Supporting good governance through board gender diversity
Measuring the impact of board gender diversity

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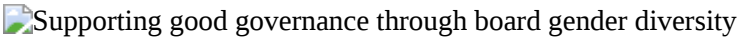

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Board gender diversity

Supporting good governance through board gender diversity

In October 2018, the Government launched its strategy for Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. At the same time, Sport NZ launched its response to this strategy, which included a commitment to supporting funded partners to make organisational change and achieve a board gender diversity target.

Introducing a circuit breaker

International research confirms women's and girls' participation in sport and recreation is increasing, but women remain underrepresented in leadership and governance roles.

A core function of boards is to consider issues from a range of perspectives. What we know through evidence is that diversity, including gender, supports this function by bringing a breadth of perspective. This results in better decision-making and creates stronger and more sustainable organisations.

Diverse boards also play an important role in increasing the visibility and profile of underrepresented or traditionally disadvantaged groups. Board members are role models and leaders, and diverse boards demonstrate to all people that they too can participate in and lead the way within their chosen fields.

There are many women with the skills and experience required for appointment to boards, but we knew there was a 'demand' issue — new board members were being recruited by incumbent members with mainly male networks. A 'circuit breaker' was needed.

In 2018, Sport NZ announced a policy requiring qualifying partner organisations to have 40 percent self-identified women on their boards by December 2021. Sport NZ has been working with partners to meet the new requirement, which is now a formal condition of investment.

This initiative has been highly successful. As of December 2021, 65 out of 66 qualifying Sport NZ-funded partners have achieved a gender balance on their boards of 40 percent or more self-identified women.

NATIONAL POLICY FOR GENDER EQUITY GOVERNANCE

Measuring the impact of board gender diversity

In September 2022, Sport NZ commissioned an independent report to evaluate the outcomes of the policy's implementation and record the progress made towards achieving board gender equity across the sector.

The insights and recommendations in this report will be carefully considered and will inform future Sport NZ strategies and areas of prioritised investment.

EVALUATION: NATIONAL POLICY FOR GENDER EQUITY IN GOVERNANCE VISUAL SUMMARY

Board gender diversity - starting the journey

The Sport NZ Group encourages and expects all partner boards to take a leadership role in introducing and maintaining diverse, equitable and inclusive organisational cultures, starting with diversity and inclusion within the board.

In addition to maintaining a list of Governance ready Women with an affinity to active Play, Recreation and Sport, the Nine Steps to Effective Governance resources, and the Governance Evaluation System, Sport NZ can assist partners with an approach to achieving board gender diversity. For more information, please contact your Sport NZ Partnership Manager in the first instance or email: governance@sportnz.org.nz.

Downloads

National Policy for Gender Equity in GovernancePDF - 68 KB

Evaluation: National Policy for Gender Equity in GovernancePDF - 233 KB

Increasing board diversity factsheetPDF - 208 KB

Frequently asked questionsPDF - 92 KB

Getting the right people on boardDOC - 62 KB

Board gender diversity | Sport New Zealand - Ihi Aotearoa (sportnz.org.nz)

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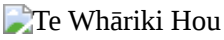

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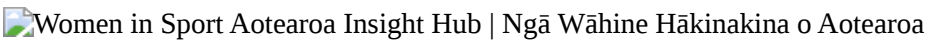
Close panel 

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