings.
- Consider applying for a Council community grant to enable funding for activities that promote equality in your club.
- Celebrate and reward women and young girls of all ages, abilities and diversity at the club.
- Undertake regular member surveys to understand needs or concerns of club members.
- Implement accessible feedback processes and take appropriate action where indicated.

## Part 2: Key Steps to Create Change

Once you have completed a gender equity self-assessment at your club...

1. Raise and review your assessment results at a committee meeting.
2. Identify your priorities for action. Develop a gender equity action plan using the information from the pre-tool survey and self-assessment. A link to an action plan template is on page 16 of this document.
3. Seek committee agreement to carry out actions, set timeframes and regularly check in on progress at meetings.
4. Set annual or 6-month review of actions and record progress.
5. Celebrate your success! Promote your club's journey and how you are working to improve gender equality at your club to the wider community. This could involve seeking local media attention.
6. Consider discussing your action planning process with your local Council or organisation who may be supporting you to use this tool.
7. Complete the Club Evaluation Survey to evaluate the implementation of the tool. The survey can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Creatingaplaceforwomeninsport>



## Part 3: Action Plan Template

An Action Plan Template has been designed to be used after your club has completed the gender equity self-assessment. Results from the assessment will assist in identifying actions for improvement which can be included in this plan. **The gender equity action plan template can be found here:**

<https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Support-for-community-groups/Leading-the-change-promoting-gender-equality#section-3>

## Part 4: Support for Your Club

### Key Resources

The following documents are key resources to support sport and recreation clubs to promote positive change around gender equality and respectful relationships.

#### Stepping In

A bystander action toolkit for state sporting associations, to support equality and respect at work.

Find it at: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/bystander-action-toolkit](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/bystander-action-toolkit)

#### Everyone Wins

A toolkit that aims to assist clubs to build healthy and inclusive sporting environments.

Find it at: <https://vicsport.com.au/welcoming-sport>

#### Be the Change!

A resource for sporting club coaches on the role they can play to promote equality and respect between women and men.

Find it at: [www.inspiro.org.au/our-services/healthy-communities](http://www.inspiro.org.au/our-services/healthy-communities)

#### Equality is the Game: Club Committee Resource

A resource with simple steps for club committees on how they can create gender equality and prevent violence against women.

Find it at: [www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Explore/Sports-clubs-and-recreation-facilities/Our-codes-our-clubs](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Explore/Sports-clubs-and-recreation-facilities/Our-codes-our-clubs)

#### This Girl Can – Helping women and girls get active

A guide if you're part of any activity, club or industry body that could be getting more women involved in getting active.

Find it at: [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/helping-women-and-girls-get-active](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/helping-women-and-girls-get-active)

#### Equality in Action Tool Kit

A tool kit of four tip sheets to support conversations with committee and leadership groups regarding working towards gender equality.

Find it at: [www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Explore/Sports-clubs-and-recreation-facilities/Equality-in-action-in-our-club](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Explore/Sports-clubs-and-recreation-facilities/Equality-in-action-in-our-club)

# Creating a Place for Women in Sport

For more information regarding the development of this gender equity self-assessment tool, contact Yarra Ranges Council.

P: 1300 368 333