

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

2021-2024

- ▶ **Creating lasting change**
- ▶ **Being part of the solution**

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Chief executive's welcome



Tackling inequality is at the heart of our ten-year strategy, *Uniting the Movement*.

Our equality, diversity and inclusion work is intrinsically linked to this strategy – and the role leadership will play in delivering our ambition is therefore critical.

We are, through our words and our actions, creating the climate for change; we are both sponsors and role models for the future we want to build.

This Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan clearly sets out our ambitions as an organisation.

They represent our internal objectives for ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion for the next four years and recognise the principles around these as set out in the Code for Sports Governance.

Our plan aims to be ambitious, in both changing behaviour and making progress.

The plan describes what this means in practice: creating a climate for change, and setting ourselves targets to be more representative of British society today. We'll achieve this by being more self-aware and crucially by attracting, progressing, and retaining diverse talent.

It's hugely important to me that all employees are treated fairly and with respect and can flourish and reach their full potential. This means ensuring we deliver on a wide range of workplace outcomes for staff, around recruitment, progression, and our decision-making processes in relation to roles and structure.

Inequality cannot be tackled by one-off disconnected initiatives – our action plan is therefore intended to translate actions into tangible impact and results.

We'll of course monitor and report on progress annually and remain focused on achieving our goals.

Notwithstanding our equality, diversity and inclusion journey to date, I hope that we've set out an agenda for real change in this new plan. It's a catalyst for change that needs to be understood at every level across the organisation.

These are our equality priorities and everyone in the organisation will play a critical role in achieving them. There's real power in us all working together to make progress: ensuring we 'create lasting change' so that everyone feels valued and can thrive at Sport England.

Tim Hollingsworth

Chief executive

Board champion statement



The publication of Sport England's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan comes at a time of heightened awareness and intensified need to address the inequalities facing our society.

Sport and physical activity must be open and accessible to all and has a fundamental role to play in the nation's physical and mental health.

As well as being Sport England's Board Champion for equality, diversity and inclusion, I'm also a South Asian woman and guardian to my older, disabled brother.

This past year has magnified the disparities people from particular backgrounds face. Even as we return to play, too many people face continued barriers and exclusion from participation in sport and physical activity.

I'm proud to be part of a diverse Board that's committed to enabling long-term, systemic change that'll create more opportunities for more people. This is not just about more people being physically active; it's about creating a representative workforce, ensuring decision-making is driven by diversity of thought, and supporting people to develop and thrive.

If we're to realise the ambitions of Sport England's strategy 'Uniting the Movement', which places tackling inequalities at its core, we must lead by example. This plan is therefore critical to realising our wider ambitions.

Our organisation has made great progress since the publication of our last plan, and staff clearly recognise that inclusive practice is fundamental to organisational success.

But the pursuit of parity internally and externally in sport and physical activity must be constant and relentless. It must be driven at an organisational level and valued at an individual level.

This plan is the culmination of broad consultation. In particular, our employee and equality networks have engaged in valuable discussion and debate.

The issues we face are complex and our approach will need to constantly evolve. Maintaining the checks and challenges of our approach within and outside the organisation are essential to achieving positive and sustainable change.

The challenges we face in sport and physical activity are deeply connected to wider inequalities which we cannot ignore. But we know that sport and physical activity play a powerful role in connecting communities and improving quality of life.

This is not just about fairness: there is an economic imperative to being relevant and representative of the communities we serve.

Rashmi Becker

Board champion for equality, diversity, and inclusion

Section 3

Introduction

We're committed to creating sustainable, lasting change in our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, and our internal Diversity and Inclusion Action plan is our roadmap to making this a reality.

Our plan aims to:

- Be ambitious, in changing our behaviours and ensuring we make progress in advancing equality within Sport England
- Be inclusive in our daily interactions, and decisions, and act as the catalyst to create opportunities that support our employees' career development and progression
- Be measurable and regularly reviewed by our internal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, and our Board and Executive.

Working within the Code for Sports Governance and our own diversity pillars provides us with a framework for our equality, diversity and inclusion actions. This plan details the actions we're taking to further equality in our workplace. It also explains our public sector equality duties, set out in [section 3.2](#).

3.1 Purpose

Our long-term strategy, Uniting the Movement, has a vision to imagine a nation of more equal, inclusive, and connected communities – a country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives. This vision translates into how we want our own employees to feel about their employment and will form the basis of our wider People Strategy (*currently under development*) which will place our values and equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart.

Our goal is to create an inclusive culture where everyone accepts and views as a strength the difference we all bring to Sport England. We want all our employees to thrive as they're our greatest resource and key to the successful implementation of our strategy.

We're setting ourselves ambitious targets around equality, diversity and inclusion as creating a diverse and inclusive workplace is an ongoing journey. We know that our workforce is not as diverse as we would like it to be and we recognise that wider societal issues will impact upon us as an employer.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is our roadmap to delivering these ambitions and takes an internal perspective of our organisation whilst maintaining a critical awareness of our role in modeling inclusive behaviours across the sports and physical activity sector.

Although we've made progress in representation – this isn't enough. We've announced our ambition to attract new, progress and retain existing talent from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups – we're agreeing specific targets, especially at more senior levels in the organisation for ethnic minority representation over the next five years. We aspire to be representative of British society today.

This is not our only goal as we also strive to meaningfully reflect the wider disabled and LGBTQ+ communities.

Our plan is not only about representation – the experience of our employees in the workplace is just as important and we want all our employees to feel included, progress and be supported at work. It's important to us that all voices are welcomed and heard, and we all have shared responsibility for making this a reality.

One of our four values is, *We Are... Inclusive*. This value is paramount in supporting our belief that everyone should have the right to benefit from sport and physical activity regardless of age, background or ability.

In terms of an inclusive culture, we know that by being more inclusive we will make better decisions, be better able to meet the needs of the breadth of audiences we serve and ultimately actively reduce the inequalities present in sport and physical activity.

Our inclusive value echoes what our employees have told us:

- we value diverse perspectives and treat everyone with dignity and respect
- we feel able to share our ideas, and we listen to the voices of others
- we respect each other, always mindful of the impact of our thoughts, words and behaviour.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan encourages our employees and teams to explore our Inclusive value and to understand how we will further support employees to develop the behaviours that are expected of them. Additionally, we expect regular discussion of all our values and this forms a cornerstone of our Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework.

This is not our first diversity action plan and our previous achievements can be found in Appendix 2.

3.2 Our public pledges

Not only does our long-term strategy have a strong commitment to equality, we've made public pledges on how we want to champion equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout our people practices as an employer. These pledges are enshrined through our commitments to:

- the Race at Work Charter
- the Disability Confident Employer Scheme
- the Mindful Employer scheme.

These pledges are more than just plaques on our walls – they provide us with strong frameworks to work within and the guidance to help us make sustained progress and lasting change.

Additionally, we're members of and engage with, a number of overall membership programmes and forums which aid our work in promoting inclusivity and our thinking in areas such as disability and LGBTQ+.

3.3 Our statutory duties

Not only is having equality, diversity and inclusion ambitions the right thing to do, it also complies with our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, our specific Equality Duties as a public body, and other legislation – such as annual Gender Pay Gap reporting and triennial Equal Pay Audits.

As a public body our equality duties mean we must:

- publish our equality objectives
- annually report our progress towards achieving our objectives
- work towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Further details on our statutory obligations can be found in Appendix 4 and these will be built into our annual delivery plans.



3.4 How does the plan work?

Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan articulates our widest ambitions and commitments over a four year period.

It will be accompanied by practical annual plans highlighting specific equality objectives and goals – some of these objectives will be about maintaining our current position while others will be about where we need to make progress if we identify gaps between where we're now and where we want to be in the future.

Our plans will be developed by taking an evidence-based approach to understanding our position on an annual basis through analysing the various forms of data we collect and seeking intelligence on what we could do differently as we move forward.

Our analysis will not only review demographic data but also seek insight into our success in building an inclusive culture. It'll gain the views of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, our trade union and employee networking groups, as well as reviewing the results of our employee engagement surveys.

This in-depth analysis will also enable us to measure and therefore celebrate our success and hold ourselves to account and take remedial action if the pace of our progress slows.

Our plans will be published both internally and externally and we'll report on our progress annually. Communication and engagement with our employees will be key and each annual plan will be supported by a communications and engagement plan.

This is a focused action plan and work around agile working and wellbeing can be found in the relevant parts of the People Strategy. As part of the Race at Work Charter, zero tolerance of harassment and bullying is included – however most debate around this sits within our relationship with our trade union, PCS, and Whitley Council meetings.

Other documents that reflect our ongoing commitment to diversity but fall outside of this plan include our family friendly policies and other matters relating to individual grievances and contracts of employment that have regulatory underpinnings.

3.5 What are the key ambitions for the plan?

The plan is focused upon the delivery of three themes – our equality objectives we've identified as priorities over the next four years across protected characteristics and recognising intersectionality. While we've prioritised these themes, we continue to support areas of work being implemented within our wellbeing priorities, another key area of our People Strategy.

- 1. Leadership, creating and sponsoring a climate for change**
- 2. Attracting, progressing and retaining diverse talent**
- 3. Wider change through employee engagement and learning**



Section 4

Our plan

4.1 Leadership, creating and sponsoring a climate for change

Why is leadership important?

Our leadership team has already strongly signalled a public commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in employment through our external partnerships. Additionally, the integral role of equality within our strategy, Uniting the Movement, demonstrates the leadership team's determination to build and foster an organisation that is truly inclusive of all people and of all backgrounds.

Our team know that diverse organisations can be more effective and that building an environment where everyone, from any background can bring their authentic self to work is simply the right thing to do.

Our leaders understand leadership needs to be seen through the lens of inclusion and makes clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders. Of course, leadership can be found in different parts of the organisation and we all have an immense role in fostering our inclusion efforts.

Finally, having diversity in leadership communicates to staff that there's a pathway to leadership and shows them a concrete example of what it looks like.

How will we support leaders over the next four years?

In our annual delivery plans we will highlight specific actions for the forthcoming 12-months and these actions will centre upon how leadership can get more involved in developing an inclusive culture. Typically, activity will encourage leaders to:

- demonstrate responsibility and sponsorship for diversity, equality and inclusion within their teams, and create local cultures that exhibit inclusion, fairness and respect
- engage with and listen to, the diverse voices within their teams
- engage in learning around the topics of diversity, inclusion and equality
- role model by fully embracing and supporting diversity and inclusion initiatives

- develop their own inclusion goals and support activities that drive the development of our employees to act as a local catalyst for change
- share progress with their teams and celebrate success
- hold team members to account on all equality, diversity and inclusion matters and our Inclusive value through our Coaching and Valuing Performance framework.



4.2 Attracting, progressing and retaining diverse talent

Why is attracting, progressing and retaining diverse talent important?

As previously stated, our strategy has an ambition to attract new and retain existing talent from the Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups. But this is not our only ambition – we want our workforce to reflect all sections of society as we know that this will have positive outcomes for us. To recap our inclusive value, we strongly believe that as a diverse employer we will better understand our sector and the communities we serve. We believe:

- our diverse teams will perform better and will be more able to harness innovation and;
- as a diverse organisation we are more likely to have an engaged workforce that attracts and retains talent.

Our activity in this area will be multifaceted to support both new recruitment and create an inclusive culture to retain and progress talent.

How will we achieve a more diverse talent pool?

In our annual delivery plans we'll highlight specific actions for the forthcoming 12 months and these actions will centre upon how we can attract and retain talent, both internally and externally from under-represented groups.

Positive recruitment practices will continue to be important. These help us to find the right people with the right skills and abilities for the right roles at the right time. Recruitment is a critical activity for Sport England and if we get it right this will drive diversity within our workforce. Typically, activity will include:

- setting targets or goals on an organisational and directorate level and reviewing these annually
- continuing to support and develop inclusive recruitment practices to remove any barriers from employment and encourage under-represented applicants through positive action
- exploring how we can diversify our candidate pool through apprenticeships, mentoring, paid internships and other training opportunities

- reviewing what positive action can be considered to progress and develop talent internally.

Ambitious goal

Having an ambitious goal to be more representative of our wider society will increasingly be important for us. Whereas previously we agreed to seek to improve the diversity of our workforce year-on-year, moving forward, through our plan, we wish to set a clearer, internally focused target for measurable change over a more defined period of time – specifically to ensure a continued focus on the issue of under-representation.

Our ambition:

- is realistic but stretching – given our profile, hiring and turnover trends
- has the visible support of leaders and the wider engagement of all colleagues
- is supported by action plans to deliver the targets and regularly monitored.

How will we retain diverse talent?

If we achieve our ambitions to attract more talent from under-represented groups, it's important that we do not develop a revolving door of talent. To prevent this, we need to focus upon building an inclusive culture and provide progression and developmental opportunities for under-represented groups. Of course, it's important that development is obtainable for all our employees as we want **all our employees** to thrive, grow and enjoy their roles and in so doing deliver our strategy, Uniting the Movement.

In our annual plans, we will focus upon developing an inclusive culture by:

- building a strong onboarding process
- rolling-out initiatives to root out, challenge and eliminate any inequalities in the employee lifecycle
- continuing to support our employee networking groups who help us to amplify diverse voices across our organisation
- through our staff engagement surveys and focus groups continuing to gather data about the culture within our organisation
- continuing to support positive action initiatives to support career development and progression for under-representative groups (such as BITCs Mentoring Circles, our internal Activate Programme and secondments)
- encouraging all our employees to fully reach their potential.



4.3 Wider change through employee engagement and learning

Why is engagement with our colleagues important?

The engagement of colleagues more widely remains important as achieving our goals around diversity and inclusion needs collective action, ownership, and accountability from across the organisation. This is of paramount importance in encouraging our employees to develop the behaviours championed in our value, *We are... Inclusive* and driving forward an inclusive culture.

Additionally, ensuring all our employees have opportunities to learn and grow supports our wider goals to have an engaged workforce which thrives and is happy. Engaged employees tend to be more motivated and productive and are likely to be greater advocates for Sport England and our strategy, Uniting the Movement.

How will we achieve greater engagement in our diversity ambitions?

In our annual delivery plans we'll highlight specific actions for the forthcoming 12-months. These actions will centre upon encouraging our employees to learn more about different topics in this field, use a perspective taking approach and utilise this learning in their everyday working lives. Typical areas of focus will be:

- initiatives to raise awareness of diverse cultures to support colleagues in their roles to deliver our long-term strategy and create a community of learning. Current examples include Be an Active Bystander, raising awareness of the Disability Confidence scheme and other areas
- an annual programme of learning and development opportunities (in-person, remote and via our internal learning and communication platforms)
- encouraging staff to talk about our *We are... Inclusive* value as part of our Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework.

Human Resources and Development Team
July 2021



4.4 How we all have a role to play

Our plan takes an ecosystem approach – this is crucial and involves us all. It's important that everyone in the organisation collaborates within our ecosystem and are committed to living our *We are... Inclusive* value by:

- listening to and welcoming diverse voices
- demonstrating inclusive behaviours and advancing equality and diversity
- championing respect, fairness, and dignity at work
- support learning for everyone enabling them to thrive at work

- valuing relationships with different groups and recognising the intersectionality, each of us have a myriad of identities that overlap and intersect in dynamic ways to gain a deeper understanding of different perspectives.

We believe that there's real power in us all working together making progress to effect change. However, some people have specific roles within our ecosystem.

4.5 The key roles in our inclusive ecosystem

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Chief executive Provides strong purposeful leadership on all equality, diversity and inclusion matters | Board champion equality, diversity and inclusion Represents the views of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group at Board level and conversely the views of the Board to the wider organisation | Chief operating officer Executive with responsibility for all internal equality, diversity and inclusion matters | Strategic lead HR and development Lead for all internal equality, diversity and inclusion matters related to our role as an employer |
| Diversity and inclusion manager Subject matter expert on equality, diversity and inclusion issues relating to our role as an employer | Employee networks Our networking groups amplify diverse voices and engage with colleagues within the ecosystem Allies Visible role models of everyday inclusion, helping to raise awareness, showing support and signposting | Equality, diversity and inclusion in sport director Lead Sport England's over-arching approach to tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity | Executive sponsors – Equality networks and BITC race champion Using their voices to advocate the work that needs to be done |
| The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group The Group has oversight of internal work that we undertake to ensure that it improves equality, diversity and inclusion within Sport England itself. The Group cascade information following each meeting to their directorates | Senior leaders Leaders set expectations, shape group dynamics and role model inclusive behaviours | Line managers Managing diverse teams ensuring fairness in decision making including recruitment decisions and career progression opportunities, project allocation, role modeling and challenging behaviours | PCS (our union) A valuable contributor and partner in achieving our equality, diversity and inclusion agenda |
| All staff Employees play an important role in developing inclusive workplaces, for example, calling out exclusionary behaviour and treating colleagues with fairness and respect | | | |

Appendices



Appendix 1 – Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

– Year One 2021/2022

Equality Ambition 1. Leadership

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|---------|--|
| Leadership, creating and sponsoring a climate for change | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Ensure our leadership team understand their role in driving forward our equality, diversity and inclusion ambitions | Leaders and their teams able to articulate why equality, diversity and inclusion is important and are clear what they need to do in creating a climate for change | HR and working with specialists | Ongoing | Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework Inclusive Leadership Programme |
| 1.2 | As part of the Race at Work Charter individual executive directors to agree measurable inclusion goals | Individual inclusion goals to be agreed as part of the Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework | Chief executive | Jul '21 | Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework Inclusive Leadership Programme |

Equality Ambition 1. Leadership

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|---|---|--|--|---------|--|
| Leadership – Amplifying diverse voices | | | | | |
| 1.3 | Sport England and Network Executive Sponsors to continue to support the Equality Network Groups | Agree individual equality objectives with your Networks | Equality Network Groups | Ongoing | Equality Lead regular updates to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group |
| 1.4 | Launch of a Reverse Mentoring scheme | Pilot scheme to be developed and rolled out | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Sep '21 | Evaluation of the pilot programme |
| 1.5 | Share insight about sponsorship across leadership | Discuss sponsorship at senior leadership team | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Dec '21 | Inclusive Leadership Programme evaluation |
| 1.6 | Define our internal communications approach for equality, diversity and inclusion | Communications plan to be agreed leading to regular updates across the business to include Chief executive, Board and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group work | Internal communications manager / diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Dec '21 | Staff engagement |

Equality Ambition 1. Leadership

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|--|---|--|---|--------------|---|
| Leadership – Creating a culture of fairness and respect | | | | | |
| 1.7 | As part of the Race at Work Charter demonstrable commitment at Board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying | Statement and support for Dignity at Work initiatives to be incorporated into the Dignity at Work and Code of Conduct policies | Chair/Board Champion/ Strategic Lead, HRD | Aug '21 | Staff Engagement Survey |
| 1.8 | Raised awareness of Dignity at Work within Sport England | Refreshed Dignity at Work Advisor programme | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager/Dignity at Work advisors | From Apr '21 | Feedback from Dignity at Work advisors |
| | | Roll out of a Dignity at Work engagement programme (extension of previous initiatives) for line managers | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager/Dignity at Work advisors | From Apr '21 | Staff Engagement Survey Number of complaints |
| 1.9 | Gender Pay Gap Reporting | Leadership specific communications to help raise awareness and transparency of the report | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Dec '21 | Staff engagement |

Equality Ambition 1. Leadership

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1.10 | As part of our Disability Confident Employer Scheme commitments and our work with the Business Disability Forum, to support our work against the key criteria of the scheme | Leadership specific communications to help raise awareness of our aims over the next 12 months | Briefing for the leadership team | From Jul '21 | Staff engagement, increased awareness among line managers and all staff |



Equality Ambition 2. Attracting, Progression and Retaining Diverse Talent

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---------------------|---------|--|
| Attracting Diverse Talent | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Continued support for Sport England's inclusive recruitment practices launched in 2020 | Regularly review the success of current practices in recruiting diverse talent | HR | Ongoing | Half yearly reporting to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group/Board |
| 2.2 | Review the attractiveness of our careers page and the inclusive messages conveyed | Focus group | HR | Sep '21 | Number of diverse applicants |
| 2.3 | Ambitious goal - setting targets by ethnicity and disability over a five-year period | Specific targets agreed with each executive director | HR and directorates | Sep '21 | HR dashboard and reported to Board |

Equality Ambition 2. Attracting, Progression and Retaining Diverse Talent

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|---------|------------------------------|
| Attracting Diverse Talent | | | | | |
| 2.4 | Explore non-traditional routes into Sport England | Explore the creation of an apprenticeship scheme | Strategic lead, HR and directorates | Jun '21 | Approval of proposal |
| 2.5 | Greater transparency of equality data in recruitment | Creation of HR dashboard on recruitment and employee data | HR | Jul '21 | Number of diverse applicants |
| Progression of diverse talent | | | | | |
| 2.6 | Positive action initiatives to develop existing employees and build a talented pipeline from within | External mentoring programmes, secondments, and internally activate programme and work shadowing opportunities | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Ongoing | Evaluations |

Equality Ambition 2. Attracting, Progression and Retaining Diverse Talent

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|---|---|--|--|---------|--|
| Retaining Diverse Talent – Creating an inclusive culture | | | | | |
| 2.7 | Employee experience – we'll never lose sight of our employees' experiences and voice | Through our staff engagement surveys and focus groups we'll continue to gather data about the culture of working within Sport England | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Yearly | Staff Engagement Report by directorate |
| 2.8 | Continued engagement with external partners to support us in becoming an inclusive employer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BITC Race at Work Charter • Stonewall Workplace Equality Index • Disability Confident Scheme and a gap analysis/assessment with the Business Disability Forum • Inclusive Employers | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Ongoing | Annual review |
| 2.9 | Achieve the UK Equality Standard for Sport at an advanced level | Working group to be created | Working group and lead/consultant | Sep '21 | Actions |
| 2.10 | Equal pay | Triennial equal pay audit and annual gender and ethnicity pay gap reporting | HR | Aug '21 | Progress report to Executive and Board |

Equality Ambition 3. Wider employee engagement and learning

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|---|---|--|--|--------------------|--|
| Increasing awareness of diverse cultures and backgrounds | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Continue with equality training for all staff to increase awareness, reduce bias and build inclusive skills | Ongoing rolling training programme promoted | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Yearly | Evaluation forms Staff Engagement Survey |
| 3.2 | Duty to adjust and provide ongoing and anticipatory support | Develop a 'This is Me' passport document for use at Induction and for existing staff (on launch) | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Dec '21 | Staff satisfaction Line manager feedback |
| | Workplace adjustments and comprehensive support in providing an inclusive and barrier free workplace | Line manager communications/ briefings | | | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group feedback |
| 3.3 | Engagement with colleagues through continued support for employee networking groups and allies | Equality Leads quarterly meetings – engage on joint areas of work Allies programme to be provided to all allies | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Ongoing Sep '21 | Membership Evaluation of programme |

Equality Ambition 3. Wider employee engagement and learning

| Goal number | Goal | Action point | By whom | By when | Measured by |
|---|---|---|---|---------------------|--|
| Increasing awareness of diverse cultures and backgrounds | | | | | |
| 3.4 | A programme of engagement/seminars/training on topics around protected characteristics in the workplace led by experts in this field, helping to raise awareness, empathy, change behaviours and support inclusion at Sport England | Existing equality and diversity schedule of training to be reviewed, asking colleagues for their input, and embedded within the wider learning and development schedule of training | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager / learning and development manager | Updated half-yearly | Staff engagement Evaluations |
| 3.5 | On-line equality, diversity and inclusion training Training to be reviewed and benchmarked against new providers | A review sub-group to be set up | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager | Dec '21 | Recommendations to be brought to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group |
| 3.6 | We aim to make educational materials available through SharePoint and encourage personal responsibility for developing knowledge and literacy in diverse topics | Materials to be uploaded in SharePoint in readiness for sharing more widely and increasing visibility. IT to enable permissions, provide support | Diversity, inclusion and wellbeing manager Head of IT | Dec '21 | Staff engagement/ feedback |
| 3.7 | To increase awareness amongst managers on equality related topics | Briefings on recent cases to be added to SharePoint | HR Team | Dec '21 | Line manager feedback |

Appendix 2

Progress since 2017

The Diversity Action Plan 2017–2022 was approved by Executive and Board in December 2017. The plan was developed in line with the Sports Governance Code (a requirement of all Tier 3 Sports Partners) with three overarching objectives:

- **Recruitment** – how the organisation will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates
- **Engagement** – ensuring that our organisation’s commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally
- **Progressing Talent** – a focus on developing a strong internal pipeline of diverse talent.

Each objective had several priorities focussing on either the Board or the wider workforce. A summary of the key achievements is set out below.

Recruitment, how the organisation attracts an increasingly diverse range of candidates

Positive recruitment practices continue to be important. These help us to find the right people with the right skills and the right abilities for the right roles at the right time. Recruitment is a critical activity for Sport England and if we get it right this will drive diversity within our workforce. To attract diverse talent, we must ensure that we remove any barriers that prevent jobseekers viewing us as an attractive destination employer. We’ve taken many steps to improve our employer brand and attraction strategies – in addition to reviewing our recruitment guidance this included:

- improving our careers site and job packs – this includes clear messaging on what diversity and inclusion means to us
- encouraging recruiting managers to ensure that the wording of their job descriptions and adverts are inclusive, free from bias, approachable for candidates outside of sport and in plain English

- encouraging all recruiting managers, and anyone on an interview panel to undertake interview skills training course and ensure a high-quality candidate experience
- extending our advertising reach by advertising our opportunities to new audiences on specialist websites
- using positive action statement sentences as a part of our efforts to reflect a diverse community
- recruiting anonymously via a name-blind recruitment process.

Engagement ensuring our commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally

The engagement of colleagues more widely remains important as achieving our goals around diversity needs collective action, ownership, and accountability from across the organisation. All of what we do is developed in consultation with our network groups and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, and we have in place opportunities for colleagues to learn more about diversity in the workplace and how they can change their behaviour to support our goals. This included:

- Let's Talk about Race sessions run by the Business in the Community
- the incorporation of our values, including *We are... Inclusive*, into our appraisal process
- our staff development plans included diversity training, working with specialists. The training is essential for creating an inclusive ethos and culture, thinking beyond discrimination in its extreme forms to identify and tackle the subtle things that take place in the organisation on a daily basis

- engaging specialists to run sessions on 'Be an Active Bystander' and Tackling Micro-Incivilities and Aggressions
- running raising awareness sessions on unconscious bias for all new employees. This training is part of a robust plan to implement actions and to measure progress.

As part of our wider engagement programmes we continue to demonstrate our commitment to encouraging colleagues to be open about mental health and wellbeing.

In 2019 we launched a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) scheme. Additionally, members of the human resources team have been providing mental health awareness guidance sessions to line managers, a session to support having conversations in the workplace.

We continue to be a member of the Mindful Employer Charter and is a visible display of our commitment. Our focus on well-being has been particularly present due the coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis with a number of surveys and actions being put in place.



There have been a number of internal 'Lunch and Learn' sessions held over Teams for colleagues to hear from and learn about our internal networks. Recent events have been held by Culture Crew (our Black, Asian and minority ethnic group) our disability network STRIDE and our new Women's Network. All were extremely well attended, interactive and prompted good discussion.

We've taken several active steps to improve wider engagement:

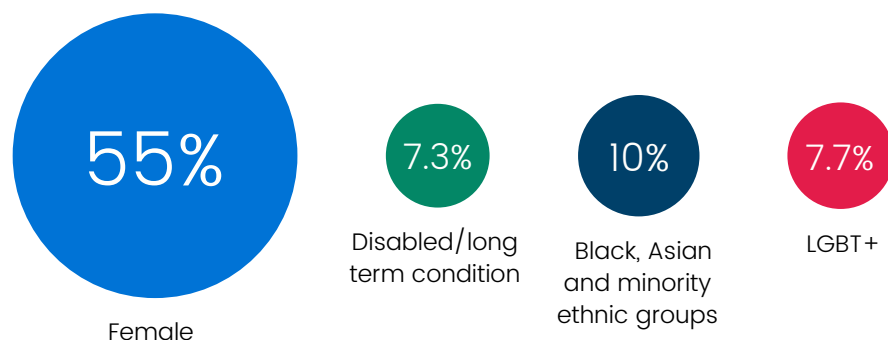
- We offer very generous maternity and shared parental leave pay and return to work coaching for employees returning from maternity leave or shared parental leave.
- We have a separate strand of work around the future flexibility of our workplace, but we do retain colleagues by offering part-time employment or other flexibilities such as career breaks and encouraging shared parental leave.
- To ensure that we have an engaged workforce that thrives it is important for us to eliminate bias in the employee lifecycle. We will be delivering an intervention targeted at strategic leads and above (our key decision makers) that promotes inclusivity and targets bias in employment – this is not solely about recruitment but selection for projects, progression and reward.
- We've a network of Dignity at Work Advisors, trained to provide confidential support to individuals who may be experiencing difficulties relating to harassment and/or bullying and have appointed a Race at Work Champion, a member of our Executive team.
- Mental Health First Aiders who provide additional support for mental health at work and help reduce the stigma that still exists. We appointed a Mental Health Champion, a member of our Executive Team.
- We've a strong public commitment to diversity in employment through our partnership with the BITC (Business in the Community) and our memberships of Stonewall, the Business Disability Forum for Employers and our Disability Confident Employer and Mindful Employer commitments.
- During the period we introduced a new Equality Policy, reviewed our Dignity at Work Policy and have in place Transgender Guidelines.
- Our Equality Committee meets quarterly and members are responsible for cascading information about discussions within their teams. Board receive half-yearly reports on our equality, diversity and inclusion work.

Progressing Talent – A focus on developing a strong internal pipeline of diverse talent

We've positive action initiatives to support career development such as mentoring circles through Business in The Community (BITC) and an extension to our Activate programme supporting career development for our more junior colleagues.

Appendix 3: Staff composition

We prioritise and collect good quality people data to assess the make-up of our workforce and our Board, assisting us to identify barriers and solutions. The data is at 28 February 2021. Our data focuses on four protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act: race (referred to ethnic group), disability (referred to disabled/long term conditions), sex (referred to gender) and sexual orientation (referred to LGBT+).

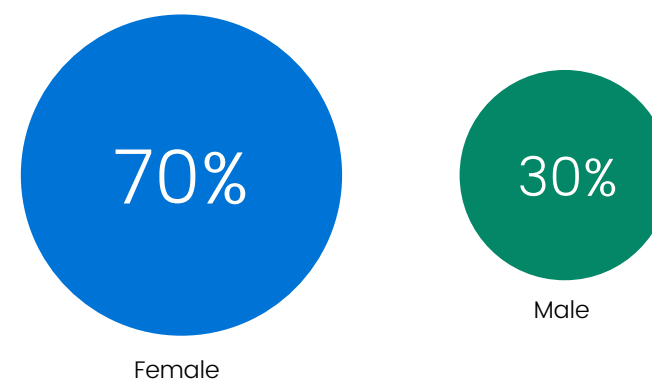


Our Executive Team

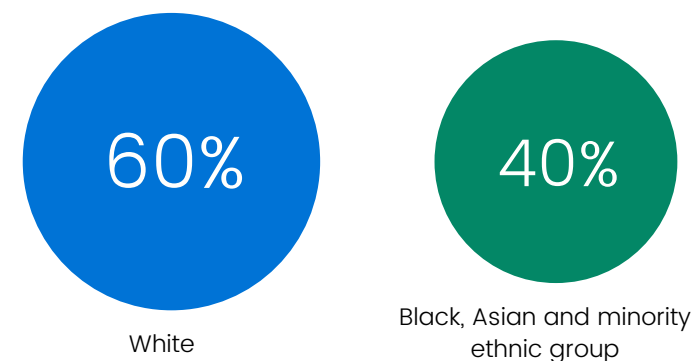
Our Executive Team comprises of eight members. As numbers are less than 10, Sport England is unable to report diversity breakdown due to General Data Protection Regulations (Information Commission Code of Practice).

Our Board

Gender

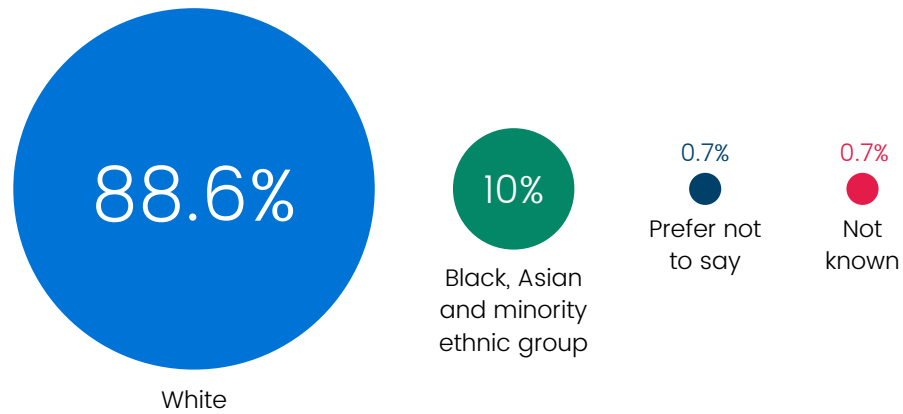


Ethnic group

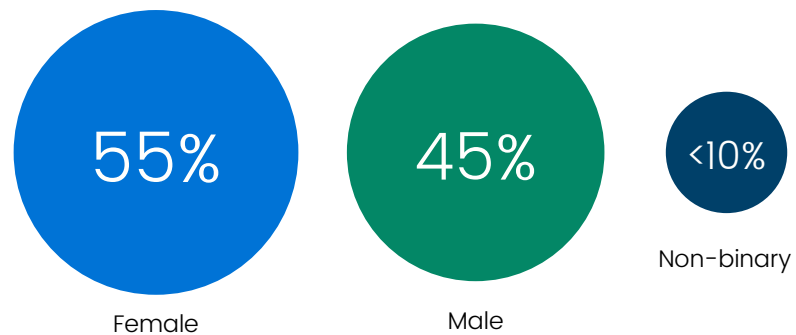


Employees

Ethnic group



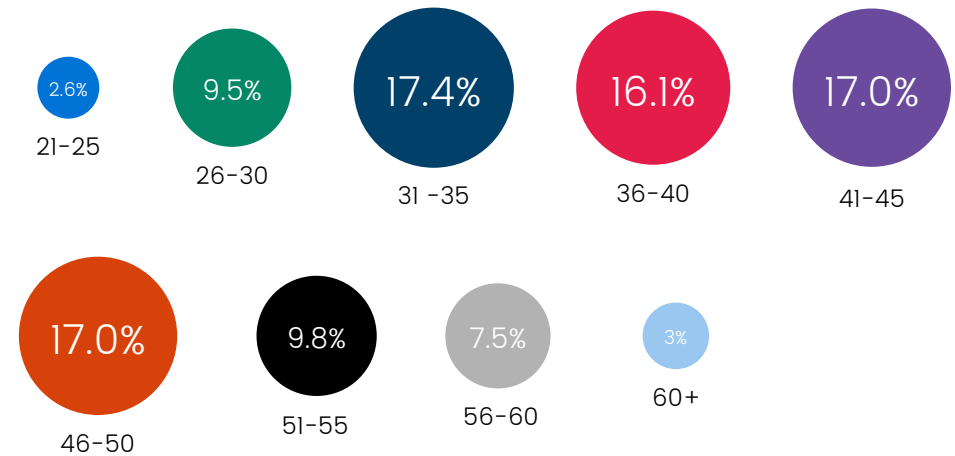
Gender*



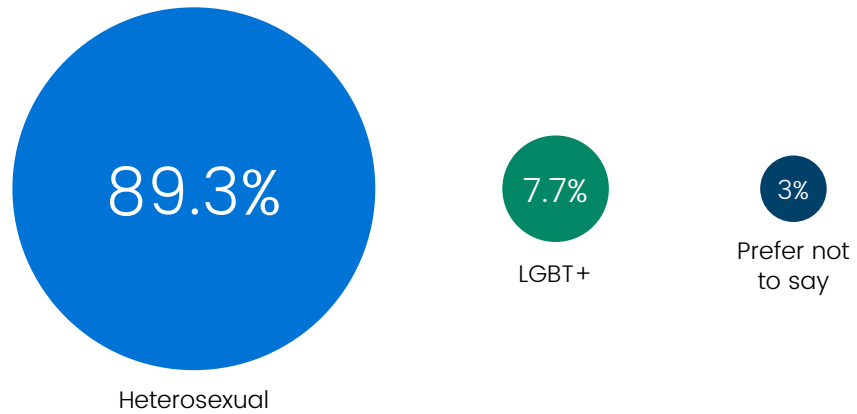
*GDPR rules applied

Age range

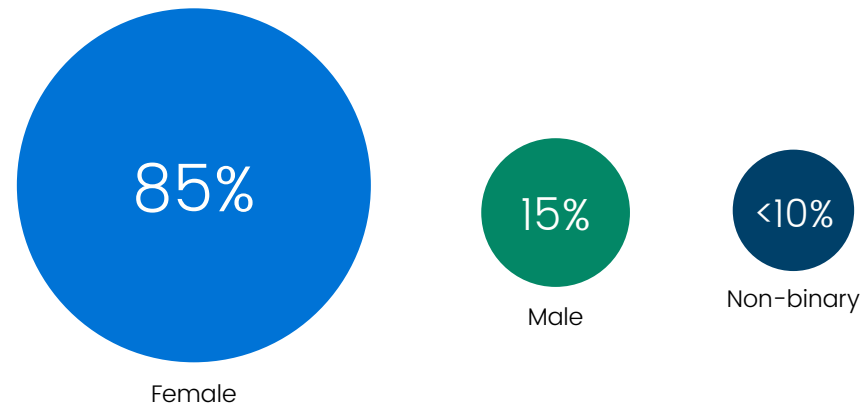
Two thirds of the organisation are aged between 31-50.



Sexual orientation

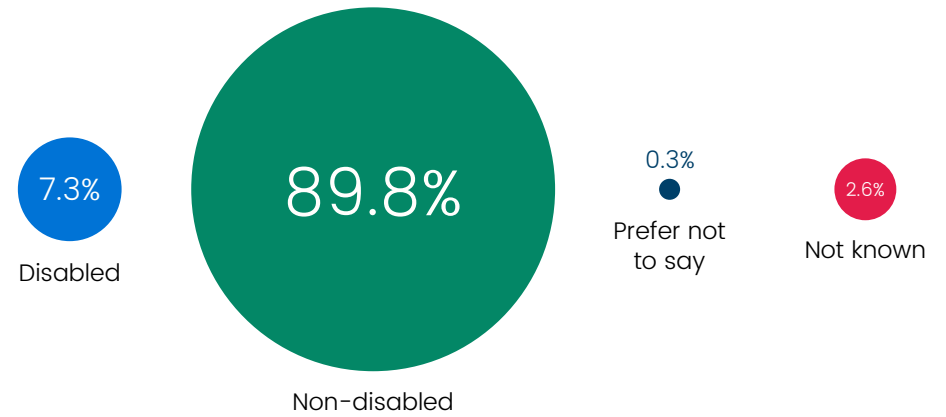


Part-time employees*



*GDPR rules applied

Disabled and long-term conditions



Appendix 4

Statutory responsibilities

Sport England has statutory responsibilities (Public Sector Equality Duties, Gender Pay Gap reporting, Equal Pay Audits, Equality Act and guidance from the Civil Service Commission).

Equality Act 2010

Sport England complies with equality law and implements good practice in all aspects of employment including recruitment, pay, working hours, managing staff and developing policies.

www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-guidance#hl

Public Sector Equality Duties

Sport England is a public sector organisation and has Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities across all our functions giving due regard to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- specific Equality Duties are met through the publication of this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and through our Annual Report.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting and Equal Pay

Sport England publish details of our approach to reward externally through our Equal Pay Audits and Gender Pay Gap reporting.

www.sportengland.org/corporate-information/equality-and-diversity

Our Equal Pay Audits take place every other year and the Gender Pay Gap Report is reported annually, based on a snapshot of 31st March of the preceding year.

Guidance from the Civil Service Commission

It is a requirement of the [Constitutional Reform and Governance Act](#) that selection for recruitment to the Civil Service must be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition <https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/recruitment/>

Appendix 5

Our Accreditations



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network





Sport England
1st Floor
21 Bloomsbury Street
London WC1B 3HF

[sportengland.org](https://www.sportengland.org)

July 2021