

Sport and Recreation Fair Access Policy

June 2024

Responsible Directorate: Community Support
Authorised By: Council
Date of Adoption: 24 June 2024
Review Date: 24 June 2028

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to address known barriers experienced by women and girls and gender diverse people in accessing and using community sports and recreation infrastructure and ensure all groups are provided equal participation opportunities, access and power in sport and recreation.

The Policy aims to progressively build the capacity and capabilities of the City of Boroondara and associated stakeholders in identifying and eliminating systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery and allocation of community sports and recreation infrastructure.

Policy objectives include:

- Participation opportunities are inclusive for all
- There is access to safe facilities and welcoming sport environments
- Diverse representation in leadership and decision making is encouraged
- Resources are distributed in a fair, equitable and transparent manner
- Addressing intersectionality through design and participation
- Eliminating systemic causes of gender inequality and discrimination in sport and recreation services
- Women and girls and gender diverse people will be treated with respect and fairness.

1.2 Scope

The Policy will ensure positive action is taken towards achieving gender equality in access and usage of community sports and recreation infrastructure. Achieving gender equality will require diverse and intersectional approaches from Council, State Sporting Associations, local sports associations and leagues, and local sports and active recreation clubs to achieve similar outcomes for people of all genders.

1.3 Corporate framework

This policy supports Council's Mission and Vision by addressing the following objective(s) in the Council Plan 2021-2031.

Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities, strategic objective of 'community services and facilities are high quality, sustainable, inclusive and strengthen resilience'.

Theme 2: Parks and Green Spaces, strategic objective of 'green and open spaces are provided, well-utilised and enhanced'.

2 Background

The City of Boroondara has developed the Sport and Recreation Fair Access Policy (the Policy) to align with the Fair Access Policy Roadmap and facilitate equitable access and allocation of community sport and recreation infrastructure. The Policy is also intended to help identify and eliminate systemic causes of gender inequality in programming, policies and strategies and to help ensure the equitable distribution of community sports and recreation infrastructure.

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of Boroondara's culture and identity. The sport and active recreation sector provide opportunities for enriching our communities and encouraging participation from a broad range of community members. Establishing inclusive environments is a key part of enabling people from all walks of life to feel comfortable to be part of community sport.

Research shows a gap in both the participation of women and girls and gender diverse people in sport and recreation and an identified gender imbalance in leadership positions across all levels of the Victorian sporting and recreation industry. This is demonstrated by some key statistics:

- Overall, (across all ages) Victorian sport participation rates are higher for males (17%) than females (9%) (VicHealth, 2023)
- Overall, 29% of executive positions and 33% of board positions are held by women in State Sporting Organisations (Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation, 2015)
- 28% of women have considered leaving their club due to inequitable treatment (Change Our Game State of Play Survey, 2022-23)
- Women are 2.5 times more likely to report feeling unwelcome at their sporting club compared to men (Change Our Game State of Play Survey, 2022-23)
- Of people who played community sport, women were less likely than men to agree that club facilities were shared equally (Change Our Game State of Play Survey, 2022-23)
- Many Victorian women and girls don't have access to the best courts or grounds, have facilities of lesser standard, or are relegated to less convenient competition and training times (Change Our Game, 2023)
- LGBTQIA+ young people have lower participation rates in sport and recreation participation and engagement than the wider population (Free To Exist, 2024)
- Approximately 50% of young LGBTQIA+ young people have witnessed or experienced homo/bi/transphobia (Free To Exist, 2024)
- Young LGBTQIA+ people show a higher percentage of participation in competitive sport compared to adults (33.4% compared to 23.4%). Both age groups engagement in competitive sport has decreased (youth 14% decrease and adults 23% decrease) (Free To Exist, 2024).

2.1 Policy context

The Policy responds to the following Federal Government and State Government gender equality legislation and policy and Local Government strategies:

- Australian Government legislation – Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Victorian Government legislation – Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Gender Equality Act 2020
- Victorian Government Policy – Fair Access Policy Roadmap 2022
- Regional Strategic Plan and Policy – Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy 2022-2032
- Council Child Safe Policy and Statement - Child Safe Standards, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Boroondara Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016
- Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013

The Policy provides a consistent platform for the integration of the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, the Local Government Act 2020 and Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

As a defined entity of the Gender Equality Act 2020, Council has been required to conduct Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) on all new policies, programs, communications, and services, including those up for review, which directly and significantly impact the public (Gender Equality Act 2020) since 31 March 2021. The access and use of community sports and recreation infrastructure is an example of a policy that directly and significantly impacts the public.

Key reasons for the Fair Access Policy:

- A need to improve participation for all genders and abilities. To do this a Fair Access Policy is required which focuses on infrastructure, programs and governance
- Overall participation trends show an increase in women and girls' and gender diverse people participating in sport and recreation activities. However, some sport specific trends still indicate low levels of women and girls' and gender diverse people participation. Support is needed to reverse this trend
- Women and girls and gender diverse people continue to face barriers to accessing or participating in sport and active recreation
- Victorian Government mandating all Local Government Authorities to implement a Fair Access Policy to access State Government sport and recreation funding opportunities, effective from 1 July 2024.

- A partnership approach with State Sporting Associations, local sports associations and leagues and local sport and active recreation clubs is important to improve gender equality in sport and active recreation.

3 Methodology

Policy development included a review of current policies and strategies and the completion of a Gender Impact Assessment. Additionally, a participation and facility allocation survey were undertaken by an external consultant.

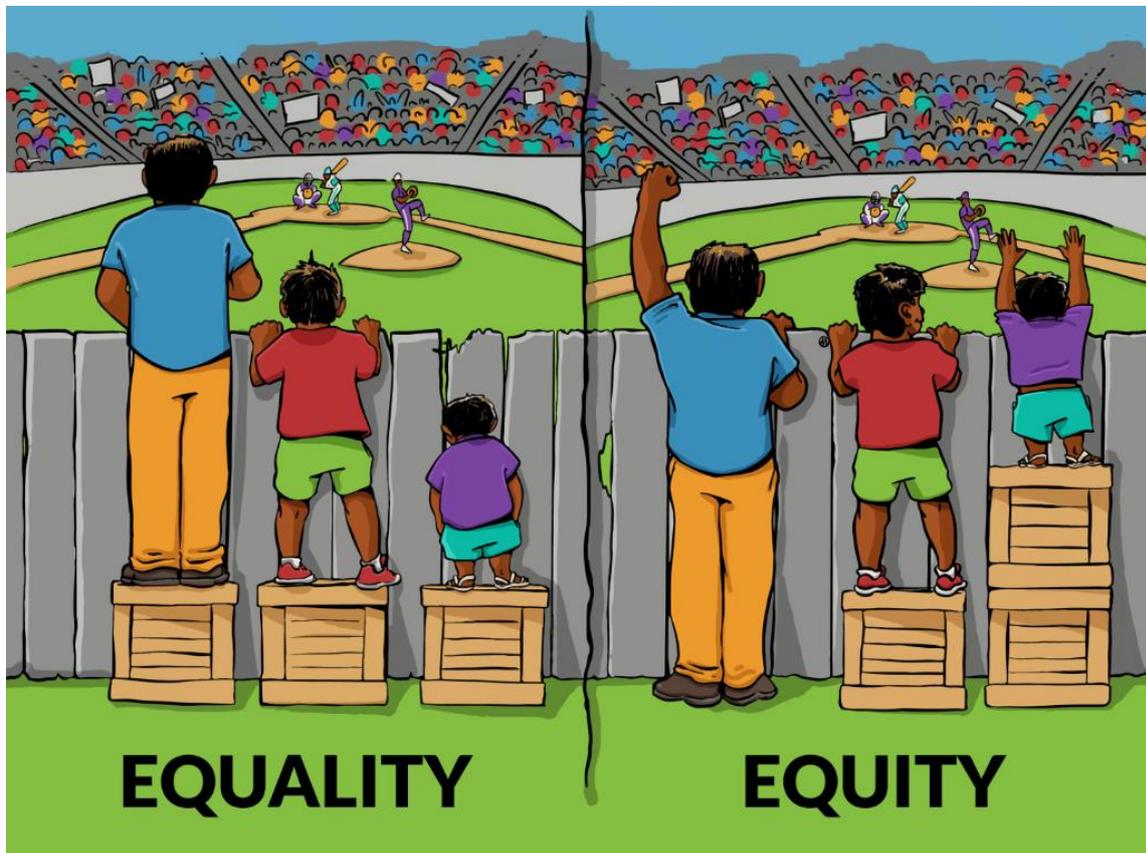
4 Policy statement

The Policy acknowledges the disadvantaged position some individuals have in the sport and recreation sector because of their gender and gender identity. Gender equality should be considered and prioritised in all current and future planning, policy, service delivery and practice related to sport and recreation infrastructure.

The Policy recognises:

- Gender equality is attaining equal rights, responsibilities, results, resources and opportunities for women and girls, men and boys and gender-diverse people. It's recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all. Equality does not mean that women and girls, men and boys and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, results, resources and opportunities will not depend on their gender
- Gender equity is the provision of fairness and justice in distributing benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and powers related to their gender, and these differences should be identified and addressed to rectify gender-related imbalances.

The difference between equality and equity is identified in the image below. *Image source: Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire.*



4.1 Policy principles

The Policy includes six guiding principles, which align closely to the Fair Access Policy Roadmap. These are:

- Principle 1 – Infrastructure
- Principle 2 – Roles in Sport
- Principle 3 – Allocation and Scheduling
- Principle 4 – Leadership
- Principle 5 – Culture and Environment
- Principle 6 – Reward, Celebrate and Prioritise.

Principle 1 – Infrastructure

Community sports and active recreation infrastructure to be genuinely welcoming, safe and inclusive.

Principle 2 – Roles in Sport

Women and girls and gender diverse people to participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation including as a player, coach, committee member, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.

Principle 3 - Allocation and Scheduling

Women and girls and gender diverse people to have fair access to and use of community sport and recreation infrastructure (equal to men and boys) of the highest quality available to each club through a lease or licence, at the most convenient and popular location and times. Allocations and scheduling to support existing and new participation opportunities and sports.

Principle 4 – Leadership

Women and girls and gender diverse people to be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.

Principle 5 – Culture and Environment

Support all user groups who access community sport and active recreation infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices.

Principle 6 – Reward, Celebrate and Prioritise

Reward, celebrate and prioritise access, use and support all user groups who demonstrate ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated infrastructure.

4.2 Evaluation

Assessing current policies and processes has identified opportunities to develop or strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in alignment with the Policy principles. The Policy will be reviewed every four years.

4.3 Accountabilities

For all queries or feedback regarding this policy, please use the contact details for the responsible department below.

Position title	Contact number	Contact department email
Planning and Facility Development Coordinator	9278 4444	sport@boroondara.vic.gov.au

5 References

5.1 Definitions

Include a list of key terms and definitions if required.

Term	Definition
Community Sports Infrastructure	Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state-level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.
Gender	Refers to the way in which a person identifies or expresses their masculine or feminine characteristics. A person's gender identity or gender expression is not always exclusively male or female and may change over time (Australian Human Rights Commission).
Gender Diverse	An umbrella term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people. It can include and is not limited to, people questioning their gender, those who identify as transgender, non-binary, agender (having no gender) and other terms (Government of Victoria, Inclusive Language Guide).
Gender Impact Assessment, or GIA	A requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services which have a direct and significant impact on the public. The assessment must

Term	Definition
	evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.
Intersectionality	Intersectionality is when different aspects of a person’s identity such as disability, race, class, gender, and sexual identity can compound discrimination and disadvantage (Government of Victoria, 2021).
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer and questioning as an inclusive umbrella abbreviation to encompass a range of diverse sexualities, genders and sex characteristics (Government of Victoria, Inclusive Language Guide).