

Gender equality in sport. It's time to move forward.

In Australia, sport is a big part of our culture. But inequality in sport means that players, clubs, and the community are missing out on the benefits and opportunities that an increased diversity and gender balance can bring.



Inequality in sports participation



Men and boys participate in organised community-based sport at nearly **TWICE THE RATE** of women and girls.ⁱ



Indigenous women have the **LOWEST RATE** of sports participation and women who speak a language other than English at home tend to participate less often on average than other women.ⁱⁱ



Australians with a disability are **SIGNIFICANTLY LESS LIKELY** to participate in sport and/or physical activity (organised or non-organised).ⁱⁱⁱ

Women are also under-represented in organised sports as coaches, officials, leaders and in the media.^{iv}



In 2020, of the 68 funded national sporting organisations, **LESS THAN 13%** had a female CEO, and only 26% had a female chair.^v



Women occupy **ONLY 15%** of elite coaching positions, compared to 41% at a community level.^{vi}



81% of sports news coverage is of men's sport, compared to women's at just **7.4%**.^{viii}



ONLY 10% of sports reporters are women.^{vii}

Disrespect towards women and outdated ideas about gender create inequality in sports participation—and not just for women and girls.^{ix}



Women athletes experience three times more **SOCIAL MEDIA ABUSE** than athletes who are men.^x



More than half of gay, lesbian or bisexual sport participants conceal their sexuality from their team/club and report **FEELING UNWELCOME**.^{xiii}



Gender stereotypes – such as that “girls playing contact sports is unnatural” – contribute to young women **DROPPING OUT OF SPORT**.^{xi}



Men who do not live up to the “masculine” stereotype have reported **FEELING INTIMIDATED** and excluded from sport.^{xii}

The case for change in sport...



Gender equality in sport is what Australians want and expect.

84% OF SPORTS FANS

are interested in women's sports.^{xiv}



89% OF PEOPLE

expect clubs to educate males about appropriate behaviour towards women.^{xv}

Gender equality has significant benefits for sporting organisations.^{xvi}



Promoting gender equality enhances sporting organisations' reputation – and may help to **ATTRACT NEW FANS.**



Attracting women and gender-diverse people to sport as players, volunteers, administrators and fans provides an **OPPORTUNITY TO GROW REVENUE** from sponsorships, advertising, ticket sales and membership fees.



Increasing the representation of women across key leadership roles in an organisation **ADDS MARKET VALUE** of between \$52 and \$70 million, per year, for an average-sized organisation.^{xvii}

It also benefits women, men, gender-diverse people and families.

GIRLS AND WOMEN WHO PLAY SPORTS

have higher levels of confidence and self-esteem, more positive body image and lower levels of depression than girls and women who do not play sport.^{xviii}



Research shows that there is a proven link between **GENDER EQUALITY AND MORE RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

between women and men – in fact, gender equality is key to ending violence against women.^{xix}

ⁱ Eime, R., Young, J., Harvey, J., et al. (2013). [A systematic review of the psychological and social benefits of participation in sport for children and adolescents: informing development of a conceptual model of health through sport](#)

ⁱⁱ Australian Sports Commission (2017). [AusPlay Focus Women and Girls Participation](#), https://changeourgame.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/39012/34953_ausplay_factsheet_soda_access2.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Clearinghouse for sport. [Sport and persons with disability](#).

^{iv} Clearinghouse for Sport. [Women in sport](#).

^v Clearinghouse for Sport. [Women in sport](#).

^{vi} Clearinghouse for Sport. [Women in sport](#).

^{vii} Deakin University. [Sports journalism: One simple way to increase coverage of women's sport](#)

^{viii} Victoria University. [A level playing field: the case for investing in women's sport](#)

^{ix} Government of Western Australia. (2019). [Gender Diversity Case for Change The case for gender-balanced leadership in sport and recreation](#).

^x Plan International. (2019). [Snapshot Analysis: Social media commentary of sportswomen and sportsmen](#)

^{xi} Clearinghouse for sport. [Sexuality and gender perspectives on sports ethics](#)

^{xii} Clearinghouse for sport. [Sexuality and gender perspectives on sports ethics](#)

^{xiii} Clearinghouse for sport. [Sexuality and gender perspectives on sports ethics](#)

^{xiv} Women Sport Australia. [Harnessing the positive momentum for active Australian women](#).

^{xv} Our Watch (2017). [How sport can change the story](#).

^{xvi} Government of Western Australia. (2019). [Gender Diversity Case for Change The case for gender-balanced leadership in sport and recreation](#)

^{xvii} Women's Gender Equality Agency. [Women in leadership](#).

^{xviii} Women's Sports Foundation. [Benefits: Why sports participation for girls and women](#).

^{xix} Our Watch. (2021). [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia](#) (2nd ed.). Our Watch.