

# IMPROVING ACCESS TO SPORT FOR ALL PEOPLE

RESOURCE PACK FOR  
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY  
SPORT CLUBS



This program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services

# USEFUL RESOURCES

THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES COMPRISE GUIDES, CHECKLISTS, TIPS AND CASE STUDIES TO ASSIST DEVELOP INCLUSIVE SPORT ENVIRONMENTS

## NATIONAL INCLUSIVE RESOURCES

- Clearinghouse for Sport: [Persons with Disability and Sport](#)
- Sport Australia: [Inclusive Sport](#)
- Play by the Rules: [Inclusion of People with Disability](#)
- Disability Sport Australia: [Changing Lives Through Sport](#)
- Sport Inclusion Australia: [Community Inclusion Through Sport](#)
- International Olympic Committee: [New IOC guidelines to ensure gender-equal, fair and inclusive representation in sport in Tokyo](#)
- Amnesty International: [How to be an anti-racism-ally](#)
- Disability Sport and Recreation: [Seeing capability before disability](#)  
(full document attached, after the Outback Academy “tips for creating a welcoming and inclusive CSO Environment”)

## SAMPLE STATE INCLUSIVE RESOURCES

- VIC Sport: [Participation People with Disability](#)
- QLD Government: [For Coaches and Clubs](#)
- WA Government: [Including People with Disability in Sport & Recreation](#)
- TAS Disability Getaway: [Tas Competitive and Recreational Sports](#)
- ACT Sport and Recreation: [Participants with a Disability](#)
- NSW: [Her Sport Her Way | NSW Government](#)

## SAMPLE CHAMPIONS OF DISABILITY

- GingerCloud Foundation: [Modified Rugby Program](#)
- Bowls QLD: [Disability Bowls](#)
- Gymnastics Australia: [GymAbility](#)



# RED DUST HEELERS

## CHECKLIST FOR AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY SPORTS ORGANISATION

The Red Dust Heelers (the Heelers) are Aboriginal and other athletes with disability. Some of us are Paralympians. We co-design and deliver community engagement programs with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across Australia. We focus on awareness raising about the ability of people with disability, and increasing inclusion in sport, education and employment for young people with disability. We've been doing this since 2013.

Our lived experience of disability guides the work we do, and our relationships with Outback Academy Australia Cultural Advisors and the ACCOs we work with in various communities. We know the valuable role grassroots Community Sports Organisations (CSOs) and schools can play in encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to have a go at sport. These are a few of our tips.



[Red Dust Heelers and the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service](#)  
[Heal and Hoops Community Engagement Program, Broome 151021](#)

Watch us at work [here](#) and [here](#)



# OUR TIPS FOR CREATING A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE CSO ENVIRONMENT.

1. Be courageous. You may make mistakes. Be prepared to listen and learn
2. Remember Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people come from different cultural, family backgrounds, and life experiences – avoid making assumptions
3. Reach out to local Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), for support. ACCOs may have staff whose role is to support healthy lifestyles, youth, cultural education, social connections, and NDIS. They may be able to support the education journey for your CSO and connect you to community members
4. Remember, disability is viewed differently within different cultural groups, and even families. The word disability may not be used at all – avoid assumptions
5. See the whole person, their disability is one part of who they are. Let the person lead the discussion around disability and what they choose to share or not share. Get to know their interests and goals with sport and other areas of their life, and how the CSO may be able to support
6. Make sure new members have the gear they need, equipment, and support to travel to training and competition– this may be a challenge for some families. Do this discretely for all Club members
7. Always follow through. Aboriginal people have often experienced promises without follow through. Don't commit to something you cannot follow through on
8. Coaches and others should avoid shaming language and behaviours such as yelling, punishment and negative criticism. Positive and accurate feedback is more inclusive
9. Remember the lived experience for many Aboriginal people in towns and missions was exclusion and judgment, so shame is a very real fear
10. Have the two flags, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed at sport venues. We travel with both



**11. Celebrate Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week in your Club. There are many ways you can do this. You'll also find useful information here for [Reconciliation Week](#) and [NAIDOC Week](#)**

**12. On International Day of People with Disability and other special events arrange a Welcome to Country (an Elder from Country) or an Acknowledgement of Country (can be done by an Elder who is off-Country and/or Senior Person at the Club before starting the event)**

**13. Be ready for the young person, get to know them. Make reasonable adjustments to accommodate what they may need to feel safe in your sport environment. For example, be able to join with a friend, have a peer, a mentor**

**14. Make reasonable adjustments for disability. Listen to Brydi Saul speaking about not being able to participate in dancing, but in contrast Anika Coppin-Foley speaking about her cricket coach getting her to bat and someone else to run for her. [Watch here](#)**

**15. Get creative. Young people, coaches and others may enjoy hearing from Aboriginal Paralympians and other athletes. Create times for this to happen. For example, Indigenous Games could be run during Reconciliation Week for all Club members. Your Club could also visit with community members with guidance from an ACCO.**



Most of all aim to have some fun. The sports experience needs to be one where people feel they belong, are respected, welcome, and valued. This is what will make the biggest difference in attracting and keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with disability, and other young Australians with disability and their families to your Club.

You can learn more through listening to Aboriginal women speaking about their experiences at [Play by the Rules](#).

**Note:** If you don't know who your local ACCO is, and/or you just want to get some informal advice, let us know and we may be able to make that connection for you.

Email the Red Dust Heelers, Leadership Team at:  
[info@outbackacademy.org.au](mailto:info@outbackacademy.org.au)



# Seeing capability before disability

**A guide for employers in  
sport to attract and retain  
women with disability.**

[www.dsr.org.au](http://www.dsr.org.au)

**DISABILITY SPORT  
& RECREATION**



“ The employment participation rate of people with disability aged 15-64 years has remained stable since 2015 at 53.4%. In contrast the employment participation rate of people without disability has increased to 84.1%. ”

Australian Bureau of Statistics  
(2018) Disability, Ageing and Carers,  
Australia: Summary of Findings



# Do you know?

In general, the benefits of employing people with disability, compared to people without disability, include:

## Higher rates of retention

97% of employees remain with the same employer<sup>1,2</sup>

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## Higher rates of productivity

94% of employees' productivity is higher<sup>1,2</sup>

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## Higher rates of achievement

99% of employers report achievement of desired outcomes<sup>1,2</sup>



- Improved attendance<sup>1</sup>
- Fewer occupational health and safety incidents<sup>1</sup>
- Increased employee and customer loyalty to organisations that demonstrate they value diversity and inclusion<sup>3</sup>

“ I want to be there because I'm making a meaningful difference and because I'm a part of the team. Not to be on the outer of the team to make up a quota. ”

## Also...

The social and economic benefits of employing women with disability in sport and recreation organisations include:

- Demonstrating your organisation values an inclusive and diverse workplace culture and environment.
- Giving representation to the voices of women and girls and helping to eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence-supportive attitudes.
- Increasing the participation capacity for women and girls in an activity or club, both on and off the field.
- Contributing to good governance, leadership and decision-making.
- Demonstrating your organisation's enhanced social responsibility.

**“ They’ve always said if there’s anything that you need to help you with access, or if there’s anything we need to implement in place, just let us know. ”**

# Because this is important, funding is available.

Free workplace assessments and funding to help employers purchase work-related modifications and equipment are available through the Employment Assistance Fund.

## **The Employment Assistance Fund can help employers (and employees) to cover the cost of:**

- Adjustments to a physical workplace.
- Modifications to work vehicles.
- Special equipment for the workplace.
- Information and communication devices.
- Auslan interpreting services.
- Specialist services for employees with specific learning disorders and mental health conditions.
- Disability awareness training for the workplace (including deafness awareness).
- Mental health awareness and first aid training.

**“ At every stage they said, let us know if you need any adjustments. And they didn't even know that I had a disability, but they still asked me... So that made me feel comfortable. ”**

“ Working-age women with disabilities who are in the labour force are half as likely to find full-time employment (20%) as men with disabilities (42%); twice as likely to be in part-time employment (24%) as men with disabilities (12%); and regardless of full-time or part-time status, are likely to be in lower paid jobs than men with disabilities.<sup>8</sup> ”



## Be the leader.

Leadership that drives sustainable strategies is needed before a sport and recreation organisation can develop practices to employ women with disability.

Find out what will attract and retain women with disability as employees.

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Adopt sustainable practices to build a diverse and inclusive workplace.

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Provide accessible and inclusive pathways for women with disability.

“ I think it's that two-fold situation where there's that lack of understanding coming (from employers) and then that makes an individual more tentative and less confident with actually putting their voice forward. ”

**See the  
capability  
before the  
disability.**

# Meet Yasmina McGlone

**Yasmina, or Yas as she prefers, is a shining example of how a woman with disability, given the opportunity, can grow her confidence and skills while bringing wide-ranging benefits to her workplace.**

Yas initially approached the Richmond Football Club seeking support for a student placement. The skills she revealed during that placement resulted in the Club offering her casual employment. The benefits the Club has gained from employing Yas are wide-ranging. Aside from her day-to-day tasks, Yas advised the Club on their internal Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that has been instrumental in bringing the perspective of people with disability into the organisation.

Having Yas as an employee has resulted in staff being more engaged with people with disability in the community and now sees an increase in staff volunteering for disability training and programs.



“ Internally, it demystified what having disability can look like. I think we all carry stereotypes in our mind, and with Yas being who she is - very friendly open and willing to engage - has really broken down a few barriers with our staff. ”

See Appendix 6 for more about Yas and her work at the Richmond Football Club.

“ ...the way she engaged with the community... I think if any one of us would have done that it would have been a very different type of engagement, and I don't know if it would have been as successful. I think because the families turned up and met Yas they felt the genuineness of it. And some of those kids had seen Yas play footy in the wheelchair team. ”

Rana Hussain,  
Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator,  
Richmond Football Club



## On your mark...

Sport and recreation organisations looking to remove structural or systemic discrimination in their recruitment and employment processes, and provide the right to equitable employment, can sometimes find it difficult to know where to start.

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This guide has been created to support managers to put practices in place that attract and retain women with disability as employees and leaders in the sport and recreation sector.

It complements existing resources which are available, while linking readers to industry initiatives that support recruitment, development and retention of employees with disability.

“ Significantly fewer women than men are leaders in the sport. It is expected even fewer women with disability are leaders in this industry. ”

# Get set...

Try not to jump the gun because there are a few considerations that need to be incorporated before an organisation is in a position to employ a woman with disability.

## Understand the different types of disability

Some people are born with disability, while others may acquire disability through, for example, a workplace incident or motor vehicle accident. In Victoria alone, over one million people live with disability.<sup>4</sup>

See Appendix 1: Four types of disability<sup>5</sup>

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## Get commitment from management

It is important that your organisation is committed to building an inclusive and diverse workplace culture from the beginning. This is likely to mean an upfront, open and wide-ranging internal discussion about the realities of employing someone with disability.

See Appendix 2: Management commitment

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## Know where to find the appropriate resources

There are several state and national resources that focus on the employment of people with disability, some of which also specifically address the unique aspect of the needs of women with disability and of sporting organisations.

See Appendix 3: Resources

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## Learn the recruitment process for women with disability

When you are looking to employ a person with disability, you need to consider all aspects of the recruitment process including advertising, interviewing, induction, training and placement within a team.

See Appendix 4: The recruitment process

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## Retain women with disability in your workforce

You are more likely to retain employees with disability by providing ongoing support. This can range from appointing a mentor, to providing car parking, lift or ramp access and simply asking what will help them to achieve their tasks.

See Appendix 5: Retaining women in your workforce

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# GO!

**Sporting organisations looking to employ women with disability need to take a long-term view and a well-considered approach.**

While ultimately rewarding, building a diverse and inclusive workplace culture and environment will take time, be a learning process and present some challenges.

However, sport and recreation organisations have a duty to remove structural and systemic discrimination in their recruitment and employment processes and provide the right to equitable employment.

“ I will take in more out of a meeting than anybody else will, because I'm used to listening. I can read three times as fast as anyone who's sighted, because I listened to a robot and have done since I was five. There are so many wins that you can have by employing someone with a disability, if you can just get over the fact that you're employing someone with a disability. ”

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# See the capability before the disability.

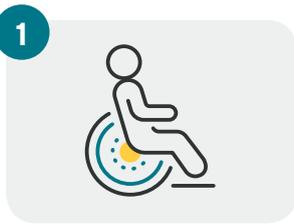
“(Diversity) is what I want to see when I’m walking into an organisation. If I’m not seeing it, then I’m probably not feeling that welcome.”



## Appendix 1: Four types of disability

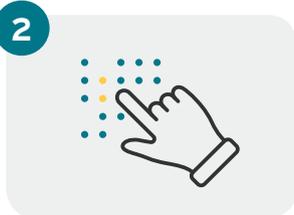
Over one million people in Victoria live with disability.<sup>4</sup> Some people are born with disability, however many acquire disability. For example, a workplace incident may result in a person acquiring disability. There is a strong relationship between age and disability; as people grow older, there is a greater tendency to develop conditions which cause disability.<sup>6</sup>

### Four types of disabilities are evident:<sup>5</sup>



#### 1 Physical

May affect, either temporarily or permanently, a person's physical capacity and/or mobility.



#### 2 Sensory

A disability of the senses e.g. sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste.



#### 3 Intellectual

May process information more slowly, find communication and daily living skills difficult and also have difficulty with abstract concepts such as money and time.



#### 4 Mental illness

A general term that refers to a group of illnesses that significantly affects how a person feels, thinks, behaves, and interacts with other people.

It is important to remember that people with disability may experience multiple forms of disability. For example, some women interviewed spoke about living with more "recognisable" disabilities such as visual impairments as well as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) or Fibromyalgia among other examples.

**“ Communication is key. There is a line of thought that you shouldn't have to disclose your disability. I prefer to disclose my disability and say, please ask me questions. ”**

## Appendix 2: Management commitment

It is important to build an inclusive work environment for all employees, not just those with disability, by making sure that flexibility, mentoring and career opportunities are available to all employees.

In particular, for people with disability, attention needs to be made to existing policies (for example, fire safety) and practices (for example, use of closed captioning on videos; ask questions like 'How can we make this facility easily accessible for you?') that may need adjustment to ensure equitable outcomes.

It is important that your organisation builds an inclusive and diverse workplace culture from the beginning.

Before encouraging women with disability to apply for a role in your organisation, it is appropriate to have an upfront, internal conversation about the realities of employing someone with disability.

### Topics to be covered could include:

- What are the benefits to our organisation of employing a woman with disability? (See pages 2-3)
- What needs to be addressed to make sure our organisation is an inclusive and accessible environment for someone with disability?
- What resources do we have available to address these needs and who can be the support person/mentor?
- What extra resources are needed (from management internally or other organisations externally) to improve the inclusivity and diversity of our workplace?
- How can we make our communications accessible?  
For more information, visit the [media access website](#).

### Some outcomes of this process may include:

- Providing unconscious bias training for the workplace, with teams discussing results together. For example, visit SCOPE e-learning resources.
- Encouraging your staff to talk about a friend or relative with disability and their employment situation as an awareness-raising exercise.
- Providing leadership training for management to develop the skills necessary to manage a diverse and inclusive organisation.

## Appendix 3: Resources

Resources to develop inclusive policies and practices for people with disability in your organisation are readily available, including:

### [Disability Reasonable Adjustment Policy Template](#)

To help organisations, when required, to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace to meet the needs of current or potential staff member with disability. A template for the design of a Disability Reasonable Adjustment Policy is available.

### [Disability Inclusion Action Plan Template](#)

An action plan is recommended to make sure goods, services, workplaces, premises and facilities are accessible and inclusive to people with disability. The action plan template acknowledges the commitment of an organisation that extends beyond compliance, to break down attitudinal, physical, communication and social barriers and makes sure the organisation will comply with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

### [Employer Toolkit](#)

The toolkit provides resources to create a fair and equitable workplace, covering support services; attracting the best talent; obligations; and inclusive team management.

### [Employment Assistance Fund](#)

Free workplace assessments and funding for employers to purchase work-related modifications and equipment, Auslan services and workplace assistance and support services.

### [Women with Disabilities](#)

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is run by women with disabilities, for women with disabilities. WWDA's work is grounded in a human rights-based format which links gender and disability issues to a full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

### [Change Our Game Recruitment and Retention Guidelines](#)

To assist community sport and recreation organisations increase the number of women and girls in leadership roles the Change Our Game Recruitment and Retention Guidelines are available.

## Appendix 4: Learning the recruitment process

While the steps taken within the recruitment process are the same - advertising, interviewing, induction, training and placement within a team - there are a number of changes to the approach which should be considered when looking to recruit an employee with disability.

### Advertising

The process for designing an advertisement that encourages women with disability to apply includes:

#### Job description

- Written in clear, plain English with minimal complicated language
- Focuses on outlining the tasks that will need to be achieved rather than the ways a person with disability can do the work. For example: many people with disability may not have a driving license, but still be able to complete the tasks required.
- Include a statement such as: “people with disability are strongly encouraged to apply”.
- Include a statement of commitment to disability employment. An example may be: “[Insert organisation] is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Employer.”
- Provide contact details of the National Relay Service to encourage candidates who are deaf or have hearing or speech impairment.
- Identify if the role is flexible and job share is an option.
- To assist with the design of, and advertising your job, refer to the [Job Access resource toolkit](#).

#### Job advertisement

Make sure job advertisements are easily accessible and promoted free of charge through organisations such as:

- [Disability Sport & Recreation](#)
- [Disability Employment Australia](#)
- [Job Access](#)

“If I feel (a lack of inclusivity), usually what’s happened is that the organisation hasn’t received any deaf awareness training, they haven’t gone through that process, so when I approach people to ask questions, they’ll just brush me off, send me on my way, and that’s really hurtful. If a team have had deaf awareness training and they understand what it means to be inclusive, then it’s great, I won’t face any barriers. They’ll approach me with an open mind.”

## Appendix 4: Learning the recruitment process

(continued)

### Alternative formats

In your job description, provide a contact email and phone number so the applicant can contact your organisation if they need to submit their application in an alternative format.

### Recruiting women with disability in the sport and recreation industry

We recommend you establish and actively promote a specialised disability recruitment pathway including:

- A process where managers can identify positions, on an ad hoc basis, that can be filled by women with disability.
- Identify positions that will give women the best chance of success based on their skill set.
- Advertise job vacancies through disability job support networks including [Disability Employment Australia](#).
- Partner with community sector organisations who have expertise in supporting people with disability to help recruit candidates. For example, [WISE Employment](#).
- Partner with [Disability Employment Services](#) (DES) to identify candidates on their list that suit your advertised role.

### Using the National Relay Service

Make an internet relay call	<a href="https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au/">https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au/</a>
Make a captioned relay call	<a href="https://captioned-relay.nrscall.gov.au/index2.asp">https://captioned-relay.nrscall.gov.au/index2.asp</a>
Speak and listen number	1300 555 727
Teletypewriter (TTY) number	133 677
SMS relay number	0423 677 767

## Appendix 4: Learning the recruitment process

(continued)

### Interviewing people with disability

People with disability can be hesitant to disclose their disability for fear of judgement. We recommend that you ask all applicants before their interview whether they require adjustments or help to participate. If you require applications to be submitted online, you could include a section where applicants can list any adjustments they need to be able to successfully undertake the role.

When you interview the candidate, be disability aware by asking questions that address the requirements of the job. We recommend behavioural questions framed around the job requirements such as “describe your experience...” and “tell me about a time when...”. To work out what questions you can ask a person about their disability, refer to the [Australian Network on Disability’s resource Interviewing people with a disability](#).

### The process

Many employers may not need to change their current interview process, however, to make sure you have a proactive approach, it is important to be aware of the following:<sup>7</sup>

- To help a candidate feel confident and welcome, your awareness must begin the moment you let a candidate know that she has an interview.
- Self-confidence, particularly for women, can be a major barrier. One strategy to alleviate this is to connect with a phone call to set an interview time and remind the candidate that their application was well presented.



“ If I’m attending a job interview, and I get an email ‘do you have any accessibility requirements?’ That makes me feel a lot more comfortable. They are aware of it and they’re starting to think about accessibility already. ”

## Appendix 4: Learning the recruitment process

(continued)

- When scheduling interviews, be mindful that some people with disability may need support to get to an interview. People with disability often need to be up earlier than most people to prepare for their day. Ask candidates what their preferred interview time is to make sure their potential accessibility and support needs are considered.
- A candidate with one type of disability may require different adjustments to information than another person with disability. For example, a candidate who has difficulty hearing may prefer to receive information by text or email instead of a phone call.
- To create a welcoming and positive experience, keep information clear and simple. Clearly outline public transport and other travel options to the interview location, including where to go when they arrive.
- Educate staff who conduct interviews to be aware of their unconscious biases by providing training, tools and information required to overcome these. For example, consider engaging a woman with disability to improve your organisation's understanding of accessibility and sensitivity towards disability. This lived experience should in turn be valued through appropriate remuneration.
- Wherever possible, make sure diversity is represented on your interview panel.
- Some candidates, with certain support needs, may prefer to receive interview questions in advance. For example, we recommend that people with intellectual disabilities, including delayed processing, are given interview questions in advance to help them prepare and feel comfortable in a challenging and unfamiliar environment.
- During the interview, give candidates the opportunity to talk about their disability and any associated needs (such as accessibility or additional support). People with disability generally welcome questions from a potential employer, to ensure clear communication and avoid or negate negative assumptions.
- Consider changing the physical setting of the interview to create a welcoming, non-threatening environment.
- If a candidate with disability is unsuccessful, give them feedback to help them improve their skills and have a greater chance of success in future interviews.

You can find more information about how to conduct an interview and selection process in the [Job Access Employment Toolkit](#).

## Appendix 5: Retaining women with disability in your workforce

### Induction and training

- Conduct a free workplace assessment through the [Employment Assistance Fund](#).
- Give your new employee as much pre-employment support as possible to help them successfully adjust to the workplace. [Job Access](#) has helpful resources on induction and training. It is important you make sure your management are aware of potential stressors that may arise for a person with disability. It is worth asking your new employee what level of disclosure they are comfortable with. For example, is there a need to share with their colleagues how to manage the conditions of their disability? If so, to what extent?
- If your organisation has employed a woman who is registered with a DES provider, you will be able to access extra support including pre-employment and on-the-job training and workplace preparation support.
- Contact your new employee a few days before her first day to give her the opportunity to ask questions.
- On your new employee's first day, undertake an induction where she can meet management and her team and tour the workplace. During this time, support her with identifying the logistics of getting to work and preparing herself for a regular work-day.
- Your organisation should regularly review its employment documents and the process of filling them out. Make sure forms are easy to read and complete. Refer to [Job Access Employer Toolkit](#) for templates.
- Arrange for a professional support worker if required.

### Prepare the team who will be working with the new employee

- Give your management and host teams information and guidance that will empower them to confidently welcome a new colleague with disability into their team. For example, use inclusive language and conduct unconscious bias/disability awareness training.
- Give structured pre-placement training to management and host teams and create an [Employment Support Plan](#) which can be adapted to the needs of your new staff member.
- Brief department staff such as payroll, IT, learning and development to make sure they prepare tailored support. Refer to [Job Access Disability and Adjustment](#).

## Appendix 5: Retaining women with disability in your workforce

(continued)

### Supporting a woman with disability

- As a host manager, conduct an ongoing conversation - for example a monthly check-in - with your new employee, as conditions may change over the course of her employment.
- Choose colleagues, who have the right qualities, to be a supportive mentor or buddy to your new employee. Make sure they check in a number of times during the first week and regularly during the next couple of weeks.
- Ask your new employee what she needs to do her job - she is the expert on what supports she needs. This will avoid any presumptions and help her reach goals that will enhance her work.
- You should also familiarise yourself with potential resource adjustments and the funding sources available to make these adjustments. It's important to recognise that requests for adjustments are common practice for employees with disability. Once resource adjustments are identified, adjustments should be made quickly.
- Make sure your workplace is accessible by providing appropriate resources and accessible facilities (for example, parking, lifts, ramps, availability of interpreters and access to other resources such as live captioning and deaf awareness training). Talk about whether ICT and adaptive technology or software, such as screen readers, are needed.
- As with your other employees, provide flexible working arrangements to help women with family responsibilities.
- Be aware that there is potential for difficulties to arise, as with any employee. Examples that may present specific barriers for women with disability include restructure of an organisation, changes to their role, changes to the physical location of work, automatisation of tasks and changes in management or other support staff. It is important to consult with employees in advance of any anticipated changes and talk about how to best manage them.

## Appendix 5: Retaining women with disability in your workforce

(continued)

### Strengthen leadership opportunities

- Encourage women with disability in your workplace to apply for leadership positions. Acknowledge any constraints they may face and work together to identify how to overcome them. It is worth noting that women may not apply or express an interest in leadership roles due to fear of judgement or experiences of discrimination.
- Train and educate your staff about the benefits of having a diverse leadership team, including women with disability.
- Recognise that women with disability will bring valuable and unique skills.
- Provide targeted professional development, such as training to further the leadership potential, skills and knowledge of women with disability in your workplace. You should strive to understand the aspirations of these women and facilitate opportunities for them to progress towards their goals.
- Provide other pathways to leadership opportunities such as mentoring, networking, grant programs and internships.
- Celebrate and promote women with disability who are role-models and leaders in your community.
- If you employ women with disability via quotas or other targeted recruitment strategies, make sure they are not assigned to 'token' positions. Women with disability desire, and should have, the same potential for meaningful engagement as others in leadership.
- Make sure you don't give women with disability the diversity and inclusion portfolio by default or make them a 'figurehead' for your organisation's status as an affirmative employer.

“ Mentors are a great, you learn from them, from their personal experience. If a deaf person wanted [a leadership] role, then having a mentor is going to help them get there. You're going to be able to become like your mentor. You need that within an organisation. ”

“ Professional development is really important. We understand the statistics of how challenging it is to get women, people with disabilities, ethnic and all minorities groups, to step through the hoops. It is key to provide opportunity for development that really encourages self-confidence and self-empowerment so we can take that next step. ”



## Appendix 6: Case study – Richmond Football Club

When Yasmina McGlone (Yas) approached the Richmond Football Club (Tigers) for support with her student placement, they were more than happy to accommodate.

Not only because Yas was well known at the club as the only female player in their wheelchair football team, but as Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator Rana Hussain explains:

“For us it was really important to have someone like Yas around because up until that point we hadn’t really had staff members who had a disability, and seeing as we were starting to work more in that space it seemed an important decision to have somebody who could give us the lived experience, and another lens over the work we’re doing.”

Yas’ skills shone through during her placement. As a result, the Tigers offered Yas a casual employment role to fit in with her other employment role in the community sector. When asked what skill sets Yas possessed which were attractive to the club, Rana was quick to point them out.

“She’s a go getter! I hate that phrase but I don’t know how else to describe her. She has initiative, gets things done and fits in... she’s a great support for me.”

While Yas’ disability did not require any physical adjustments to the office environment, open communication between her and Rana made sure any role adjustments were made as required; such as emailing new clients rather than phoning them. This approach helped Yas feel more welcome and included within the organisation.

To expand Yas’ career development, the Tigers encouraged her to attend meetings with Rana in order to gain exposure to a broader range of operational tasks and expand her networks. In addition, the Tigers supported Yas in gaining external roles including being involved in the development of a local government Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and the AFL’s Disability Action Plan.

The benefits the club has gained from employing Yas are wide-ranging. Aside from her day-to-day tasks, Yas advised the club on their internal Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that has been instrumental in bringing the perspective of people with disability into the organisation and has been the connection between the wheelchair team and the club. Yas also led the pilot program with children with disability in the Tigers annual kid’s clinic which according to Rana was a huge success.

**“ The openness and the communication, and I think as well, they weren’t trying to get me to fit into a specific role. They really wanted it to be a role that would fit and suit me as well. They could see that I could contribute. ”**

## Appendix 6: Case study – Richmond Football Club

(continued)

“...the way she engaged with the community...I think if any one of us would have done that it would have been a very different type of engagement, and I don't know if it would have been as successful. I think because the families turned up and met Yas they felt the genuineness of it. And some of those kids had seen Yas play footy in the wheelchair team.”

Rana also points out that having Yas as an employee has resulted in staff being more engaged with people with disability in the community and staff now volunteer for disability training and programs.

To attract and retain women with disability in sport, Rana and Yas say it is important for organisations to be open to volunteer and placement opportunities. While it can be a fearful experience for some organisations because it is new and unknown, being open about that fear and allowing the volunteer to help make adjustments and learn as you go, will create a more tailored and suitable environment.

Creating voluntary opportunities for women with disability is an ideal way for both parties to test things out, and through communication, shape the role and the environment to best fit. And as Yas points out, this approach will empower the volunteer, knowing that they can provide guidance and input that is helping the organisation.

Rana adds that even if a volunteer opportunity does not lead to employment, the woman at least has the experience to add to her CV. In addition, the organisation gets to experience working with a woman with disability and in turn learns from that experience.

During a voluntary experience, Yas recommends providing the opportunity to shadow someone in a specific role that the volunteer is interested in pursuing in order to identify if that role is right for her.

“Most of my jobs I've started as a volunteer. I do like to have that period where I can get to find my feet and get comfortable with people. Once I know the people, I know that I can speak to them and be open. So if I have any issues, I feel more comfortable sharing them.”

Yas also recommends the organisation provides programs which can build the confidence of the woman. To allow a woman with disability to identify her skills and strengths helps her to understand what she can offer. It builds her confidence which in turn will enable more career opportunities to arise.

<https://www.richmondfc.com.au/video/257083/tigers-in-community-yasmina-mcglone?videoid=257083&modal=true&type=video&publishFrom=1545692400001>

“ For us it was really important to have someone like Yas around because up until that point we hadn't really had staff members who had a disability, and seeing as we were starting to work more in that space it seemed an important decision to have somebody who could give us a lived experience, and another lens over the work we're doing. ”

Rana Hussain, Diversity  
& Inclusion Coordinator,  
Richmond Football Club



## Our commitment

**Disability Sport & Recreation is committed to a Victoria where all people with disability can choose and access any sport or active recreation they want to engage with. We're equally committed to leading a movement for change with a stronger voice for people with disability to support these outcomes.**

An enhanced involvement of people with disability in leadership and employment positions within the sport and recreation sector as a result of this guide is crucial to support new approaches internally within these environments so that true change can be nurtured and progressed.

## Resources

	<p><b><a href="#">Voice at The Table (Self-Advocacy Resource Unit)</a></b></p> <p>This project aims to increase the number of people with cognitive disabilities sitting on boards, committees and advisory groups within government, service providers, community and mainstream organisations at a local, state and national level.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Disability Leadership Institute (Boards and Committees Project)</a></b></p> <p>This initiative of the Disability Leadership Institute aims to increase the number of Victorians with disabilities on Victorian government boards and committees.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">AAA Play</a></b></p> <p>Operated by Reclink Australia, Access for All Abilities (AAA Play) provides Australia's only first-point-of call service connecting people with a disability to sports and recreational opportunities in Victoria.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Job Access</a></b></p> <p>The national hub for workplace and employment information for people with disability, employers and service providers. Provides information and resources that can drive disability employment.</p>

## Peak Bodies and Advocacy Organisations

	<p><b><a href="#">People with Disability Australia</a></b></p> <p>National disability rights, advocacy and representative organisation.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Women with Disabilities Victoria</a></b></p> <p>Peak body of women with disabilities in Victoria.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">VALID</a></b></p> <p>Advocacy organisation for Victorians with intellectual disability.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">WISE Employment</a></b></p> <p>Provides employment services under the Australian Government's Disability Employment Services. Job active services are free to eligible job seekers and employers.</p>

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- Australian Network on Disability
- Victorian State Government (Voice at the Table resource)
- Disability Leadership Institute
- Institute of Community Directors Australia
- Richmond Football Club (case study)

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# See the capability before the disability.

Health is a basic human right. Everything we do is to help Victorians with disability live happier, more active lives. We are working to make sure Victorians with disability have equal opportunities to take part in the sport and recreation activities they want to participate in.

[www.dsr.org.au](http://www.dsr.org.au)

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