



She moves.
She leads.
She belongs.

Tasmanian Women and Girls
Sport Strategy 2026-2032

Department of State Growth





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Front cover: Taroona Football Club junior players. Image by Jess Oakenfull.

Inside Cover: Phoenix Harrison, Yoga & Pilates Teacher. Image by Jess Oakenfull.



Tasmanian Pepperberry. Image by Natasha Mulhall.

Acknowledgement of Country

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we acknowledge and pay our respects to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the traditional owners of the Land.

We recognise Aboriginal people's continuing connection to Land, Sea, Waterways, Sky and Culture.



Abby Sargent, Hockey player. Image by Jess Oakenfull.



Message from the Minister

All women and girls in Tasmania deserve the opportunity to engage in sport and active recreation in a way that suits them.

Our Tasmanian community is diverse, and we want to support and empower women and girls in all areas of the sporting sector. The Tasmanian Government is committed to identifying and removing barriers to allow equal access and opportunities for all those participating in the sports sector.

The She moves. She leads. She belongs. Women and Girls Sport Strategy 2026-2032 will continue to build strong partnerships and collaborate with State Sporting and Active Recreation Organisations in Tasmania. This Strategy recognises the challenges and opportunities and focuses our attention on a pathway to positive change for the future.

I want to thank all those in the Tasmanian community who have contributed to the strategy and look forward to working with you all to drive a positive future for women and girls in our state.

The Honourable Nick Duigan MLC.

Case for change

Australian research shows that women and girls face a range of barriers and challenges to participating in sport and active recreation. Women's participation has dropped nationally by five per cent from 2020 to 2024.¹ In Tasmania in 2024 statistics show that participation levels for females are slightly lower than those of males. The most significant drop is from age 11 through to 18, with 8.9 per cent fewer girls participating compared to boys.

Women and girls are still drastically underrepresented in sports leadership roles across the Nation. Based on data from 2023, of the 65 National Sporting Organisations, only 14 have female Chief Executive Officers, equating to only 22 per cent². This falls well short of equal representation and meeting gender equity standards.

Data from 2023 on media coverage of women in sport on television, print and online media sits at a mere 15 per cent, with 81 per cent being mens sport³. The visibility of women and girls in sport is vital to encouraging the next generation to get involved and stay involved.

There is a critical need to tackle systematic barriers and instigate change in cultural attitudes and practices in a sports setting. Making sporting clubs and environments safer, more equal, inclusive and respectful will help improve access and participation for women and girls.

Sport has many positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians. It offers the opportunity to develop confidence and leadership skills and build teamwork and resilience. Equal access to sport and active recreation is vital.

Creating spaces and organisations where all women and girls feel safe and valued will help increase women's participation in sport. Building respectful and equal cultures and structures within sports clubs and organisations will help sustain this change and deliver benefits for the whole Tasmanian community.

¹ AusPlay National Data 2024

² Data reported by National Sporting Organisations to the Australian Sports Commission, (accessed 24 April 2023)

³ Representation of Women in Sports News Coverage. *Change our Game*, Victorian Government 2023.



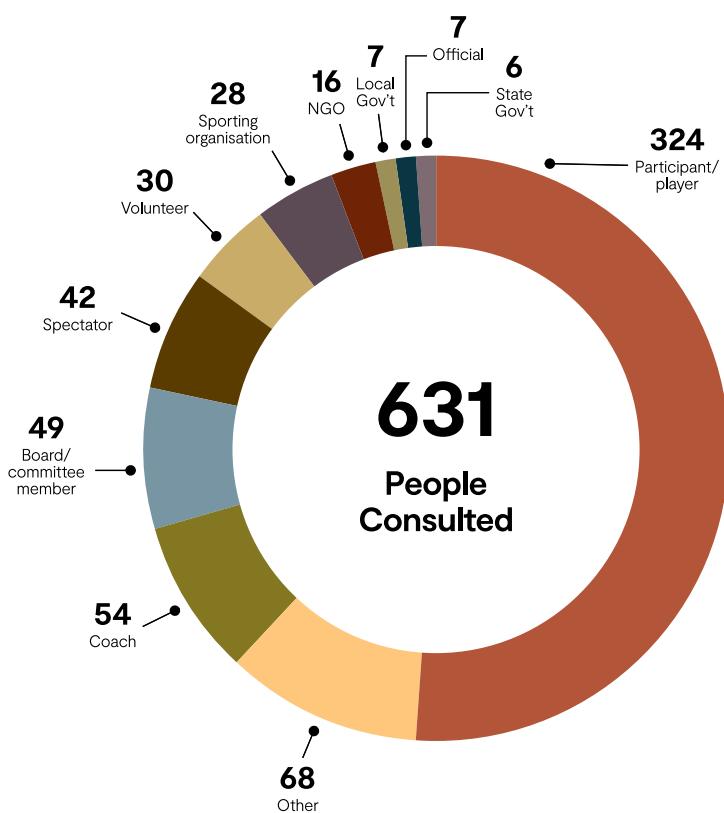
What we heard

Throughout the consultation we heard from over 600 people who shared their feedback to guide the long-term vision for women and girls in sport. These were representatives from across the sport sector, government, non-government organisations and the Tasmanian community.

We received an overwhelming response from the Tasmanian community that participating in sport and active recreation is about building overall physical health and fitness, prioritising fun and enjoyment and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing. Participants shared with us the barriers faced in Tasmania and what is needed to overcome them to boost and maintain women's participation at all levels.

The Tasmanian community is diverse, we need to break down barriers to cater for the wide range of needs and create positive and long-lasting change for all.

As heard by Tasmanians the following areas have been identified that have a broader reach across the strategy. To see positive change in the sporting landscape, this strategy needs to influence culture change, visibility and the overall health and wellbeing of all women and girls in the state.



Culture change

Creating systemic change in social and cultural attitudes and behaviours to achieve gender equality.

Visibility

Promoting equal representation for women and girls in all aspects of sport and active recreation.

Health and wellbeing

Women and girls have equal access and opportunities to maintain and improve their overall health and wellbeing.



Cricket Tasmania Development Program athletes. Image by Jess Oakenfull.

Top needs identified by Tasmanians



Greater visibility of women and girls.



Fair and equal opportunities.



More social/non-competitive options.

Informed by the voices of Tasmanians the consultation highlighted the positive initiatives that already exist to increase participation. This strategy reflects and responds to what we have heard and works for Tasmanian women and girls and continues to build upon the successes already occurring in the sporting community. The Tasmanian Government is committed to continuing to support and facilitate current initiatives and programs that boost participation for women and girls at all levels.



Our vision

Women and girls have equal access and opportunities in sport and active recreation in a safe, inclusive and fun way.

Our priority areas



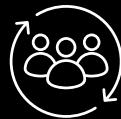
Participation

Women and girls have equal opportunities to be involved and stay active across community, recreational, and elite sport.



Leadership

Women and girls are represented and empowered to undertake and thrive in all leadership roles.



Inclusive environments

Women and girls can access and engage in spaces that prioritise their safety, comfort, and inclusion.

Participation

Women and girls have equal opportunities to be involved and stay active across community, recreational, and elite sport.

Participation in sport and active recreation has proven significant positive outcomes. It offers health and social benefits, develops leadership skills, teamwork, builds resilience, and develops positive values.

Research shows that for females, sport and active recreation are social experiences. This view was echoed in what was heard during community consultations.^{4,5} Tasmanian women participate in sport and active recreation for physical health and fitness, to have fun and for their mental health and wellbeing.

Sport and active recreation organisations must consider the different motivations for women and girls compared to men and boys when planning their sport offerings. Women told us they want more flexible schedules, social and non-competitive choices and a range of cost options. Partnering with schools and other community organisations to utilise current environments that promote positive experiences will help build upon the journey to lifelong sport participation.

Tailoring the sporting experiences offered, and the way in which they are delivered is vital to future participation and retention. It is no longer feasible to rely on a one size fits all approach; it simply does not work.

Sport and active recreation offerings that are more social in nature will help to create a more sustainable model for women and girls participation in sport in Tasmania.

Objectives

1

Increase the number of women and girls playing sport and being physically active.

2

Promote and develop initiatives that help address barriers to participation.

3

Increase sector understanding and education in catering to the needs of women and girls.

⁴ Factors relating to women and girls' participating [retention and dropout] in sport. *Institute for Health and Sport, Victoria University 2023*

⁵ This Girl Can: The Enjoyment Gap. *Sport England 2023*



Leadership

Women and girls are represented and empowered to undertake and thrive in all leadership roles.

Diverse leadership boosts the variety of skills and perspectives an organisation must embrace and draw upon.⁶ This helps potential participants better connect to an organisation, leading to more involvement and positive benefits for women and girls.

The key message we heard from Tasmanians is that 'you can't be what you can't see'. The level of visibility of women on boards, in coaching positions, as mentors and those in other leadership roles is essential. Pathways into leadership roles must be transparent and widely promoted to lift the level of engagement and uptake of women and girls.

Tasmanians not only want to see women and girls represented in leadership roles but also see them thrive. Tasmania has endorsed the National Gender Equity in Sport Governance Policy, which makes it clear that boards must meet gender equity standards. As a state we are committed to increasing training and education for leaders in the sport and active recreation sector. It is essential women and girls feel empowered to influence and create change.

There are already many women and girls in leadership roles around the state who would be valuable mentors for aspiring leaders. Harnessing their knowledge and experience to strengthen the next generation of leaders in Tasmania will ensure our future women leaders.

The sporting and active recreation industry must embed gender equity into their practices for the future of women and girls in our state.

Objectives

1 Increase the number of women and girls in sport leadership roles.	2 Celebrate diverse leaders in Tasmania.	3 Build network/s of aspiring leaders to promote existing and facilitate new leadership pathways for women.	4 Provide education and mentoring opportunities to leaders at all levels of sport.
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⁶ National Gender Equity in Sport Governance Policy. Australian Sports Commission 2024

Holly-Lace Ayton, Taroona Football Club Technical Director & Kit Manager for the Matildas. Image by Jess Oakenfull.



Inclusive environments

Women and girls can access and engage in spaces that prioritise their safety, comfort, and inclusion.

Creating truly inclusive and safe spaces involves more than just the physical environment.

The attitudes and behaviours in an organisation can greatly affect its culture. They influence how inclusive and safe it feels.

Establishing an equal, inclusive and safe culture within an organisation is extremely important for all women and girls. Many women and girls report that feeling unsafe or uncomfortable is a barrier to participation.⁷ We know that by creating welcoming and respectful spaces for sport and active recreation, organisations can attract and retain women and girls as participants.

Women and girls in Tasmania told us that they experienced poor attitudes within organisations and that they lacked supportive and inviting environments. Organisations need to listen to the voices of women to better understand how they can cater for their needs and create more inclusive environments. Acknowledging that women's experiences are impacted differently by ability, age, gender identity, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Sport and active recreation organisations need to consider a wide range of practices to create positive change. These include applying good governance, reviewing policies, gender diverse needs, the experience to and from sporting venues, as well as valuing both women's and men's sport equally.

New infrastructure must cater for women and girls regardless of their role in the sport and all existing facilities need to apply a gendered lens to upgrades and improvements.

Objectives

1

Sporting organisations promote gender equity and challenge stereotypes.

2

Promote and recognise sporting clubs and organisations that are championing cultural change.

3

Ensure a gendered lens is applied to new sporting facilities and upgrades to existing facilities.

⁷ Make Space for Us. *Women in Sport 2022*



Current government initiatives

Initiative	Outcome		
	Participation	Leadership	Inclusive Environments
Women in Sport Stories Lifting the visibility of women and girls in sport and active recreation is crucial in creating a sustainable and positive future in Tasmania. By building and maintaining positive relationships within sporting organisations, clubs and active recreation groups, all women and girls in Tasmania will be able to not only participate but thrive. Some inspiring women and girls in Tasmania are unsung heroes in their local sporting community. By making these individuals and groups visible the aim is to champion the meaningful achievements of Tasmanian women and girls. Their stories are elevated and made visible to the broader community and celebrated.	✓	✓	✓
Gender Inclusive Boards Support State Sporting Organisations and active recreation organisations to meet the targets of equal representation on sporting boards, with a focus on creating gender equitable board cultures. State Sporting Organisations and active recreation organisations adopt Good Governance Principles and develop a sustainable model of positive board culture.	✓		
Active Industry Infrastructure Grants Funding opportunities for organisations to build new or upgrade existing sporting facilities. Projects should provide spaces that are safe, inclusive, accessible, meet present standards and cater for a range of activities.		✓	
Coach and Official Network Providing professional development and networking opportunities for State Sporting Organisations, coaching directors, sport development officers and community sport coaches and officials. The program will support a cohesive, vibrant and inclusive sport and recreation sector and promote the benefits of being physically active. Tailored to focus on the specific needs for women and girls.		✓	



Implementation

An implementation group will be established to help monitor the progress and guide the future work of the strategy and associated action plans.

The action plans that follow the strategy will include ongoing discussion and partnerships with the sport and active recreation sector.

Success will be measured through regular reporting, data collection and analysis and stakeholder consultation based on the objectives for each of the priority areas.

Related strategies and policies

- Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2022-2027, *Equal Means Equal*
- Tasmanian Women on Boards Strategy
- National Gender Equity in Sport Governance Policy
- National Policy Framework for Girls and Women in Sport 2030
- Australia's Sport Participation Strategy – Play Well
- Australia's High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy – Win Well
- Australia's National Sport Strategy, *Sport Horizon*
- Healthy Tasmania Five-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2026



Our definitions

Access

Ensuring all women and girls regardless of background, abilities or circumstances have the opportunity to benefit from physical and recreational activities.

Active Recreation

Activities engaged in for the purpose of relaxation, health and wellbeing or enjoyment, with the primary activity requiring physical exertion, and the primary focus on human activity.

Culture Change

Building shared values, behaviours and practices within the community to move towards gender equality for all.

Gendered Lens

Examining situations, practices, or perspectives with a focus on how gender influences them and how they affect different genders.

Inclusion

Intentional actions and behaviours that create safe and welcoming environments where everyone has a sense of belonging and connection.

Participation

Individuals taking part in a sport or active recreation activity as a competitor, coach, official, board member or volunteer.

Sport

A human activity involving physical exertion and skill as the primary focus of the activity, with elements of competition where rules and patterns of behaviour governing the activity exist formally through organisations and the activity is generally accepted as a sport.



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