|  | Female Participation Plan |
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**Introduction**

The purpose of the Female Participation Plan (plan) is to assist sport and active recreation organisations with building their capacity to recruit and retain women and girls as participants and leaders. The plan can be used for any organisation that is keen to create or further develop a female friendly environment and to encourage women and girls as participants and leaders in their sport or active recreation. This plan has also been designed for recipients of the Female Facilities Program and should be completed as part of the Grant Deed requirements.

The plan has been structured in three sections to assist and support organisations, namely:

* **Section 1: Benefits of Women and Girls Involvement**—Read the benefits for sport and active recreation organisations. Additional links to resources are provided throughout the plan to explore deeper insights that may be supportive for the following two sections.
* **Section 2: Self-Assessment Checklist**—Tick responses to questions in the checklist to understand how your organisation is progressing. The checklist is structured to allow an organisation to benchmark itself against good practice that has been shown to encourage women and girls as participants and leaders in sport or active recreation.
* **Section 3: Action Plan**—Identify opportunities for improvement to your organisation within a 12 to 18 month period.

# Section 1: Benefits of Women and Girls Involvement

## Why is the involvement of women and girls important to sport and active recreation organisations?

Women and girls as participants and leaders bring a wealth of opportunities to organisations. They:

* provide different knowledge, experiences, and connections than males[[1]](#endnote-1)
* represent the voice of women and girls and the needs required to increase numbers in an activity or club[[2]](#endnote-2)
* increase participation capacity[[3]](#endnote-3)
* improve financial performance[[4]](#endnote-4)
* enhance social responsibility[[5]](#endnote-5)
* contribute to good governance, leadership and decision making[[6]](#endnote-6)
* help eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence-supportive attitudes.[[7]](#endnote-7)

## What do we know in Australia?

The top factor influencing motivation for women (over 15 years) to participate in sport and physical activity is physical health or fitness (81%). This is followed by fun and enjoyment (40%), social reasons (26%), and to lose or maintain weight/tone (21%).[[8]](#endnote-8)

The top barrier restricting women from participating in sport and physical activity is poor health or injury (29%). This is followed by not enough time/other commitments (28%), a dislike for sport/physical activity (7%) and have a disability (6%) or is not a priority (6%).

## What does this mean for a sport and active recreation organisation?

To encourage and increase the number of women and girls to participate in sport and active recreation activities, and lead as coaches, officials, guides, administrators and committee members, there is a need to create a female friendly environment. This is where the plan can assist organisations to further develop their environment, so it becomes a welcoming, safe and enjoyable place.

# Section 2: Self-Assessment Checklist

## Introduction

For assistance with completing the questions contact your nearest Sport and Recreation Services office. Alternatively, your organisation’s peak body may provide a similar resource which the Department will accept as another option for completing this checklist. Please contact the Department for confirmation of this resource.

State of Queensland (2013). Start Playing Stay Playing: A summary of the evidence and stakeholder insights into women’s and girls’ participation in sport and active recreation. Retrieved from https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/assets/documents/health/start-playing-stay-playing-appendix.pdf

Victorian Government (November, 2015). Inquiry to Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. Retrieved from http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/201704/Inquiry%20into%20women%20and%20girls%20in%20sport.pdf

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Carter, N., Wagner, H., 2011, ‘The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women’s Representation of Boards’ (2004-2008), Catalyst. http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/bottomline-corporate-performance-and-womens-representation-boards-20042008

Smith, A., & Westerbeek, H. (2007). Sport as a Vehicle for Deploying Corporate Social Responsibility. The Journal of Corporate Citizenship, (25), 43-54. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/jcorpciti.25.43

*Carter, N., Wagner, H., 2011, ‘The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women’s Representation of Boards’ (2004-2008), Catalyst. http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/bottomline-corporate-performance-and-womens-representation-boards-20042008*

*Natasha Stott Despoja AM, (21/22/2014). Media release: Launch of Our Watch Grants for sporting community to prevent violence against women and their children in 2015*

*Ausplay Focus Women and Girls Participation* [*https://www.ausport.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0011/665921/34953\_Ausplay\_factsheet\_SODA\_v14.pdf*](https://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/665921/34953_Ausplay_factsheet_SODA_v14.pdf)

*State of Queensland (2013). Start Playing Stay Playing: A plan to increase and enhance sport and active recreation opportunities for women and girls. Retrieved from https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/assets/documents/health/start-playing-stay-playing.pdf*

*Sport and Recreation Services acknowledges the contribution of Associate Professor Clare Hanlon, Institute of Health and Sport, Victoria University to the development of this document.*

## Self-Assessment Checklist

### Organisation name:       Date:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total no. of players |  | No. of female players |  | No. of male players |  |
| Total no. of coaches |  | No. of female coaches |  | No. of male coaches |  |
| Total no. of officials |  | No. of female officials |  | No. of male officials |  |
| Total no. of committee members |  | No. of female committee members |  | No. of male committee members |  |

### Organisational practices

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Policy | Yes | No | N/A |
| Does your organisation have a gender equity policy and implementation plan (e.g. policies identify commitment to equitable access to facilities, services, programs & leadership opportunities)? |  |  |  |
| Do policies, procedures and training exist to discourage and address discrimination, including against females (e.g. appropriate action taken when disparaging remarks are made about a female by members or visitors)? |  |  |  |
| Do policies, procedures and training exist to appropriately provide for minors, including girls? |  |  |  |
| **Operational** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Does your organisation provide a welcoming and supportive environment (e.g. new member welcomed, mentor appointed, female participant coordinator appointed, social events provided)? |  |  |  |
| Is training and support for females encouraged to become qualified instructors, officials, leaders and coaches? |  |  |  |
| Does an implementation plan exist to attract more females to leadership roles? |  |  |  |
| Is membership data, including a breakdown of gender, gathered to identify progression of recruiting and retaining female members? |  |  |  |
| Are coaches and committee members adequately trained, informed or aware of female requirements (e.g. child protection policy, body changes in adolescents)? |  |  |  |
| Have coaches/officials/ and/or committee members undertaken training provided by a [State Level Organisation](http://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/industry-information/contacts/organisations.html) or [Play By The Rules](https://www.playbytherules.net.au/)? |  |  |  |
| **Promotion** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Do images used in publications/ resources appropriately illustrate female participants and leaders (e.g. images to reflect male and females)? |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Are promotional materials appropriate and respectful to all members (e.g. images portrayed of different cultures, ages and abilities and not in a sexual or demeaning way)? |  |  |  |
| Does your club regularly advertise for female members and leaders on social media? |  |  |  |

### Places and spaces

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Overall design and accessibility** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Is signage clear and accurate - identify what the facility is and the organisations that use it? |  |  |  |
| Is adequate lighting evident in appropriate activity spaces, walkways and car parks? |  |  |  |
| Are members and spectators able to leave the venue safely, particularly at night? |  |  |  |
| Is the area/facility easily accessible for people with mobility devices or prams (e.g. uneven ground, steps, gravel, gate widths/slopes modified for easy & safe access)? |  |  |  |
| Do females have equal access as males to amenities, as required (e.g. equal access to social room, change room, official room during respective participation times)? |  |  |  |
| Is the social room welcoming for girls, women and families? |  |  |  |
| Are female change rooms clean and attractive (e.g. light, airy, sanitary bins, lockable cubicles)? |  |  |  |
| Does the carpark present any entrapment sites (e.g. shielded on three sides by barriers such as walls or vegetation & provide for easy concealment)? |  |  |  |
| Is there accessible and safe public transport options (e.g. access to public transport stops are promoted, easy to find, and safe to access)? |  |  |  |
| Is the nearest person within range to hear a call for help (e.g. emergency distress points easily accessible and phone coverage available in case of emergency)? |  |  |  |
| **Umpires/referees/officials rooms** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Does the facility have a space/s for umpires/referees/officials to change and shower? |  |  |  |
| Does this space cater for females and males to use the space concurrently? |  |  |  |
| **Child and baby care facilities** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Are there private baby change / breastfeeding areas? |  |  |  |
| Does this space allow for females and males to use the space concurrently (e.g. private feeding areas available for females)? |  |  |  |
| Are there facilities to heat or refrigerate food or drink items? |  |  |  |
| Is space allocated to park and lock strollers? |  |  |  |

### Programs and Services

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Equal opportunity** | Yes | No | N/A |
| Do females have appropriate and reasonable access to playing surfaces and training schedules (e.g. flexible roster to training and playing times based on their needs, access to all areas of the playing area)? |  |  |  |
| Does a structured process exist for females to provide feedback (e.g. end of season surveys, suggestion boxes)? |  |  |  |
| Are the varied cultural needs of women and girls addressed (e.g. opportunity to wear uniforms or clothing based on what is culturally appropriate)? |  |  |  |
| Is appropriate clothing/uniforms available for female participants (e.g. alternative uniform options available to females to reflect their comfort)? |  |  |  |
| Is equipment provided appropriate for females (e.g. training equipment appropriate to the strength and ability of female participants)? |  |  |  |
| Is learning individualised and encourages and recognises improvement and effort, in addition to ability (e.g. individualised coaching methods)? |  |  |  |
| Are instructional methods used to teach, evaluate and motivate women and girls that emphasise the fun, pleasure and challenge of participation (e.g. focus on health and improvement instead of winning)? |  |  |  |
| Do the playing programs for females include social, less structured pathways? |  |  |  |

# Section 3: Action Plan

## Planning for the Future

Now you have completed the Self-Assessment Checklist the next step is to identify and prioritise opportunities for improvement to your organisation which can be achieved within the next 18 months in an action plan. This is achieved by:

* reviewing the checklist questions with ticks marked in the ‘No’ response
* identifying opportunities for each checklist question marked with a ‘No’ response. This will allow you to identify and prioritise the improvements for your organisation that can be completed in the next 18 months that would improve the likelihood for women and girls to become involved or increase involvement as participants and leaders.
* sharing the load and beside each of these opportunities acknowledge who is responsible from within your organisation, the timeframe, and the stage the improvement is at prior to implementation.

## Additional Support Material

To assist with committing to the improvements it is important to recognise that this is an organisational commitment, embraced by male and female leaders and players. If this commitment is not yet gained your organisation will need to work towards creating an environment that promotes understanding of the need to encourage women and girls for the benefit of the organisation. To further assist with these improvements, the following resources may be of assistance:

* [Female Facilities Program](https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/getinthegame/facilities)
* [Start Playing Stay Playing](https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/health/women-girls/stay-relevant/)
* [Play by the Rules - Gender Inclusion](https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-can-you-do/gender)
* [viaSport British Columbia inclusion information](https://www.viasport.ca/inclusion)
* [AFL Female Football Club Guide](http://www.aflcommunityclub.com.au/fileadmin/user_upload/Play_AFL/Female_Footy/AM_3987_Womens_Football_Club_Guide_D5_lores.pdf)
* [Cricket Australia - Six Steps to Inclusion in our Club/Association](http://community.cricket.com.au/clubs/a-sport-for-all/take-action)
* [Netball Australia - Inclusion Program](https://onenetball.org.au/)
* [Building Active Communities Workshops](https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/volunteers-coaches/workshops)
* Check with [your local council](http://www.dilgp.qld.gov.au/local-government-directory/search-the-local-government-directory.html) regarding any local laws or building codes (if applicable).

## The Plan

The process of implementing gender equity practises into your organisation is an ongoing process. Organisations need to stay abreast of member needs to progress and evolve policies and procedures over time. Providing regular opportunities for consultation and feedback from members is crucial to make sustainable and effective changes. Communication between members and the organisation should be recorded and reviewed regularly, this may also include incident reports relating to gender equity issues, such as reports of discrimination.

The completion of this plan or a similar resource from your peak body is acceptable as part of your Grant Deed requirements. Please contact the Department for confirmation of this resource.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Organisation name:       Date: | | | |
| **Action Plan period:**       to | | | |
| **Organisational practices** | | | |
| **Improvement action** | **Who** | **When** | **Progress / Outcome** |
| Policy |  |  |  |
| e.g. Develop a gender equity policy and implementation plan. | Executive Management Board | April 2018 | Consultation with members has begun |
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| Operational |  |  |  |
| e.g. Appoint a female participant coordinator. | Executive Management Board | May 2018 | Decision approved, Expression of Interest actively promoted |
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| Promotion |  |  |  |
| e.g. Review promotional material to reflect female participants of different cultural backgrounds and abilities having fun. | Marketing manager | June 2018 | Marketing and promotion team is reviewing the resources in consultation with the board and members. |
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| **Programs and services** | | | |
| **Improvement action** | **Who** | **When** | **Progress / Outcome** |
| Equal opportunity |  |  |  |
| e.g. Equal access for females and males to playing surfaces and training schedules. | Timetabling manager | June 2018 | Timetabling manager is currently reviewing the existing timetable. |
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| **Places and spaces** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improvement action | Who | When | Progress / Outcome |
| Overall design and accessibility | | | |
| e.g. Adequate lighting to be inserted in walkways and car park. | President/Council facility manager | May 2018 | Decision to proceed is currently sitting with the board. |
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| Umpires/referees/officials rooms | | | |
| e.g. Update umpires/referees/officials change room so it is gender neutral. | Council facility manager | Next round of SRS funding | Grant application is being finalised with SRS representative. |
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|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Child and baby care facilities | | | |
| e.g. Include baby change room in facility update. | Grants coordinator | Next round of SRS funding | Grant application is being finalised with SRS representative. |
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1. State of Queensland (2013). Start Playing Stay Playing: A summary of the evidence and stakeholder insights into women’s and girls’ participation in sport and active recreation. Retrieved from https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/assets/documents/health/start-playing-stay-playing-appendix.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Victorian Government (November, 2015). Inquiry to Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. Retrieved from http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/201704/Inquiry%20into%20women%20and%20girls%20in%20sport.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. State of Queensland (2013). Start Playing Stay Playing: A summary of the evidence and stakeholder insights into women’s and girls’ participation in sport and active recreation. Retrieved from https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/assets/documents/health/start-playing-stay-playing-appendix.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Carter, N., Wagner, H., 2011, ‘The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women’s Representation of Boards’ (2004-2008), Catalyst. http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/bottomline-corporate-performance-and-womens-representation-boards-20042008 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Smith, A., & Westerbeek, H. (2007). Sport as a Vehicle for Deploying Corporate Social Responsibility. The Journal of Corporate Citizenship, (25), 43-54. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/jcorpciti.25.43 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. *Carter, N., Wagner, H., 2011, ‘The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women’s Representation of Boards’ (2004-2008), Catalyst. http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/bottomline-corporate-performance-and-womens-representation-boards-20042008* [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. *Natasha Stott Despoja AM, (21/22/2014). Media release: Launch of Our Watch Grants for sporting community to prevent violence against women and their children in 2015* [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. *Ausplay Focus Women and Girls Participation* [*https://www.ausport.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0011/665921/34953\_Ausplay\_factsheet\_SODA\_v14.pdf*](https://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/665921/34953_Ausplay_factsheet_SODA_v14.pdf) [↑](#endnote-ref-8)