



**England
Rugby**

**DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION ACTION PLAN
2017 – 2021**

ABOUT US

The Rugby Football Union is the national governing body for grassroots and elite rugby in England, with 2,000 autonomous rugby clubs in its membership. The clubs are grouped within 35 Constituent Bodies (CBs), comprised of counties, the three armed forces, and universities and other educational bodies.

In 2017 we launched a new Strategic Plan where we outlined our priorities, ambitions and how we will go about delivering them.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to encourage rugby, and its values, to flourish across England.

OUR VISION

By the end of the 2017-21 Strategic Plan, our aim is to be:

- England's strongest sport underpinned by good governance and regulation, with the financial strength to maintain and increase investment in the game to drive elite performance and community participation.
- The world's leading rugby nation, with the best teams in the world at all levels delivering the best rugby events and competitions in the global calendar.

OUR VALUES

Rugby in England is built upon five core values:

Teamwork

Teamwork is essential to our sport. We welcome all new team members and include all because working as a team enriches our lives. We play selflessly: working for the team, not for ourselves alone, both on and off the field. We take pride in our team, rely on one another and understand that each player has a part to play. We speak out if our team or sport is threatened by inappropriate words or actions.

Respect

Mutual respect forms the basis of our sport. We hold in high esteem our sport, its values and traditions and earn the respect of others in the way we behave. We respect our match officials and accept their decisions. We respect opposition players and supporters. We value our coaches and those who run our clubs and treat clubhouses with consideration.

Enjoyment

Enjoyment is the reason we play and support rugby union. We encourage players to enjoy training and playing. We use our sport to adopt a healthy lifestyle and build life skills. We safeguard our young players and help them have fun. We enjoy being part of a team and part of the rugby family.

Discipline

Strong discipline underpins our sport. We ensure that our sport is one of controlled physical endeavour and that we are honest and fair. We obey the laws of the game which ensure an inclusive and exciting global sport. We support our disciplinary system, which protects our sport and upholds its values. We observe the sport's laws and regulations and report serious breaches.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is the foundation upon which rugby union is built. We uphold the rugby tradition of camaraderie with teammates and opposition. We observe fair play both on and off the pitch and are generous in victory and dignified in defeat. We play to win but not at all costs and recognise both endeavour and achievement. We ensure that the wellbeing and development of individual players is central to all rugby activity.

These values, set down after consultation across the entire game in England, are the foundation that rugby is built upon. They are embedded in the work that we do throughout the game.

Message from Our Chair

In our latest strategic plan, the RFU sets out its vision to make rugby:

"England's strongest sport, underpinned by good governance and regulation...to drive elite performance and community participation"

To deliver this vision the RFU understands it needs to increase both the quantity and the diversity of the people involved in the game. Greater diversity and inclusion will provide us with a deeper pool from which to draw our players, supporters and volunteers. It will provide more breadth of opinion and experience in the discussions and decision making that takes place across our game and it will help build the reputation and appeal of the game as one that truly reflects the nature of the society in which we live. Culturally, this should not be hard for rugby to do. The game has always been open and inclusive, and rugby clubs are welcoming and friendly places. This is in large part due to the nature of the game itself which requires an unusually wide variety of body shapes to make up the different positions in a team. We now need to expand our understanding of the value of diversity beyond simply the physical.

The RFU has committed to comply with the Sport England Governance code with a minimum of 30% of each gender represented on the Board of Directors with an aim to achieve closer gender parity in the future. Our near term ambitions though go further than this, with our strategic plan setting out a number of aspirations regarding diversity and inclusion that go across the game. These are:

- *"to engage, utilise and recognise diverse talent and skills at all levels across the game with a focus on volunteers in our Constituent Bodies and clubs."*
- *"to encourage and embrace diversity within the game and the RFU to better reflect and connect with the Nation."*
- *"to establish an inclusive culture to attract top talent from all backgrounds."*

We will deliver these aspirations in three ways.

First, we will develop and execute plans aimed at driving up the diversity of those who are involved in playing the game. We are proud to see female playing numbers standing at record levels today but our strategic

plan calls for a doubling of that number to 50,000 by 2021. We will also accelerate plans to engage more ethnically diverse populations in the game, building on learnings gained from a number of early pilots we have been running in this area.

Second, we will seek to create a more inclusive professional workforce within the RFU. Steps to achieve this are set out in this action plan.

Third, we will seek to create a more inclusive and diverse environment in the volunteer decision making structures that operate across the game, including our Council, Constituent bodies and clubs. Our first step in achieving this goal has been the creation of a new Diversity and Inclusion working group chaired by an independent senior HR professional. This group will work with internal stakeholders and external bodies to benchmark our current position and identify strategies for meeting, and becoming, best practice in this area.

We believe that rugby is a significant force for good in this country, with values underpinning the game that have never been more relevant. With a clear focus on diversity and inclusion we believe our game can benefit many more people from all parts of our society going forward. This is our purpose and why the RFU exists.

Andy Cosslett, Chair of the RFU Board of Directors

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Recruitment</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">How the organisation will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates</p>	Code for Sports Governance					
<p>Objective: Establish an inclusive culture to attract top talent from all backgrounds</p>	<p>Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGBT and socio-economic)</p>	<p>Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1</p>	<p>The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)</p>	<p>The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2</p>
			✓	✓		
Priorities	Actions		Person(s) Responsible		Completion Date	
<p>Short Term:</p> <p>RFU employees: Take immediate steps to ensure vacancies are communicated widely</p> <p>Volunteers: Conduct audit of committees and sub-committees to assess current make-up</p> <p>Co-opt to council an individual with specific Diversity and Inclusion responsibility</p>	<p>Audit extent to which current job advertisements contain wording around diversity and inclusion, ensure best practice wording is included, and that where appropriate, they are advertised in a wide range of places to attract a diverse range of applicants (e.g. mydiversity.com or equalapproach.com).</p> <p>Council Nominations Committee to identify and propose individuals and work with chairs to find spaces within committees.</p> <p>Identify individual and make co-option</p>		<p>RFU HR Department, Council Nominations Committee, chairs of standing committees and sub-committees</p> <p>President, Chief Executive and Chair of the Board</p> <p>RFU Legal and Governance Department, Council</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>31 December 2017</p> <p>29 September 2017 (complete)</p>	

<p>Medium Term:</p> <p>RFU employees: Implement recommendations of EY National Equality Standard</p> <p>Volunteers: Populating sub-committees</p>	<p>Implement appropriate recommendations in agreed timeframes</p> <p>Use data from audit of sub-committees to populate sub-committees with appropriate targets set by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group from 2018/19 season.</p>	<p>RFU HR Department</p> <p>Council Nominations Committee, chairs of standing committees and sub-committees</p>	<p>Ongoing, as required</p> <p>1 August 2018</p>
<p>Long Term:</p> <p>Board representation</p> <p>Representation on committees and sub-committees</p>	<p>At least 30% of each gender will be represented on the Board by 2020.</p> <p>Implement any recommendations of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group which relate to recruitment</p>	<p>RFU Board and Council</p> <p>RFU Board and Council</p>	<p>1 August 2020</p> <p>1 August 2020 or as recommended by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>

Engagement	Code for Sports Governance					
	Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGB&T and socio-economic)	Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1	The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)	The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2
Objective: Encourage and embrace diversity within the game and the RFU to better reflect and connect with the nation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Priorities	Actions		Person(s) Responsible		Completion Date	
<p>Short Term: RFU Board and Council to adopt a target of 30% of each gender on its Board.</p> <p>Communication of action plan.</p> <p>RFU Board to receive diversity and inclusion awareness presentation.</p> <p>Establish Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>	<p>Resolutions to be passed at Board and Council.</p> <p>This action plan and agreed targets to be communicated as appropriate.</p> <p>External provider to deliver session to RFU Board at January Board meeting.</p> <p>Terms of Reference of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group approved by RFU Council, which will make recommendations as to medium and long term actions.</p>	<p>RFU Legal and Governance Department</p> <p>RFU Communications team</p> <p>RFU HR Department; chair of the Board</p> <p>RFU Legal and Governance Department</p>	<p>19 July 2017 (complete)</p> <p>1 December 2017</p> <p>1 November 2017</p> <p>29 September 2017 (complete)</p>			
<p>Medium Term: RFU Board and Council to receive diversity and inclusion awareness education</p>	<p>External provider to deliver session to Board and Council</p>	<p>RFU HR Department</p>	<p>1 August 2018</p>			

<p>Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to establish best practice and RFU's position in relation to this.</p>	<p>Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to engage with relevant stakeholders to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. review best practice in diversity and inclusion, as it relates to organisational governance, from sport, community organisations and business. 2. benchmark existing RFU, CB and club provision against agreed best practice. 3. recommend an agreed RFU position on diversity and inclusion across leadership and governance in the game – where are we now and where do we aspire to be in 2020 	<p>RFU HR Department, chair of the Board, RFU President Chair of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>	<p>1 August 2018</p>
<p>Long Term: Implement appropriate actions.</p>	<p>Implement recommendations of the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, and make changes</p>	<p>Multiple stakeholders, including RFU Board, Council and Executive</p>	<p>1 August 2020 or as recommended by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>

<h2>Progressing talent from Within</h2> <p>A focus on developing a strong internal pipeline of diverse talent to populate decision making and other structures.</p>	Code for Sports Governance				
	Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGBT and socio-economic)	Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1	The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)
<p>Objective: Engage, utilise and recognise diverse talent and skills at all levels across the game, with a focus on volunteers in our Constituent Bodies and clubs</p>				✓	
Priorities	Actions		Person(s) Responsible		Completion Date
<p>Short Term:</p> <p>RFU employees: Undertake EY's National Equality Standard</p> <p>Volunteers: Invest in Leadership in Union programme</p>	<p>Undertake this standard to inform diversity and inclusion strategy and action plan for employees</p> <p>Maintain investment in and focus on Leadership in Union programme, a custom made leadership programme (currently delivered by Ashridge Executive Education). Maintain target of 30% female representation on programme (and revisit target as appropriate).</p>		<p>RFU HR Department</p> <p>RFU Rugby Development Director</p>		<p>30 June 2018</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Medium Term:</p> <p>RFU employees: Organisation-wide diversity and inclusion training</p> <p>Volunteers:</p>	<p>Undertake organisation-wide diversity and inclusion training as informed by EY's National Equality Standard</p>		<p>RFU HR Department</p>		<p>Ongoing, but by 1 August 2019</p>

<p>Continue to invest in National Youth Council</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to establish best practice and RFU's position in relation to this.</p>	<p>Continue to invest in National Youth Council and ensure their representation within committees and sub-committees</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to engage with relevant stakeholders to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. review best practice in diversity and inclusion, as it relates to organisational governance, from sport, community organisations and business. 2. benchmark existing RFU, CB and club provision against agreed best practice. 3. recommend an agreed RFU position on diversity and inclusion across leadership and governance in the game – where are we now and where do we aspire to be in 2020 	<p>Council Nominations Committee, Rugby Development Department</p> <p>Chair of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>1 August 2018</p>
<p>Long Term:</p> <p>Implement appropriate actions.</p>	<p>Implement recommendations of the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, and continue to implement recommendations from EY National Equality Standard, and appropriate make changes</p>	<p>Multiple stakeholders, including RFU Board, Council and Executive</p>	<p>1 August 2020 or as recommended by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</p>

Key Questions

How does this feed into our broader governance plan?

These strategies are integral to the RFU's 2017-21 Strategic Plan which puts good governance at the heart of its work. The objectives set out in this action plan are set out clearly within the Strategic Plan.

Who are the key people responsible for the delivery of this plan?

Everyone will have a part to play in delivering this plan, but foremost among them will be the Rugby Development Director, HR Director, Chair of the Board and Chief Executive.

How will we measure overall success?

There are a number of metrics which can be used to measure success, including recruitment metrics, attrition data, gender pay gap information, employee survey results as well as the demographic make up of the Council, Board and employees. Success will not only be measured by reference to target groups, but to create a truly inclusive environment where all can succeed and enjoy.

Our measures of success will go beyond measuring people; with greater diversity and inclusion will come better decision-making, wider engagement across the country and a more diverse range of role models within the game.

How does your Diversity Action Plan (DAP) cross-reference other parts of the code or other relevant equality or diversity monitoring standards/framework?

We see this as central to the work of the RFU as its governing body. We will seek to provide the most appropriate way of monitoring and reporting. This Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually).