

Promoting Inclusion in Your Sports Club

Creating a welcoming, inclusive environment benefits everyone — it strengthens your club, improves member satisfaction, and reflects the diversity of the community you serve.

1. What is Inclusion?

Inclusion means that everyone — regardless of age, gender, cultural background, ability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status — feels welcome, respected, and able to participate fully.

2. Why Inclusion Matters

- **Broader membership base** – attracts more players, volunteers, and supporters.
- **Better performance** – diversity brings fresh ideas and perspectives.
- **Positive reputation** – seen as a community leader.
- **Compliance** – aligns with anti-discrimination laws and sporting body policies.

3. Practical Steps to Promote Inclusion

A. Policies & Leadership

- Develop a clear **Inclusion and Diversity Policy**.
- Ensure leadership reflects the diversity of your community.
- Provide training for coaches, committee members, and volunteers on inclusive practices.

B. Communication

- Use inclusive language in all materials (avoid stereotypes and assumptions).
- Promote club activities through diverse community channels, including cultural groups, disability organisations, and schools.
- Translate key information into multiple languages where appropriate.

C. Facilities & Access

- Ensure venues are **physically accessible** (ramps, accessible toilets, clear signage).
- Offer flexible membership options (e.g., reduced fees, casual participation).
- Schedule activities at times that suit different groups, including families and shift workers.

D. Programs & Participation

- Offer modified programs for beginners, juniors, seniors, and people with disabilities.

- Encourage social as well as competitive participation.
- Partner with local schools, community centres, and disability services.

E. Culture & Behaviour

- Set clear expectations for respectful behaviour.
- Have a simple process for reporting discrimination or harassment.
- Celebrate diversity days (e.g., NAIDOC Week, International Day of People with Disability, Pride Month).

4. Examples of Inclusive Actions

- Running “Come and Try” days for underrepresented groups.
- Having a buddy or mentoring system for new members.
- Providing gender-neutral change rooms or clear privacy options.
- Featuring diverse members in club marketing.

5. Resources

- **Play by the Rules** – www.playbytherules.net.au
- **Sport Australia** – www.sportaus.gov.au
- Local council diversity and inclusion officer.

Remember: Inclusion is not just a policy — it’s a culture that grows when everyone in your club actively welcomes, respects, and supports others. Small actions make a big difference.