



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Action Plan
2024-2028



IRFU

IRFU VISION INSPIRE, CONNECT AND THRIVE

Our Strategic Plan 2024-2028 sets out how we intend to continue to develop our game, embrace opportunities and tackle challenges.

Inspiring more people to play, support and volunteer in rugby; **connecting** people and communities through rugby and ensuring **thriving** environments for staff, players and volunteers through rugby.



OUR EDI ACTION PLAN

At the core of all that we do will remain our Rugby Values. Every participant needs to know that they will be offered a positive experience through rugby, and that starts with the welcome at the gate.

INCLUSIVITY
DIVERSITY OF OPINION AND CULTURE MEANS WORKING TOGETHER TO BE A VIBRANT RESPECTFUL ORGANISATION.

RESPECT
FOR ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THE RUGBY COMMUNITY, THE WIDER COMMUNITY AND SELF.

FUN
A PASSION FOR THE GAME ON AND OFF THE PITCH, RUGBY IS A SOURCE OF JOY FOR ALL.

INTEGRITY
ACTIONS ON AND OFF THE PITCH THAT ARE OPEN AND TRANSPARENT.

EXCELLENCE
STRIVE TO BE THE BEST WE CAN BE.

The goals laid out in the **EDI Action Plan** will assist in creating places where people can thrive, where they can be inspired by others and where they can be themselves and connect with each other through rugby.



ACHIEVING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Implementing the Strategy and amplifying our values is part of the journey in achieving Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity across the organisation.

We will do so by embracing the following principles and approach:

- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Leadership
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Inform and Educate
- Reflective of society in which it exists
- Create a sense of belonging

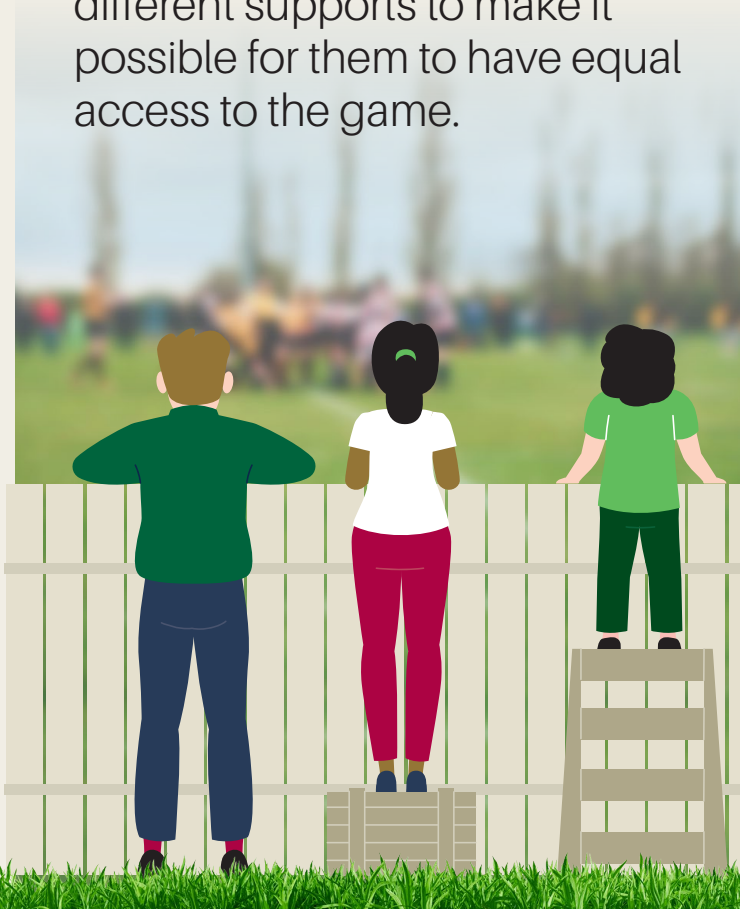


ACHIEVING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being **treated equally**.



And here, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game.



All three can see the game without any supports because the environment was changed. Everyone feels included as the systemic **barrier has been addressed**.



OUR REACH IN THE COMMUNITY

Irish Rugby can thrive in all parts of Ireland if we are open to a wider audience and reflective of current Irish society.

Current census statistics show:

50%

OF THE IRISH POPULATION
ARE **FEMALE**

22%

OF THE IRISH POPULATION
WERE BORN **OVERSEAS**

20%

OF THE IRISH POPULATION
HAVE A **DISABILITY**

5-10%

SELF-IDENTIFY AS **LGBTQ+**
(ESTIMATION FROM SURVEYS)

We will provide offerings that are welcoming to these populations.

OUR REACH IN THE COMMUNITY

continued

AREAS THAT
NEED SPECIFIC
ATTENTION
INCLUDE:

WOMEN, DISABILITY,
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY,
MENTAL HEALTH AND
AFFORDABILITY

In addition, we have heard what people want from rugby. Based on the EDI 'game wide survey', the IRFU 'State of the Game' survey and other sports research, people tell us why they play, volunteer and what they want from their environment:

GIVE BACK TO RUGBY

HAVE FUN

BE WELL
LOOKED AFER

BELONG TO
RUGBY FAMILY

FUTURE PROOFING/
LONGEVITY OF THE GAME



IRFU commissioned the Irish Centre for Diversity to carry out a game wide survey between March and June of 2024. The IRFU also carries out a State of the Game survey every two years, information is from 2023.

OUR VISION TO BE A SPORT OF CHOICE

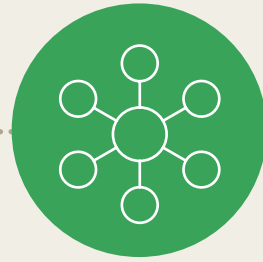
Our aim is to offer access to those who wish to experience the connection, fun and sense of belonging that the rugby community offers, both in its clubs and across the wider organisation, irrespective of individuals' characteristics.

Through guiding principles, we will assist all to:



INSPIRE

through diverse and inclusive leadership to build sustainable workplaces and clubs



CONNECT

with the wider community by socially engaging programmes



THRIVE

through the creation of suitable, welcoming spaces and environments



CONSIDERATIONS

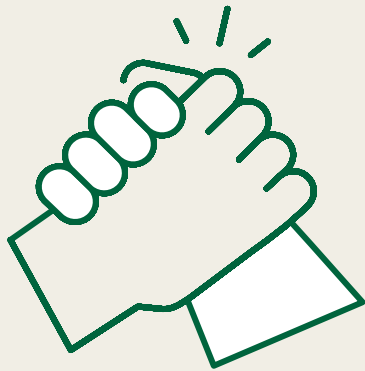
Our projects will be designed to support people to be confident to perform on and off the pitch, comfortable to be themselves, irrespective of skill, skin colour, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.



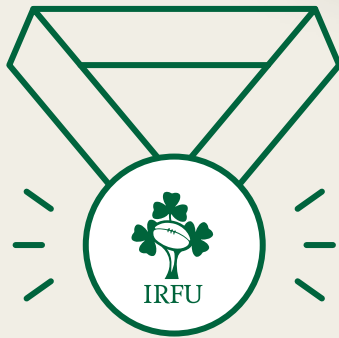
ACCESS
HOW CAN I **CONNECT**
WITH THE GAME



REVIEW & RENEW
WHAT OTHER **OPTIONS**
MIGHT EMERGE FOR ME?



SUPPORT
HOW LONG WILL **SUPPORT**
BE AVAILABLE



OPPORTUNITY
WHERE CAN I **THRIVE**
IN THE GAME

OUR EDI JOURNEY

OUTCOMES

- **Welcoming spaces** to enjoy rugby
- Suitable **formats of the game** for a variety of audiences/participants
- Diverse populations playing and supporting the game

PRIORITIES

- Design offerings that are suitable for **local community** and its **diverse population**
- Modify **environment so that it is safe** and welcoming to all those accessing the game
- **Leadership is representative** of all those involved in the game

TARGET GROUPS

- **Women | Disability | Ethnicity | LGBTQ+ community**

Intersectionality will be considered as part of programme delivery so that no one audience will be looked at in isolation, a wholistic approach will be taken in designing projects and activities.



PLANS AND PROJECTS INSPIRE



ALLOCATE KEY EDI TOPICS (gender, disability and ethnicity) to staff and volunteer champions

Organise a series of **REGULAR ROUND TABLE EVENTS** to get perspectives on what more could be done on EDI

REVIEW EDI TRAINING – include more case studies so that there is knowledge of how to deal with inappropriate behaviour

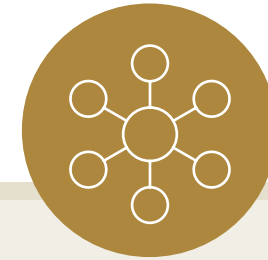
Identify **EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS WHICH REPRESENT DIVERSE GROUPS** and explore possibility of entering into learning partnerships to build knowledge and understanding

Explore IRFU as signatory to **IWG BRIGHTON** plus **HELSINKI DECLARATION** by Global Summit in July 2026

EXPANSION OF THE WOMEN'S RUGBY NETWORK to showcase multiple roles and levels at which women can inspire others



PLANS AND PROJECTS CONNECT



Gather data for staff against **NINE GROUNDS OF DISCRIMINATION** and identify gaps in areas of representation

Gather data so that we are aware of **BASELINE MEMBERSHIP DEMOGRAPHICS**

Link with **EXTERNAL AGENCIES FOR KNOWLEDGE AND PROGRAMME DELIVERY** so that the clubs become the hubs of the community

Allocate **KEY TOPICS** to Champions at Union and Provincial level to act as sponsors across the organisation

ASSESS VISIBILITY of all aspects of the organisation so that we show representation of a diverse and inclusive membership across various platforms and engagements



PLANS AND PROJECTS THRIVE



Introduce a process that encourages and supports members to **REPORT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR** of all types, a 'safe space' approach

REVIEW WORKFORCE PLANS (members) and modify leadership programmes accordingly

Develop a **MENU OF EDI RELATED SUPPORT ACTIVITIES** to develop an inclusive approach towards suppliers, partners and community groups

DIVERSIFY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME to include new volunteers from the community

Expand existing Youth Award for **SUSTAINABLE AND DIVERSE COACHING AND OFFICIATING**

Grow **FEMALE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME** and volunteering opportunities for people with a disability. Support clubs to achieve 40% gender balance in decision making roles

Develop **WELCOMING CLUBS TOOLKIT** for cultural change – to enhance diversity and inclusivity across the organisation, supporting clubs to be reflective of communities in their locality

Raise the standards within clubs to be more **WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE** with access to a variety of grants and projects

Reintroduce **CLUB SPIRIT OF RUGBY AWARD** to recognise diverse, inclusive, welcoming initiatives



SUMMARY OF TARGETS



WOMEN

- Leadership, governance and networking
- Signing of IWD Brighton/Helsinki Declaration



DISABILITY

- Volunteering opportunities
- Enhanced accessibility of facilities



LGBTQ+

- Pride festivals
- Inclusive club offerings



ETHNICITY+

- Anti-racism training
- Wear Red Day campaign

WELCOMING CLUBS

MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Gather **baseline data** through Rugby Connect and monitor annually for growth



Achieve Irish Centre for Diversity Gold Award



Run **EDI survey** every two years from 2026 onwards



Monitor **Governance** across the organisation to maintain 40%



Monitor **growth in services** and facilities through Rugby Connect for accessibility criteria and project uptake



Produce **two case studies** annually to showcase diversity across the organisation

irishrugby.ie

Irish Rugby Football Union
10/12 Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4, Ireland
+353 (0) 1 647 3800

