



Inclusive Swimming Framework 2020–2022

A BLUEPRINT FOR ENSURING
SWIMMING REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY
OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

First published December 2015
Redeveloped December 2020

Website: www.swimming.org.au

Email: inclusion@swimming.org.au

© Swimming Australia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Swimming Australia respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

Our commitment to inclusion

At Swimming Australia (SA), our vision is simple. To enrich and inspire the nation.

Our goal is to build participation and connection by creating an inclusive swimming community, where all Australians feel welcome, have equal opportunities and are treated with respect.

Swimming in Australia operates in an era of significant social and cultural change. In a time punctuated by the Black Lives Matter, Me Too and Marriage Equality movements, the establishment of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a focus on child safety in institutional settings and the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic – the issues affecting sport are complex and many.

In this context SA accepts the important role it can play in building a healthier, safer and more connected society through swimming, and the Inclusive Swimming Framework will be our guide for achieving this.

SA equally acknowledges that with limited resources, numerous priorities and a rapidly changing environment, we cannot do everything. As such, SA will commit to initiatives that ‘move the dial’ on inclusive culture and practice. Underpinning this approach will be our Road Map (see page 11) which highlights our flagship activities to be implemented under the Inclusive Swimming Framework.



Kieren Perkins
Swimming Australia
President

President’s Statement

As Australians, we have a deep connection to the water and are taught to respect it from an early age. Learning to swim is a rite of passage and a fundamental life skill that enables us to enjoy our beautiful backyard pools, beaches and rivers. With five million active swimmers, swimming is Australia’s largest participation sport.

As a sport for all, Swimming Australia is committed to providing an environment for everyone, free from discrimination where each individual has equal opportunities and is treated with respect. We adopt a growth mindset and are respectful in all that we do; these principles are included in our core values at Swimming Australia. Every participant, including swimmers, parents and guardians, coaches, volunteers, officials and administrators should demonstrate the principles and promote inclusivity within the sport at every opportunity.

Our diversity journey over time

Swimming and our connection with water has always held a special place in the lives of Australians. The cultural and spiritual identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the first inhabitants of the nation, is intrinsically linked to water in all its forms. From creation stories, to the use of water as a resource and sacred places, water continues to hold strong cultural value for our First Nations people. Our outdoor lifestyle and beach culture heavily influence how many Australians spend their recreation time in and around water. Learning to swim is a life skill and swimming is Australia's

number one participation sport. It's an activity that enables so many people to have increased health outcomes, form greater social connections and enjoy the water for life!

Competitive swimming has been strong in our community swimming clubs across the country for many years. Pathways are formed from juniors to elite competitions, with our Australian Dolphins providing countless iconic sporting moments on the world stage.

The timeline below highlights some of our proud and historic moments in our diversity journey over time.

1912	Women's swimming events added to the Olympic Program, Fanny Durack and Wilhelmina 'Mina' Wylie first represent Australia, winning gold and silver in the 100m freestyle
1988	First female President Evelyn Dill-Macky AM appointed
1980/90s	Vena Murray appointed as first female Executive Director
1990s	First Disability Officer Anne Green appointed
1990s	Began including swimmers with a disability in mainstream and disability swimming events
2003/4	Created the first Disability Sport Policy and Disability Action Plan
	CEO Glenn Tasker and Australian Paralympic Committee CEO Jason Hellwig commence development on the Mainstream Paralympic Agreement
2004	First Paralympic Head Swimming Coach Brendan Keogh employed under an agreement with Australian Paralympic Committee
2006/7	Employed Disability Development Officer Wendy Ross
2009	Employed National Inclusion Coordinator Michael Woods
2012	Para-swimming recognised as equal discipline in High Performance best offshore Paralympic Games results
2015	Launch of Inclusive Swimming Framework
2018	Leigh Russell appointed as first female CEO
2019/20	Delivered Move IT AUS Community Swimming Grants Program targeting disability and culturally and linguistically diverse participation in swimming via new industry partnerships.

Our goals

1

All Australians feel welcome, safe, valued and celebrated in swimming.

2

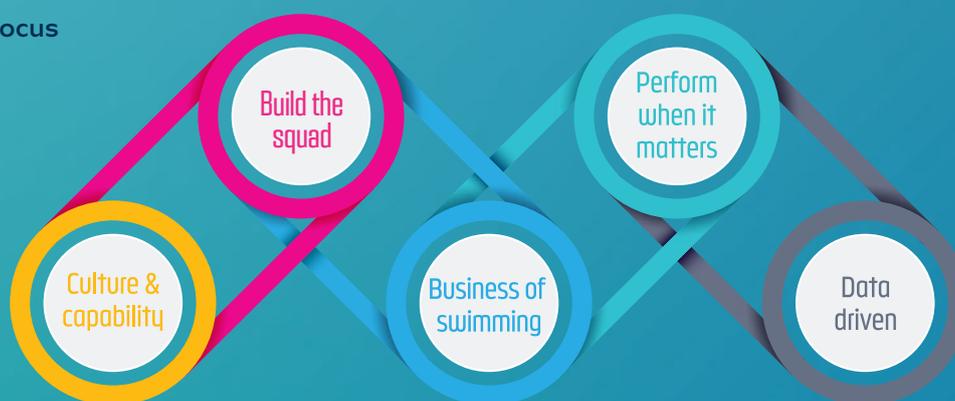
All Australians can participate in the role and at the level of their choice in swimming.

3

Australia's diversity is reflected in swimming.

Strategic alignment

Strategic Focus



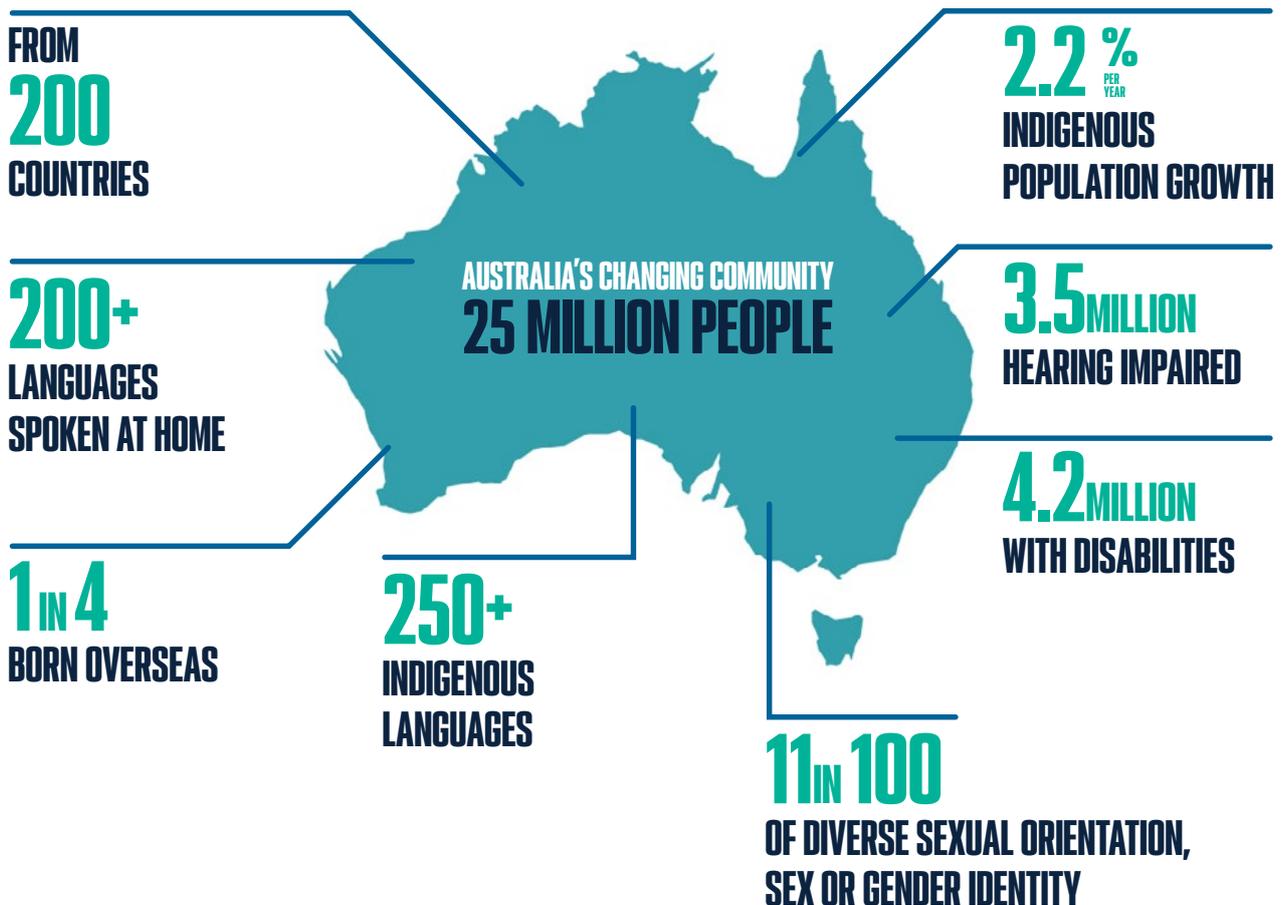
Key Enablers

- Strategic partnerships
- Community led programs & stories
- Digital engagement
- Paralympic pathway & High Performance program
- Equitable opportunities for women coaches
- Commitment to inclusion & diversity
- Involvement of staff across the business
- Workforce development
- Exploring funding opportunities
- Equal opportunity employer
- Enhanced reporting on participant & member demographic information
- Evidence-based decision making

The challenge

An increasingly diverse nation

The demographic makeup of the communities in which swimming operates has changed dramatically over the last decade. Australia is becoming increasingly culturally diverse, and we are getting older. In addition, historically marginalised and disadvantaged population groups, such as people with a disability, LGBTI+ communities, Indigenous Australians and women, command greater respect, acknowledgment and involvement in society than at any point in Australia's history.



An increasingly diverse sport

Statistically we can estimate that a diverse range of Australians already participate in swimming, with five million (more than 20% of the Australian population) participants. However, when we explore how this is reflected in our sport, there is an opportunity for us to better understand the current membership base, whilst also implementing strategies to grow and better serve an increasingly diverse audience.

While swimming has a long and proud egalitarian history with many positive outcomes for inclusion already achieved, there is more work to do.

The snapshot below provides some current statistics regarding diversity within our membership audiences:

- 59% Female swimmers v 15% female coaches
- 39 Paralympic gold medals since 2008, however only 1% are swimmer members with a disability
- 1% Of all members identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, however none of the Australian Dolphins identify with this community
- One out of nine female CEOs, with 41% female Board members across the SA network

Barriers to participation

General research has highlighted a range of barriers that might prevent or discourage people from diverse market segments getting involved in sport. These include:

 COST	 TRANSPORT ISSUES	 LACK OF ROLE MODELS	 UNIFORM POLICIES	 SCHEDULING
 NEGATIVE ATTITUDES	 DISCRIMINATION	 LANGUAGE	 ACCESSIBILITY	 TIME / OTHER COMMITMENTS
 LACK OF CONFIDENCE	 TOO COMPETITIVE	 LACK OF UNDERSTANDING	 STEREOTYPING	 PEER PRESSURE

The opportunity

Acting on inclusion leads to numerous positive outcomes for the sport, participants and wider Australian community.

 <p>HEALTH</p>	 <p>SOCIAL</p>	 <p>ECONOMIC</p>	 <p>ORGANISATIONAL</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved cardio, strength and flexibility Improved mental health Feeling 11% less stressed than the general population Reduced chronic disease Reduced drowning Feeling twice as healthy as the general population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved social cohesion (10% increase with social network) Improved sense of optimism More diverse friendships 78% of swimmers volunteer in the community, nearly twice that of overall sport participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes \$3.6B to economy annually \$135M saved on public health burden annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More effective More innovative More diverse and vibrant

Our guiding principles

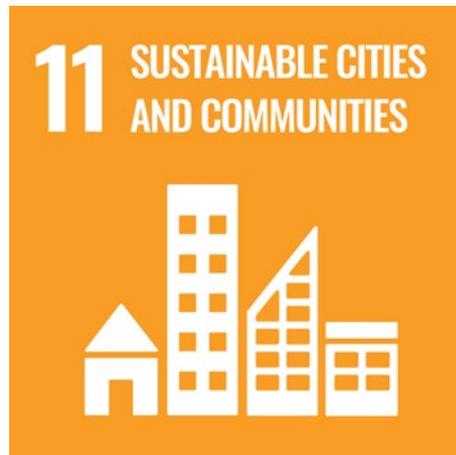
7 Pillars of Inclusion

The [7 Pillars of Inclusion](#) is a broad model developed by Play by the Rules to give sports clubs and associations a starting point to address inclusion and diversity. The 7 Pillars model takes a helicopter view of inclusion focusing on the commonalities of inclusion and the habits that drive change. The 7 Pillars will guide how we plan for inclusion.



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

SA aims to support the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that highlight the need for promoting equality, reducing disadvantage within and between nations, and creating inclusive workplaces, communities and cities. These UN SDGs will guide where we focus our efforts.



Human Rights approach

Respect for human rights is the cornerstone of strong communities in which everyone can contribute and feel included. SA will apply a human rights approach to policy development and decision making, ensuring legal responsibilities are met when it comes to dealing with discrimination, harassment and safety. Key to this is our strong established [Safe Sport Framework](#).

Whole of sport approach

SA recognises that the swimming and aquatics sector is represented by a range of member organisations, peak agencies and local providers, each responsible for various aspects of swimming and aquatics delivery. The Inclusive Swimming Framework is intended to provide guidance and support beyond the institution of

SA so that a more consistent national direction may be fostered. Additionally, SA will maintain an inclusion ‘influencers’ network that will see responsibility for inclusion outcomes embedded across the whole swimming community.

INTERNAL	BOARD SPONSOR Lead and influence	
	SA PROJECT TEAM Plan, monitor and advise	
	SA STAFF GROUP OF ACTION Act and champion within SA	MEMBER ORGANISATION GROUP OF ACTION Act and champion within MOs
EXTERNAL	COMMUNITY PARTNERS Advise, advocate and co-deliver key activities	COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS Inform and influence the community

Our policies, guidelines and codes

Our policies, guidelines and codes are an essential part of our commitment to preventing and addressing inappropriate and unlawful behaviour that excludes, vilifies, or harms. More information on our policies can be found on the SA website [here](#).

Our programs, products, partnerships and plans

Programs and products

SA offers a range of programs and products that advance our inclusion objectives and provide opportunities for everyone to get involved in swimming, at the level and in the way they choose.

Through the Inclusive Swimming Framework we will ensure all programs designed and delivered by SA consider the diverse needs of participants and provide opportunities and choices that meet individual needs, while being safe for all, especially children and young people.

Where appropriate, SA will design and deliver programs that specifically serve underrepresented groups to reduce inequities, raise awareness and celebrate diversity.

Partnerships

Swimming Australia partners with a range of organisations to advance our inclusion goals and seeks to continually strengthen these relationships into the future.



Plans

SA will commit to initiatives that ‘move the dial’ on inclusive culture and practice along with targeted activities that focus on increased access and opportunities for specific diversity market segments.

This will include the development of a comprehensive organisation-wide Inclusion Action Plan along with a public facing Road Map to highlight priority and flagship initiatives. Our Inclusion Action Plan and Road Map will be ‘living documents’ that evolve and change as initiatives are identified, advanced and achieved.

	HORIZON ONE – 2020/21 Review existing activity and focus on new key areas	HORIZON TWO – 2021/22 Building emerging strategies and exploring new opportunities
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate Reconciliation Action Plan process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement ‘Reflect’ level Reconciliation Action Plan Explore partnerships for education and participation growth
Sexuality, Trans & Gender Diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Pride in Sport index Develop and implement National Trans and Gender Diverse Policy Explore partnerships for education and participation growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Pride in Sport index Implement initiatives for education and participation growth
Culturally & Linguistically Diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program Explore partnerships for education and participation growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek extension of Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program Implement initiatives for education and participation growth
People with a Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program Deliver Multi-Class competition and integrated events Enhance Paralympic pathway and Paralympic High-Performance Program Explore partnerships for education and participation growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance National Classification Program Seek extension of Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program Implement initiatives for education and participation growth
Women & Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Women’s Coaching Strategy Implement Workplace Sexual Harassment Policy Maintain Champions of Change Coalition partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Women’s Coaching Strategy Explore partnerships for education Maintain Champions of Change Coalition partnership
Adults & Ageing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain strong relationship with Masters Swimming Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore partnerships for education and participation growth
Low Socio-Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek extension of Move IT AUS Participation Grants Program Explore funding opportunities

How to get involved in and out of the pool

 <p>SWIM</p> <p>At Swimming Australia, we believe everyone should have the opportunity to swim and to do so in a fun, safe and friendly environment.</p>	 <p>COACH</p> <p>Swimming coaches are the backbone of our sport and are key to ensuring that clubs continue to develop and excel.</p>	 <p>OFFICIATE</p> <p>Becoming a technical official is a rewarding way to contribute to the sport, spend time with your children, create friendships and gain new skills.</p>
 <p>VOLUNTEER</p> <p>Volunteers play an important role throughout the swimming community.</p>	 <p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Cheer on our Australian Dolphins swim team as they take on the world.</p>	 <p>WORK</p> <p>There are many opportunities to work in swimming and aquatics. SA prides itself on being an equal opportunity employer.</p>
 <p>GET INCLUSIVE</p> <p>We want everyone in the swimming community to feel confident to take action on inclusion, whatever their role may be. To help we have developed an inclusion toolkit bringing together best practice resources, advice, stories and training so you can create more opportunities for everyone to get involved in swimming.</p> <p>Visit: www.swimming.org.au/inclusion</p>		

Glossary

ABORIGINAL – the terms ‘Indigenous’, ‘Aboriginal’ and ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ (ATSI) are often used interchangeably to refer to the diverse groups of people indigenous to Australia.

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) – the terms ‘culturally and linguistically diverse’ (CaLD) and ‘non-English speaking background’ (NESB) are both commonly used to refer to all of Australia’s non-Indigenous ethnic groups, other than the English-speaking Anglo-Saxon majority.

CULTURE – can be described as the personality of an organisation or ‘the way we do things around here’. It guides how a club or association operates, and in turn, how its members normally behave.

DISABILITY – a disability can generally be defined as a condition which may restrict a person’s mental, sensory or mobility functions to undertake or perform a task in the same way as a person who does not have a disability.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION – direct discrimination occurs if a person treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law (such as race, gender, disability). Indirect discrimination occurs where a requirement, condition or practice is imposed that, on the face of it applies equally to all, but in practice can only be met by certain advantaged people.

DIVERSITY – the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that everyone is unique and recognising our individual differences.

EQUALITY – refers to being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.

LGBTI+ – stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual and intersex. The plus (+) represents all the other gender and sexuality expression that exist.

INCLUSION – providing a range of options to cater for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds, in the most appropriate manner possible.

MIGRANT/REFUGEE/ASYLUM SEEKER – a migrant is someone who leaves their country of origin voluntarily to seek a better life for a range of personal and economic reasons. The United Nations definition of a refugee is a person who is ‘outside their home country because they have suffered (or feared) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or because they are a member of a persecuted social category of persons, or because they are fleeing a war’. An asylum seeker is a person who has sought protection as a refugee, but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been assessed.

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION – a range of measures or initiatives intended to redress the effects of past discrimination.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN – a framework or business plan that documents what an organisation commits to do to contribute to reconciliation in Australia.

SOCIAL INCLUSION – is about making sure that all children and adults can participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society.

References

1. Australian Sports Commission. (2011). Integrity in Sport Literature Review
2. Australian Sports Commission. (2010). Ethical and Integrity Issues in Australian Sport survey
3. Australian Human Rights Commission. (2013). What are human rights? Retrieved 29 September, 2020, from <https://humanrights.gov.au/about/what-are-human-rights>
4. Australian Human Rights Commission. (2006). What's the Score?: A survey of cultural diversity and racism in Australian sport
5. Clearing House for Sport. (n.d). Persons with Disability and Sport. Retrieved August 19, 2020 from https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/knowledge_base/organised_sport/sport_and_government_policy_objectives/persons_with_disability_and_sport
6. Clearing House for Sport.(n.d). Women's Sport. Retrieved August 19, 2020, from https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/knowledge_base/organised_sport/sport_and_government_policy_objectives/womens_sport
7. National Cultural Flows Research Projects (n.d.). Aboriginal People and Water. Retrieved September 29, 2020 from http://culturalflows.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8&Itemid=122
8. Play by the Rules. (2013). Inclusion and diversity – what can you do? Retrieved September 29, 2020 from <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-can-you-do>
9. Settlement Council of Australia. (2012). Sport and Settlement, Discussion Paper
10. Sport Australia (n.d). Diversity in Australia. Retrieved September 29, 2020 from https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/inclusive_sport/toolkit/diversity-in-australia
11. Sport Business Partners, Street Ryan and Swimming Australia (2020). Community Swimming Impact Study. Retrieved September 29, 2020 from <https://www.swimming.org.au/community-impact-study#:~:text=Swimming%20Australia%20has%20commissioned%20a,%244.35%20billion%20lifetime%20health%20contribution>
12. Swimming Australia (2020). Membership Data Report
13. United Nations (2015). The 17 Goals. Retrieved September 29, 2020 from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>