

WAFootball.

Strategy 2026 – 2028





We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we gather across Western Australia, and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

We recognise and value the enduring connection First Nations people have to land, waters, culture, and community, and we honour their contributions to our shared future.

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that the following report may contain images of deceased persons. Where known, family permission has been given for photos to be used.

Welcome from WA Football

The West Australian Football Commission Inc. (WA Football) is the caretaker of football throughout the State and is responsible for the overall growth and development of the game.

The WA Football Strategy 2026 – 2028 has been designed following a concentrated period of engagement with our stakeholders. It sets the foundation for clear decision making on our investment priorities, exciting avenues to grow our game at all levels, having a clear intent to enhance equity and access, and setting out a deliberate approach to future proof the game in WA.

**Our vision remains the same:
*The game for all Western Australians.***

That vision emphasises equity and access to participation and performance pathways, underpinned by sound diversity and inclusion principles, so that the many characteristics which make up our diverse communities provide no impediment to participation in the game.

The Strategy also acknowledges that our way of life is constantly changing and the landscape of sport and football is no different. With challenges and change comes the opportunity to evaluate how we respond and reimagine the future of our game.

The power of this Strategy is underpinned by partnership and alignment between our organisation and the industry. We invite all our stakeholders to consider the intent of the guiding principles outlined within the Strategy. We look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that we remain *the game for all Western Australians*.

WAFootball

With challenges and change comes the opportunity to evaluate how we **respond and reimagine** the future of our game.

WAFootball Strategy 2026 – 2028

Vision: The game for all Western Australians

Guiding Principles



Growth



Equity & Access



Future Proofing

Investment Priorities

- New participants:** broadening the opportunities to participate and engage
- Experiences:** exploring different ways to play our game
- Embedding:** deepen the connection/ belonging for existing and new participants (players, coaches, umpires and volunteers)
- Women & girls:** leverage and optimise the opportunity for players, coaches, umpires and administrators
- Performance pathways:** building performance pathway programs that deliberately support regional, multicultural, and Indigenous athletes
- Participation:** designing participation and engagement initiatives that are underpinned by sound diversity and inclusion principles
- Competitions:** leading and supporting competition structures that are sustainable and equitable
- Financial:** building a WA Football financial framework that drives the existing strategy, invests in the future, and protects against economic turbulence
- Infrastructure:** having a clear intent on technology and facility infrastructure that meets the needs of the future
- People:** delivering a people capability model that attracts and develops our greatest asset

Foundations

- Design and allocate investment relative to the level of strategic need
- Organisational design reflects the investment priorities and has the depth of capability to consistently support the guiding principles



This Strategy sets the foundation for **clear decision making** on our investment priorities, **exciting avenues to grow our game** at all levels, having a clear intent to **enhance equity and access**, and setting out a deliberate approach to **future proof** the game in WA.



1. Growth

Key Actions

New Participants

- We will deliberately explore new and diverse participants to enhance the opportunity to participate and engage in our game.

Experiences

- Whilst the traditional format of playing will remain at the core of our thinking, exploring different ways to play our game will complement the intent to broaden our footprint and ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate.

Embedding

- Building club environments that foster connection and belonging is critical to the game's sustainability. Providing safe, fun and rewarding environments that not only attract new participants, but have a clear intent on embedding existing participants, will underpin our thinking and decision making.

Women & Girls

- Building fit for purpose pathways, programs and competitions for women and girls will underpin our approach in attracting and embedding female participants.

Success Measures

- Year-on-year growth in total participation
- Improved retention in junior and youth pathways
- Increase in female participants across playing, coaching, umpiring, volunteering and administration
- Stability in community club competitions across regional and metro WA
- Delivery of a considered and deliberate focus on the recognition and support of volunteers

Providing **safe, fun and rewarding environments** that not only attract new participants, but have a clear intent on embedding existing participants, will underpin our thinking and decision making.





2. Equity and Access

Key Actions

Performance Pathways

- The pathway development model will be designed with underpinning performance principles whilst ensuring that every participant has equal access to opportunity and resources, regardless of ethnicity, geographical location, socio-economic and individual circumstances.

Participation & Competitions

- **Regional Equity**
Partnering with regional stakeholders and community led solutions via competition and participation expertise, umpiring and coach development, facility development, technology and meaningful resources for volunteers and leagues.
- **Multicultural**
Ensuring that participation and development opportunities for multicultural communities are accessible and deliberately consider cultural sensitivities and preferences.

- **Indigenous**
Building clubs, environments and programs that offer Indigenous participants a culturally safe space where they feel supported, connected and a clear sense of belonging.
- **Socio-economic**
Funding models and operational planning will strongly consider any socio-economic obstacles to participation (and retention) and have the agility to adjust as required to support access and equity.
- **Inclusion & Disability**
Driving enhanced and consistent levels of education and support to build greater confidence in community led, inclusive decision making.

Success Measures

- Deliberate intent to support Indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), regional and all abilities participation
- Facility enhancements meeting universal access standards
- Indigenous cultural competence education embedded in our workforce and volunteer base
- CALD cultural competence education embedded in our workforce and volunteer base
- Performance pathway program outcomes reflect greater diversity and increased focus on Indigenous, CALD and regional participation
- Increase in the percentage of players that enter into the AFL/W system from WA

The pathway development model will ensure that **every participant has equal access to opportunity and resources**, regardless of ethnicity, geographical location, socio-economic and individual circumstances.



As 'the game for all Western Australians',
**everyone should have the opportunity
to play Australian Rules football no
matter their circumstance.**



3. Future Proofing

Key Actions

Financial

- **Financial Model**
A clear focus on building a financial model that drive strategic priorities, whilst also building protective measures for the future.
- **WAFL/WAFLW**
We will celebrate and respect the history and heritage of the WAFL and WAFLW competitions whilst also pursuing the need for innovation, and engaging with new markets and audiences.

Infrastructure

- **Facilities**
Facility development that collaborates with key strategic partners and supports the growth, access and equity expectations of WA Football.
- **Technology**
Creating an aligned organisational strategy that leverages the effective use of technology, data and AI to foster innovation and support the development of the industry.

- **Governance**
WA Football will role model best practice internal governance behaviours and systems, whilst seeking to build the capacity and awareness of sound governance mechanisms amongst our stakeholders.

People

- Our aim will be to attract the very best talent and offer development and career opportunities that supports succession planning, capability development and organisational performance.

Success Measures

- Strategic decisions are consistently aligned to investment priorities
- WA Football financial model is designed to meet the future needs of the industry
- Staff and industry capability framework implemented, and identified talent supported and developed
- Infrastructure and facility model meets the future needs of the industry
- Adoption of digital, data or tech-enabled solutions
- Safe game environments and initiatives are promoted and embedded across regional and metro WA

There is a **focus on our people and our capabilities** as an organisation and across the industry.



