

# LGBTI+ Inclusion within Victorian Sport: A Market Analysis

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# LGBTI+ Inclusion within Victorian Sport: A Market Analysis

## Introduction

In 2019, VicHealth commissioned researchers within the Faculty of Education at Monash University to conduct a market analysis examining the work that has been undertaken to date, and current activities in the state of Victoria, Australia, focused on promoting LGBTI+ engagement and participation in sport. This document provides an overview of the programs, interventions, reports and education undertaken in the sport and LGBTI+ inclusion space across the last 20 years. Furthermore, the report details some of the findings of key academic literature and evaluation reports examining the impact of LGBTI+ sporting initiatives delivered in Australia and overseas. In particular, it details contemporary knowledge regarding approaches to LGBTI+ inclusion and perceived impact of interventions.

The report is structured to respond to several key questions:

1. What does current research tell us about the experiences of LGBTI+ people in sport?
2. What work has taken place within Victoria to support LGBTI+ inclusion and reduce discrimination?
3. Which organisations are operating in Victoria to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and how have these connected with sport?
4. What work are State Sporting Associations undertaking to support LGBTI+ Inclusion and what support would they like moving forward?
5. What recommendations have emerged from existing LGBTI+ in sport reports and evaluations?

The report concludes by pointing towards potential areas for further investment to enhance LGBTI+ inclusion within sport.

## Market Analysis Methodology

The market analysis review was undertaken using a variety of methods. Initially, information was collated drawing on knowledge within the research team of current programs and initiatives and also through discussions with key stakeholders within the LGBTI+ space including representatives from Pride Cup, Proud2Play and Out on the Fields. From this, a database was established of current programs, projects and educational sessions and more detailed information collected on these via websites, media reports and any known evaluation documents. Further online searches were conducted using the websites of major sporting associations (both national and state level), Sport Australia's Clearinghouse, Play by the Rules and Change the Game Australia. Searches were also conducted for literature using academic databases including SPORTDiscus and Scopus.

The research team additionally contacted a number of the larger Victorian Sporting Associations directly to determine what work they were undertaking in the LGBTI+ inclusion setting and to discuss what support they might require to engage in LGBTI+ inclusion in the future. This included Cricket, Football, Basketball, Netball, Hockey, AFL, Swimming, Athletics, Tennis and Rugby League and Rugby Union. The research team also directly contacted staff within Sport and Recreation Victoria and Vic Sport to determine their involvement in projects or funding streams that focused on LGBTI+ inclusion.

Finally the research team reviewed survey data collected from sports clubs (23 who were involved in the Pride Cup and 5 non Pride Cup clubs) that asked if clubs had participated in any LGBTI+ programs or initiatives beyond the Pride Cup. From this scoping exercise, identified programs and projects were collated and are overviewed in Appendix 1. To ensure the overview of activity was as accurate as possible this list was distributed to key stakeholders with expertise in LGBTI+ inclusion within sporting

contexts. Stakeholders were asked to check the accuracy of the findings and to identify any initiatives that may have been missed within the search. This process led to the addition of two further programs documented in appendix 1. The information collated regarding the initiatives and programs was reviewed by the research team, including where possible any available evaluation reports.

## What does current research tell us about the experiences of LGBTI+ people in sport?

### How many people identify as LGBTI+?

Until recently, there was no reliable, large-scale, population data available to identify the proportion of the population that identifies as LGBTI+. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) suggests up to 11 in 100 Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity. Population statistics for young people are not readily available in Australia but there have been several studies in North America that have begun to collect data on LGB youth (Kann et al., 2016; 2018). No such similar, population-level data has been published yet about trans and gender diverse people, but studies suggest around 1% of the population identifies as trans, gender diverse, or is born with an intersex variation. This data has been used to estimate prevalence of LGBTI+ youth in Australia and is displayed in figure 1 below.

Australian Government data, primarily from the Bureau of Statistics, can be used to provide a context for the size of the LGBTI+ population under the age of 15 (16%) relative to other populations which have historically received significant funding to support participation in sport (see Figure 1). It is important to note that the groups are not mutually exclusive, for example, an individual could be gay and also have a disability.

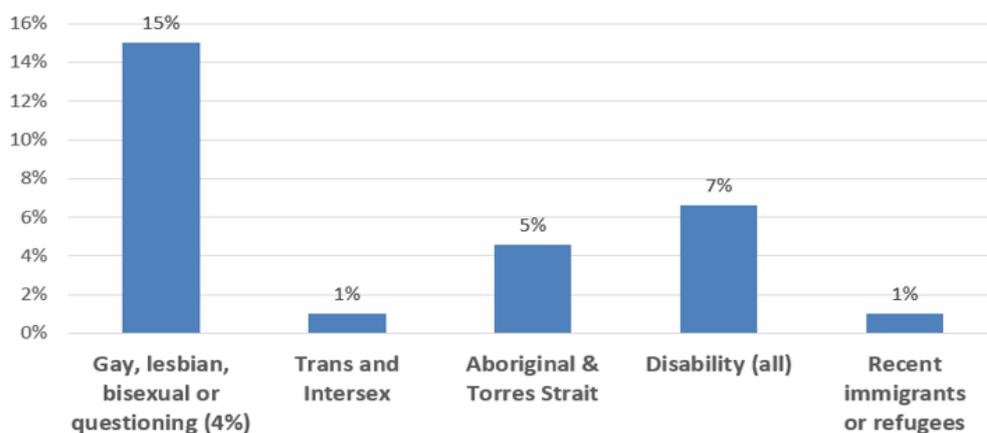


Figure 1: Estimated proportion of young Australians (under 25) by population group

Data source LGBQ (Kann et al., 2018), Trans (Meerwijk & Sevelius, 2017), Intersex (WHO, 2010), Aboriginal and Torres Strait (ABS, 2011b), Disability (ABS, 2011a), Recent immigrants or refugees (ABS, 2019)

Research highlights lower participation rates of people who identify as LGBTI+ as a result of overt and subtle forms of discrimination (Symons et al, 2010; Trussell, Kovac & Apgar, 2018). At least ten studies conducted in the state of Victoria have examined the experiences of LGBTI+ people in sport (see Table 1 for a summary of key findings across reports). This research has consistently found individuals who identify as LGBTI+ can find sports environments intimidating and exclusionary (Symons 2009; Fletcher,

2013). In Victoria, homophobic and transphobic language and behaviour is also common (see Figure 2).

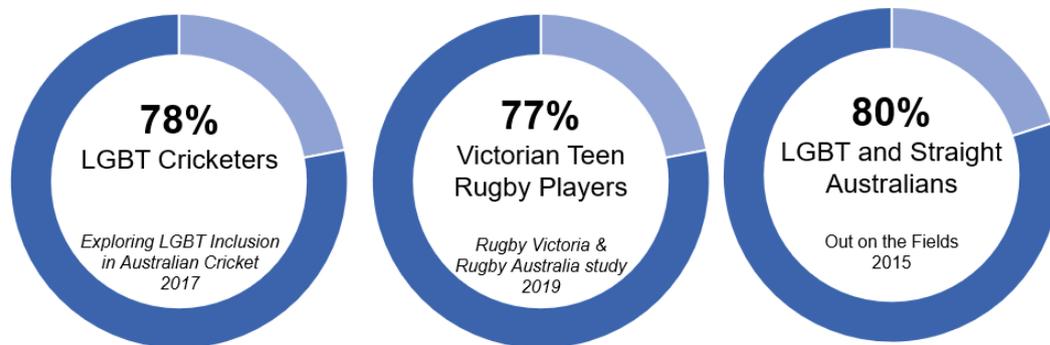


Figure 2: Percentage of participants who have witnessed homophobic language/ behaviour in sport

Sources: (Denison & Kitchen, 2015; Denison, O'Brien, Jeanes, & Faulkner, 2018; Storr, Sullivan, Symons, Spaaij, & Sbaraglia, 2017)

Figure 3 depicts how gay and bisexual teenage males play team sport at less than half the rate of their heterosexual peers (Doull et al., 2018), whilst girls who identify as lesbian are known to experience discrimination and exclusion within some sport settings (Drury, 2011). Other research has found girls of all sexualities may avoid playing 'traditionally male' team sports because they don't want to be perceived as a lesbian or experience discrimination (Drury, 2011).

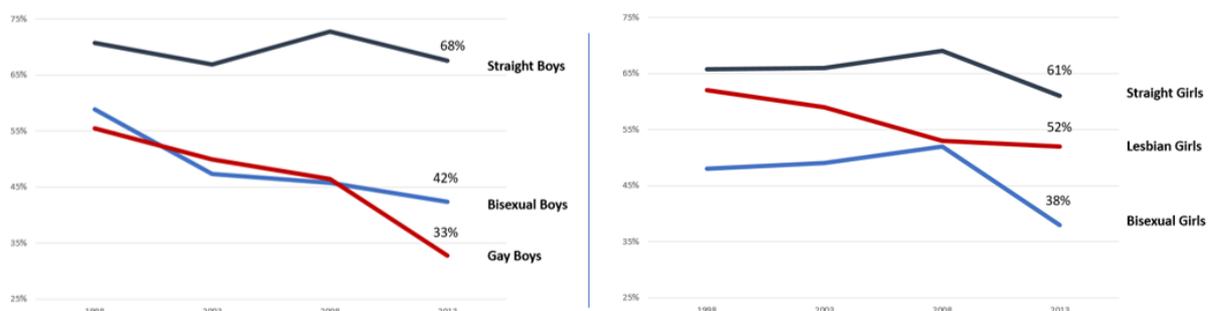


Figure 3: Team sport participation in the last year – high school student

Source: (Doull, Watson, Smith, Homma, & Saewyc, 2018)

Less is known about the experiences of trans and gender diverse people, but existing studies would suggest that transgender young people report negative and exclusionary experiences when seeking to participate in sport (Hargie, Mitchell & Somerville, 2017). A 2002 Australian Sports Commission report (now Sport Australia) suggested that trans and gender diverse people also regularly experience exclusion, and avoid sport, but also face many unique barriers such as the availability of safe changing facilities (Hargie, Mitchell & Somerville, 2017).

Several studies have identified those individuals who identify as LGBTI+ experience poorer health outcomes, including alarming rates of depression, isolation and suicide (VicHealth, 2015). LGB youth are five-times more likely to attempt suicide than straight youth (Hillier et al. 2010) No comparable, large-scale population research has been conducted to determine rates of self-harm and suicide among Trans and gender diverse young people, however, studies suggest rates are even higher than

among sexual-minority youth. For example, one study reports more than half (51%) of female-to-male Trans and 42% of non-binary youth have attempted suicide (Toomey, Syvertsen & Shramko, 2018).

A Victorian study funded by Beyond Blue has found discrimination in sport is contributing to health disparities between LGBTI+ youth and their peers (VicHealth, 2017). Another national study (Hillier et al., 2010) with Australian LGBTI+ youth found those who encounter discrimination due to their sexuality or gender identity, such as often occurs in sport, are more likely to self-harm or consider self-harm (see Figure 4).

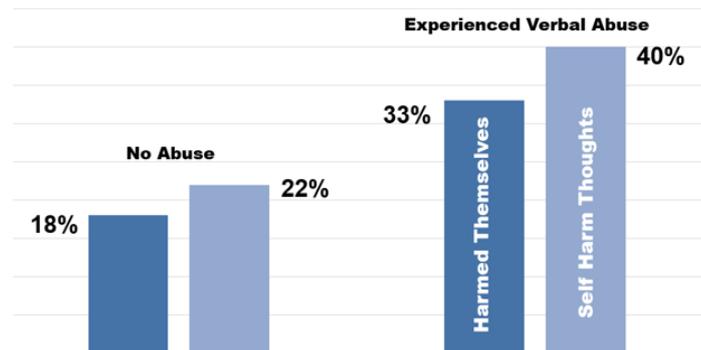


Figure 4: The relationship between experiences of anti-LGBTI+ behaviour and self-harm

Source: (Hillier et al., 2010)

The exclusion of people who identify as LGBTI+ from sporting spaces results in exclusion from the benefits associated with sport, including enhanced physical and mental health as well as social connection and feelings of belonging (Bailey, 2006). Conversely, supporting the LGBTI+ community to engage in inclusive and welcoming sporting spaces as spectators, participants, coaches and volunteers could potentially have a positive impact on addressing these health inequities. Unfortunately, not all sport environments are safe and welcoming for LGBTI+ people.

Table 1: Summary of research examining LGBTI+ experiences in sport drawn from Australian/Victorian based research

<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
1998	<a href="#">Writing Themselves In (Hillier et al., 1998)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> Australian same sex attracted young people feel least-safe in sport environments, compared to all other settings.
1999	<a href="#">Jocks and Rocks (Study into attitudes and behaviours among PE students) (Lewis, Rhea, &amp; Symons, 1999)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> “Sport and related activities tend to be considered the ‘last bastion of masculinity’. Competitiveness, aggression, even violence, and the urge to master and control, are thought to be masculine characteristics embedded in the culture of sport. Being feminine, being gay or lesbian, inside or outside of sport, is often considered by many to be not only different, but inferior. The ‘other’ in sporting culture is often harassed or vilified; reference to the feminine, the ‘poofter’ and the ‘dyke’ are often used in ways to discredit certain athletic performances and discount certain athletes as persons.” (p. 1)
2005	<a href="#">Writing themselves in again: 6 years on (Hillier et al. 2005)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> Australian LGBTI+ young people feel least-safe in sport environments, compared to all other settings. There is also a strong and direct relationship between being the target of homophobic abuse and self-harm.
2006	<a href="#">Getting over it: homophobia, sport &amp; university education (Symons and Hemphill, 2009)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> Conference organised by Victoria University to share research conducted since 1998 which found homophobic and sexist behaviour to be common in team sport.
2009	<a href="#">Sexuality Matters in Physical Education and Sport Studies (Hemphill &amp; Symons, 2009)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> “Sport and education settings as sites where homophobia is prevalent, with deleterious consequences for the health and well-being of GLB athletes and students, as well as coaches and teachers.” (p. 413)
2010	<a href="#">Fair go, sport! Literature review (Fletcher, Smith., &amp; Dyson, 2010)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> “It is beyond doubt that sport can be a site of discrimination on the grounds of someone’s (known or assumed) sexuality or gender identity. Experiences of discrimination and harassment reported in relation to sport in Australia have included verbal and physical abuse, exclusion, and silencing tactics.” (p. 4)
2010	<a href="#">Writing themselves in 3 (Hillier et al., 2010)</a> <b>Key findings:</b> “The abuse of young men in sport has been a consistent finding in all three Writing Themselves In reports and the higher percentage of abuse of GQ young people occurred in all venues” (p. 44). “Despite sport being a place where a relatively low amount of abuse took place (12%), young people generally felt least safe there, especially those who had suffered physical abuse. This was especially the case for young men” (p. 49). “SSAGQ young people continue to experience high levels of homophobic violence and abuse not just at school but also on the street, in sport and at public and private events” (p. 107).
2010	<a href="#">Come Out to Play (Symons, Sbaraglia, Hillier, 2010)</a> <b>Key finding:</b> “Within their own sporting teams, especially in traditional feminine teams or sports that were regarded as acceptable for women to play, some women suspected of being lesbian were singled out, shamed and excluded by other players.... Men were significantly less likely to play team sport than women (45.0% versus 62.0%) because the abuse of men who were suspected of non- heterosexuality could be serious. Women who played traditionally masculine team sports were almost expected to be lesbian however, the idea that there might be a gay man on the men’s team was unconscionable for other men.” (p. 7)

2013	<p><a href="#">Fair go, sport! Evaluation report (Fletcher &amp; Dyson, 2013)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> “Stating that this project is a success is not the same as claiming that a 16-month project carried out in four pilot clubs in one state sporting association is just the start of the work needed to effectively ensure that sport is a safe and inclusive environment for GLBTI people. Throughout the project, examples arose of the types of ongoing, insidious policing of gender and sexuality norms that continues to contribute to the invisibility and silencing of GLBTI people. These are included here as a reminder of the fact that Fair go, sport! has succeeded in starting conversations, not in eliminating explicit and implicit homophobia and transphobia from hockey as a sport” (p. 52)</p>
2014	<p><a href="#">Equal Play Study - The Impact of Homophobic Bullying during Sport and Physical Education Participation on Same-Sex-Attracted and Gender-Diverse Young Australians’ Depression and Anxiety Levels (Symons, Sullivan, Andersen, &amp; Polman, 2014)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> Homophobia and transphobia in sport communicates to young LGBTI+ people that ‘they are not welcome here, which can prevent them from enjoying the many physical, mental and social health benefits of participation and to maintain lifelong participation. Verbal homophobic abuse in these settings was strongly associated with poor mental health and wellbeing of these youth. PE class was a particular concern for SSAGD youth, where verbal and physical abuse was reported more often than in other sport settings. The gendered nature of sport and PE creates unique challenges for gender diverse young people.</p>
2015	<p><a href="#">Out on the Fields (Denison &amp; Kitchen, 2015)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> “The study found few positive signs that LGB people are welcome and safe playing team sports. Instead, discrimination and homophobia were still widely experienced by both LGB and straight participants. The majority of participants, for example, overwhelmingly shared the view that youth sport is not a safe place for LGB people. Another issue on which participants were largely unanimous was the topic of spectator stands - an alarming 78% of the nearly 9500 participants believed visibly gay, lesbian or bisexual people (such as if they showed affection to a partner) are ‘not very safe’ as spectators at sporting events.” (p. 9)</p>
2017	<p><a href="#">Exploring Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Inclusion in Australian Cricket (Storr et al., 2017)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> Three-quarters of non-LGBT and well over three-quarters of LGBT respondents believe that cricket should do more to be inclusive of LGBT people. Almost half of non-LGBT and almost three-quarters of LGBT respondents have witnessed homophobia in cricket. Cricket clubs are more welcoming of lesbian/bisexual women than of gay/bisexual men and transgender/gender diverse people. Few within the sport are aware of policies for either sexual orientation or gender identify inclusion/discrimination.</p>
2017	<p><a href="#">VicHealth Pride Game Evaluation (La Trobe University)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> Nearly three-fifths of participants had witnessed homophobia or transphobia in sport. 47% thought AFL games were not a safe place for LGBTI+ people. There was a small increase, among those exposed to the Pride Game, in their efficacy to intervene in some way if they witness homophobic or transphobic behaviour in the future in sport.</p>
2019	<p><a href="#">A Game for All? Understanding homophobic language in male team sport (Denison, O’Brien, Jeanes, &amp; Faulkner, 2019)</a></p> <p><b>Key finding:</b> All rugby teams with players aged 16 – 20, in Victoria and South Australia, participated in the study (just one player identified as gay). Homophobic language was commonly heard and used by participants, with 77.8% reporting teammates had used homophobic slurs, such as “fag” or “poof,” in the past two weeks, while 59.4% admitted to using these slurs themselves. This language does not appear to be motivated by prejudice or ‘homophobia’ but rather by social norms. It is learned behaviour, and the language is used to gain social acceptance in team sport environments. Interventions targeting social norms could be effective in reducing the use of homophobic language in male team sport.</p>

**Key Takeaway:** *There is strong evidence from multiple studies conducted in Victoria and Australia that LGBTI+ people face discrimination in sport leading to exclusion. There appears to be little change, with findings from studies conducted recently echoing those conducted in the late 90's. The studies collectively point to a well-established literature base demonstrating the continued existence of discrimination and exclusion of LGBTI+ people in sport. SSAs and others seeking evidence of the issues within sport can draw on these studies to better understand LGBTI+ discrimination and exclusion within sport. Further research needs to consider identifying effective solutions to solve the problems.*

## What work has taken place within Victoria to support LGBTI+ inclusion and reduce discrimination?

### Programs and Funding

Work to date has been relatively small scale, ad hoc and often focusing on one off events and activities that seek to raise awareness and knowledge of LGBTI+ inclusion. Program delivery is typically done by small, not-for-profit organisation or provided through the work of volunteers. The specific activities are detailed in the next section, however, broadly:

1. There is limited overall strategic, or policy-driven direction available to the sport sector,
2. There are no dedicated funding streams to support State Sporting Associations and community clubs to develop initiatives aimed at addressing LGBTI+ inequity,
3. Government support has generally come through organisations wishing to engage in LGBTI+ inclusion applying for general, competitive inclusion focused grants, such as VicHealth's *Innovation Challenge*, Sport and Recreation Victoria's *Together More Active* initiative and the Department of Premier and Cabinet's *LGBTIQ Community Grants Program*,
4. The number of applications to these general funding pools received from sporting and community organisations to support LGBTI+ inclusion has increased significantly from none or just 1-2 in previous years, to 11 last year,
5. This year-to-year, untargeted approach to funding of programs is very different than that taken in other areas of diversity and inclusion, which receive dedicated funding to support targeted programs. The lack of long-term, consistent, funding is limiting action in relation to LGBTI+ inclusion,
6. Initiatives are also often driven and run by volunteers from the LGBTI+ community. For example, Victorian organisations, Proud2Play and Pride Cup, were entirely volunteer run until recently and much of the program delivery continues to be delivered by volunteer board members, due to limited and unsecure funding to support staff.



Figure 5: Extract of Active Victoria strategy

Over the last three years there have been calls from sports organisations and LGBTBI+ community activists for the Victorian government to provide greater levels of strategic direction and resources to support LGBTBI+ inclusion within sport and also ensure greater coordination across sporting bodies. For example, the joint letter sent in 2016 to the Victorian Government to end homophobia and transphobia within sport supported by representatives from Proud2Play, Out on the Fields, Stand Up Events, Pride Cup, Melbourne Chargers, Purple Bombers supporters club and Victorian Seals Waterpolo Cub. An excerpt is provided in Figure 6.



Figure 6: Extract of LGBTBI+ sports advocates letter to Victorian Government

## Policy/Guidelines

The policy context is important for providing a framework through which sports can begin to both support and facilitate LGBTBI+ inclusion practices as well as challenge homophobic behaviour. Whilst sporting associations may have specific strategies and policies to support other underrepresented groups such as girls and women, people with disabilities, Indigenous Australians and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, it was rare that they have a specific strategy focusing on LGBTBI+ inclusion. Instead, LGBTBI+ inclusion and addressing discrimination is typically embedded or assumed to be included within broader inclusion and diversity strategies or policies (e.g. anti-vilification policies).

At the state level, despite the evidence that LGBTI+ people face regular discrimination in sport, this community was not included in the “Sport and Recreation 2005–2010: A Five Year Strategic Plan for Sport and Recreation Victoria” and in the original drafts of the Active Victoria – A strategic framework for sport and recreation in Victoria 2017-2021 (Figure 7).

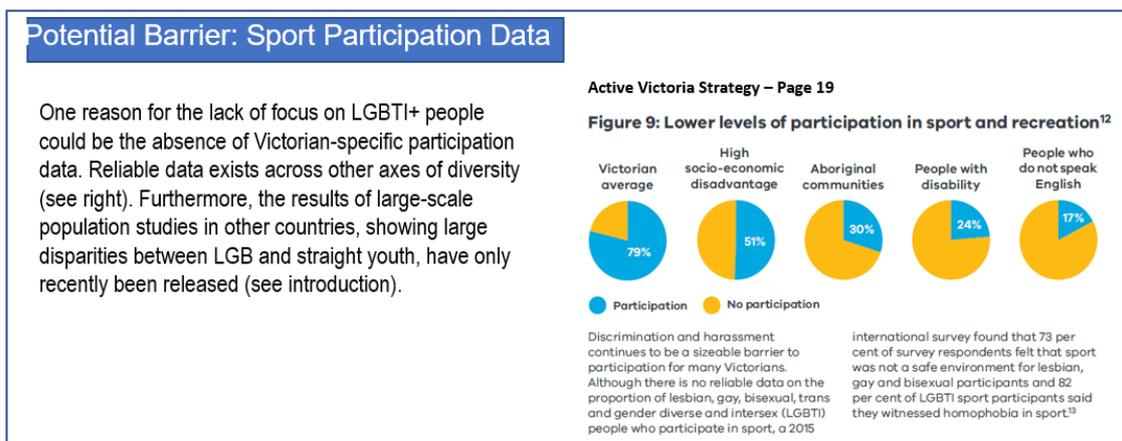


Figure 7: Extract of Active Victoria Strategy

Despite the overall lack of specific strategies, there have been some policies developed that impact on LGBTI+ inclusion across the sport sector at a national and state level. These have generally focused on processes to address homophobic vilification or ensure compliance with anti-discrimination laws, rather than promoting the active inclusion of LGBTI+ in sport. For example, the Australian Human Rights Commission developed the *Guidelines for the Inclusion of Trans and Gender Diverse People in Sport*, which build on the Victorian guidelines.

Table 2: Guidelines and Inclusion Policies

2000	Guidelines to Address Homophobia and Sexuality Discrimination	Sport Australia
2014	<a href="#">Anti-homophobia framework and inclusion framework for Australian Sports</a>	Rugby Australia, NRL, AFL, Football Australia, Cricket Australia, Australian Human Rights Commission, Sport Australia Available here
2017	<a href="#">Guidelines: Trans and gender diverse inclusion in Sport</a>	Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
2019	<a href="#">Guidelines for the inclusion of transgender and gender diverse people in sport</a>	Australian Human Rights Commission, Sport Australia, Coalition of major professional and participation sports
2019	<a href="#">Netball Victoria Gender Regulation Policy</a>	Netball Victoria
2019	<a href="#">Cricket Victoria Trans and Gender diverse guidelines</a>	Cricket Victoria

**Key Takeaway:** *The approach to funding LGBTI+ inclusion is relatively disjointed, and lacking overarching strategic direction and investment. Subsequently projects that have been funded have tended to be fairly small scale, ad hoc and often focusing on one off events and activities that seek to raise awareness and knowledge of LGBTI+ inclusion/exclusion rather than being focused on achieving specific, measurable objectives. In addition, any funding has been from general funding pools, which do not provide long-term stability and create dependence on year to year funding cycles. The*

development of policies to support LGBTI+ inclusion is positive but as studies have demonstrated these are ineffective if not enforced (Fletcher, 2013; 2014).

## Which organisations are operating in Victoria to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and how have these connected with sport?

Most of the program delivery, including support to SSAs with policy development and programs, is through the work of small, not-for-profit or volunteer-run LGBTI+ focused organisations, particularly Proud2Play and Pride Cup (see Figure 8). These are two of the more active organisations which deliver most of the programs and services in Victoria and are heavily engaged in sports contexts. Other organisations that specifically support sport organisations are Stand Up Events and Pride in Sport. There are numerous other more general LGBTI+ organisations that provide sporadic, ad-hoc services, or focus on building sector capacity within the advocacy community. A summary of all organisations supporting LGBTI+ inclusion in sport is provided in Table 3.

The current programs and initiatives delivered by all organisations, as outlined in Table 3 tend to reflect four areas of LGBTI+ inclusion work:

1. One-off events aimed at raising awareness or providing introductions to sport.
2. Education and training, generally on request (for a fee) rather than delivered proactively or as part of sport-club everyday operations.
3. Policy development advice.
4. Creating safe and inclusive environments for LGBTI+ people to participate in sport, generally separate from mainstream clubs.



# Proud2Play™

Over the last two years Proud2Play have sought to establish greater levels of collaboration and cohesion to work in this space through the establishment of the Rainbow Sports Alliance network, which brings together representatives from Athletics Australia/Victoria, Netball Victoria, Hockey Victoria, Melbourne University Sport, Football Victoria, Gymnastics Victoria, and Cricket Victoria, for regular meetings, sharing of ideas and work being undertaken. This is an important first step in bringing coordination and strategic direction to LGBTI+ inclusion in Victorian sport as well as providing the opportunity for the sharing of best practice between sports.



Figure 8: Overview of Proud2Play's Rainbow Sports Alliance

Table 3: LGBTI+ Organisations involved in supporting Victorian Sport

Ongoing engagement	Proud 2 Play	1. Organising specific LGBTI+ sports opportunities within communities	
	General Focus	2. Provide support and advice for LGBTI+ individuals and families	
		3. Support policy development	
		4. Education and training for SSAs on request	
		5. Creation and management of the Rainbow Sport Alliance, which primarily encourages collaboration and communication between Victorian SSAs	
		6. Holds community forums and public education events	
Pride Cup	1. Assist in organisation of Pride Cup events to improve LGBTI+ visibility		
AFL/Cricket focus	2. Deliver education and resources to support LGBTI+ inclusion and visibility		
Stand Up Events	AFL Focus	1. Organise and promote events seeking to raise awareness of LGBTI+ exclusion (Move in May)	
		2. Conduct research to inform program development	
Pride in Sport	Industry Body	3. Use athlete ambassadors to promote LGBTI+ awareness, and deliver education to junior sporting clubs on request	
		1. Conduct annual assessment and ranking of sport organisation activities in relation to LGBTI+ inclusion (similar to workplace index)	
LGBTI+ Sport Clubs		2. Provide guidance and advice on policy and program development to paid-member organisations (primarily NSOs)	
		1. LGBTI+ sport clubs, such as those in Rugby, Ice Hockey, Football, and Roller Derby, are involved in working with their SSA's to support policy development	
Sporadic engagement	Amnesty International	2. The clubs may also hold one-off events to raise awareness of LGBTI+ exclusion, though often in partnership with one of the Tier 1 organisations	
		1. Primarily working with Ice Hockey	
	Rainbow Network		2. Supports the organisation and delivery of Pride Games (similar to Pride Cup)
			1. Previously funded a part-time LGBTI+ youth sport inclusion coordinator (one day per week)
	Change the Game		2. Previously (most recent 04/19) produced a monthly Sport + Rec newsletter to showcase initiatives and news
			1. National network of individuals and organisations working to foster LGBTI+ sport inclusion
	Rainbow Families		2. Primarily formed to promote communication between organisations, through a private Facebook group (104 members)
	Minus 18		1. Holds introduction to sport/taster events for young people in partnership with Proud2Play
You Can Play		1. Holds introduction to sport/taster events for young people in partnership with Proud2Play	
		1. American-based LGBTI+ sport charity (invented the Pride Game) which partners and supports Australian sports organisations through strategic advice	

## Education Programs

Many of the organisations listed above provide education. Particularly at a community level, this is relatively short in duration and can be one off, although clubs that engage in multiple Pride Cups will be able to access ongoing education. In general education is introductory, addressing key topics to promote greater understanding of the experiences of the LGBTI+ community, experiences within sport, and practical strategies to consider to support the development of inclusive environments. There has been limited examination of the impact of education on practices and sporting environments.

Current education programs usually cover the following topics:

- unpacking terminology
- prevalence of homophobia within sport
- the impacts of homophobia on the LGBTI+ community
- benefits of inclusive, accessible sporting opportunities
- the need for tailored programs that can support LGBTI+ participation
- consideration of how sporting organisations can create inclusive sporting environments
- the importance of language and how to work towards inclusive language and address homophobic language and slurs.

More recently, the charity Stand Up Events, in partnership with the AFL and Monash University have delivered education within community clubs, targeting youth players and delivered by professional players. This education, is again of relatively short duration and focuses on the impact of homophobic language in sport and empowering players and coaches to challenge others who use homophobic language. This education intervention is in the process of evaluation. A similar program has also been delivered to male youth rugby clubs in Victoria as figure 9 details.

### Key Takeaways:

1. *There are multiple organisation working in the LGBTI+ sport space, however, Proud2Play and Pride Cup provide and deliver the vast majority of services, programming, and direct support to SSAs and government*
2. *All organisations receive limited funding and rely heavily on volunteers or limited staff and report being unable to meet the growing demand for advice, program delivery and resources.*
3. *Although each organisation has a unique focus, there is also overlap and competition, for scarce resources, particularly in the delivery of education programs and between Proud2Play/Pride Cup and the other organisations.*
4. *It may be logical and pragmatic to focus resources on a limited number of organisations, and build their capacity to do work in this space, rather than trying to support and provide resources to all organisations.*
5. *There is limited information available to assess the impact of the work of all organisations, and effect of current interventions and how they are contributing to increasing awareness, addressing homophobia and ultimately supporting the creation of safer spaces for individuals who identify at LGBTI+ within sport.*
6. *There is a need for more extensive research, with a particular focus on controlled interventions, to better understand what is effective in supporting inclusion in this context and why.*

## What work are State Sporting Associations undertaking to support LGBTI+ Inclusion and what support would they like moving forward?

Victorian SSA's have an increased engagement and awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion, evidenced through the increasing number of applications to the *Pride in Sport Index* (PSI). The PSI provides an opportunity for sporting organisations across Australia to submit details of their LGBTI+ practices and have these evaluated against a set of benchmarking criteria. Submissions to the index have increased by 61% from 2018-2019 (PSI website).

In 2019, the Pride in Sport award winners across all three award categories were Victorian based organisations including:

- Melbourne University Sport (joint highest ranked overall; highest ranked educational institution)
- Cricket Victoria (highest ranked state sporting association)
- St Kilda Football Club (highest ranked professional club)

As demonstrated above, many State Sporting Associations are partnering with not for profit organisation Proud2Play to support their work within LGBTI+ inclusion. At the grassroots, many sporting clubs are partnering with Pride Cup to support the organisation of Pride Cups/Games and, when a club has funding available, also to deliver an education program.

There is generally a lack of confidence and capacity for LGBTI+ inclusion within the sport sector. Proud2Play provide a pivotal role with State Sporting Associations, undertaking education of association staff, policy and guidance development and providing advice on how to better support and promote LGBTI+ visibility. The partnerships between Proud2Play and SSAs are important in building the capacity of the sport sector to develop LGBTI+ inclusion initiatives independently in the future. Pride in Sport, also plays a role, but far less-so than Proud2Play, as the organisation has just one staff member, who is based in Sydney.

**Case Study**

**RUGBY VIC**

Rugby Victoria (RV) has taken a unique approach from the other SSA's, in that much of its work has been driven and lead by non-LGBTI+ leaders within the rugby community, and gay players from within the sport. For example, board members, coaches, and professional players for the Melbourne Rebels drove the creation of an anti-homophobic language intervention, and the gay rugby teams provided the funding for Monash to evaluate. This work was recently recognized at the *VicSport Awards*. This year, RV also partnered with a strategy consulting firm, AKO, to develop a diversity ambassador program, which focuses on creating safe club environments for LGBTI+ people. The RV board is also appointing a 'special advisor on LGBTI + issues' and working on trans inclusion guidelines with Rugby Australia and World Rugby.

Super Rugby's Melbourne Rebels on the front foot in tackling homophobia in sport

World-first research into homophobia in sport wins inclusion award at 2019 VicSport Awards

Figure 9: Overview of Rugby Victoria's LGBTI+ education initiative

Table 4 provides an overview of initiatives undertaken by the most active LGBTI+ inclusion focused SSAs. A full list of activities undertaken across SSAs is provided in appendix 1.

Table 4: Overview of SSA's which are most active

(complete listing in Appendix)

Tennis Victoria	<p>Member of the Proud2Play Project Control Group. An evaluation with Proud2Play was conducted, resulting in a tennis-specific work plan supported by Proud2Play</p> <p>October 2018 saw the first Pride in Tennis event (modelled on and supported by Pride Cup) as part of the Traralgon Pro Tour</p> <p>Support affiliated body Vic Tennis (LGBTI+ tennis association). LGBTI+ weekly competitions and tournaments are held throughout the year, including the GLTA (Gay Lesbian Tennis Alliance) and the Glam Slam run alongside the Australian Open</p> <p>Support local clubs that run programs or promote LGBTI+ inclusion</p> <p>Signed the Pledge of Pride with Pride Cup</p> <p>Sponsor of P2P Wear it Purple Day event, including a panel with the Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Tennis Australia.</p> <p>Adopts National policies including updated Member Protection Policy</p> <p>Proud2Play LGBTI+ education training for staff members</p>
Cricket Victoria	<p>Produced Phase I research report in collaboration with Proud2Play and Victoria University. The research focussed on LGBTI+ inclusion in cricket</p> <p>Continuing LGBTI+ research focussing on BBL supporter groups</p> <p>In partnership with Proud2Play, Cricket Victoria deliver 'Proud Cricket', educating and embedding LGBTIQ+ pathways in cricket</p>
Hockey Victoria	<p>Heavily involved in the Fair Go Sport Initiative</p> <p>In August 2019 partnered with Pride Cup Australia changing 'Fair Go Sport Round' to 'Pride Cup Round'</p> <p>There are varying levels of participation from hockey clubs in both Fair Go Sport and Pride Cup, with education and training occurring at some clubs, and other clubs only wearing rainbow socks</p> <p>Pride Cup Australia run education sessions for affiliates</p> <p>HV and Hockey Australia education day</p> <p>In 2017 - Jason Ball educated affiliates on LGBTI health, inclusion and mental health</p> <p>Competition rules were amended to include individuals to play with the team that they identify their gender with, and for non-binary people to choose which team to play in.</p>
Netball Victoria	<p>Partnership with Proud2Play and membership to Proud2Play's State Sporting Organisation LGBTI+ Inclusion Working Group</p> <p>The Netball Victoria Constitution was amended to include Transgender guidelines</p> <p>Signed Pledge of Pride with Pride Cup</p> <p>Support Melbourne University Lightning Pride Match at Victorian Netball League (VNL)</p>
Athletics Victoria	<p>In the process of developing LGBTI+ policies</p> <p>Assist Athletics Australia in the development of a Trans and Gender Diverse policy</p> <p>Work with Proud 2 Play on the second iteration of the LGBTI+ Inclusion Working Group</p> <p>Support LGBTIQ+ Parkrun fun run</p>

## Areas for future development: The views of SSAs

The sporting associations suggested several areas that they would welcome support to develop their work in LGBTI+ inclusion in the future. These included:

- access to funding to organise LGBTI+ specific programs and activities.
- access to research and best practice to support the development of evidence informed approaches and to overcome barriers and resistance.
- Access to education that builds capacity within sporting associations and empowers them to work with and support community clubs.
- Ongoing education made available to clubs that can be delivered by sporting associations as well as other organisations (such as Pride Cup, Proud2Play).
- Specific guidance on supporting the involvement of transgender individuals, particularly education for clubs.

### Key Takeaways:

- *SSAs are increasingly engaging in LGBTI+ inclusion but there is generally uncertainty across the sector and a lack of confidence amongst staff about how best to do this. Progress is also uneven across the sector with greater levels of engagement within well-resourced SSAs.*
- *SSAs are generally securing funding for this work through Sport and Recreation Victoria or VicHealth.*
- *Sharing of best practice is beginning to occur through networks and events facilitated by Proud2Play.*
- *Education for SSA staff and for clubs, alongside funding are perceived to be key requirements moving forward.*

## What recommendations have emerged from existing LGBTI+ in sport reports and evaluations?

Most of the studies and reports, focusing on Victorian initiatives or undertaken by Victorian researchers contain similar recommendations around how to improve LGBTI+ inclusion, and reduce discrimination. These core and consistent recommendations are shown below in Table 5, as well as an indication of whether these recommendations have been implemented. When recommendations have been put into practice, such as the development of LGBTI+ specific policies, or the creation of anti-discrimination education programs, the impact and effect has not been measured, or when an evaluation has been done these have often been small scale meaning data on the impact of programs and approaches is limited, not only in Victoria, but also globally. There are no peer reviewed journal articles that provides detailed data reporting the impact of an intervention on homophobic behaviour in sport, or change to culture.

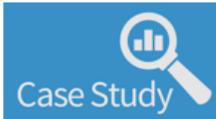
It is valuable to note that many of the recommendations made within Victorian based studies are mirrored in similar reports produced in international contexts including the *Out for Sport* report examining LGBTI+ inclusion within Scottish Sport (Smith, Cuthbertson & Gale, 2012) and *LGBT Inclusion in Sport: A good Practice Guide*, which overviews approaches to LGBT inclusion in Sport across multiple European Countries (Englefield, 2012).

Table 5: Recommendations Made in Previous Reports and Implementation

Recommendation	Reports it appears	Implemented	Evidence of implementation
Develop and implement LGBTI+ specific anti-discrimination and inclusion policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jocks and Rocks (1999)</li> <li>- ASC Guidelines (2000)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! evaluation (2013)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- Exploring LGBT in Aus Cricket (2017)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>	Partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most SSAs and sport organisations have included sexuality and gender in their anti-vilification policies</li> <li>- Homophobic and transphobic language remains common, which suggests these policies are not followed</li> <li>- Studies in cricket also found few are aware of these policies</li> <li>- LGBTI+ people were also not included in the original drafts of the Active Victoria strategy, and the final document makes just a passing reference and suggests there is a lack of research/evidence</li> <li>- Few sports have adopted proactive policies around inclusion of sexual minorities</li> <li>- More sports have adopted policies around trans and gender diversity, primarily due to a need address potential legal issues.</li> </ul>
Implement education programs and communication campaigns to send a clear, strong message that discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jocks and Rocks (1999)</li> <li>- ASC Guidelines (2000)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! evaluation (2013)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- Exploring LGBT in Aus Cricket (2017)</li> <li>- Pride Game Evaluation (2017)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>	Partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discriminatory behaviour appears to be as common in sport now, as it was when research first began in 1998</li> <li>- We were unable to identify any campaigns or programs that sent a strong message focused on ending discriminatory behaviour</li> <li>- Most campaigns, such as those related to Pride Cups, talk instead about broad goals of 'inclusion'</li> <li>- Education is occurring at the level of SSAs and community clubs. This is fairly sporadic and often of a short duration. Limited examination of the impact of education on changing practices and behaviours</li> </ul>
Implement programs to promote and encourage LGBTI+ people to play sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ASC Guidelines (2000)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! evaluation (2013)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- Exploring LGBT in Aus Cricket (2017)</li> <li>- Active Victoria Strategy (2017)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>	Partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No male players have identified as 'gay' on multiple surveys conducted with every rugby union club in Victoria, and dozens of AFL clubs, whereas a higher number of female players have identified as gay. This suggests gay males are either avoiding sport, or feel the need to hide their sexuality even when completing an anonymous survey</li> <li>- Proud2Play runs programs to support and encourage young people, particularly those who are gender diverse, to join a sporting club. No evaluation of the impact of this program is publicly available and funding for these activities is limited</li> <li>- Pride Cups are also designed to send a message that LGBTI+ are safe and welcome to participate/engage in sport; a relatively limited evaluation is underway which measures the number of openly LGBTI+ people in both Pride Cup and Non-Pride Cup clubs</li> <li>- grassroots LGBTI+ focused community clubs have organically emerged offering safe and inclusive provision for individuals who identify as LGBTI+</li> </ul>
Targeted programs educating school health and physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jocks and Rocks (1999)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> </ul>	Partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recent research continues to find PE classes are the prime sport site for discrimination and exclusion of LGBTI+ young people</li> </ul>

education teachers are needed to address discriminatory behaviours in HPE classes, which are a prime site for discriminatory behaviour and exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education regarding gender, sexuality and homophobia is now an embedded part of most Health and Physical Education initial teacher training programs. This is not however always leading to changes in practices. Whilst the Australian Professional Teacher Standards mandate that teachers have to demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as Indigenous students and young people with disabilities, supporting gender and sexual diversity is not mentioned within the teaching standards.</li> </ul>
Meaningful, long-term funding is needed to support programs designed to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and stop discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jocks and Rocks (1999)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! evaluation (2013)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- Exploring LGBT in Aus Cricket (2017)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No targeted funding programs have been created in Victoria</li> <li>- Program delivery and funding remains ad-hoc, short-term, and not based on a targeted and specific policy on LGBT inclusion, similar to policies developed for other groups such as women</li> </ul>
Collect sport participation data for the LGBTI+ population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- Active Victoria Strategy (2017)</li> </ul>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sport Australia attempted to collect data as part of AusPlay, in 2017, but stopped after the data collectors experienced verbal abuse from those taking the survey</li> </ul>
Research is needed to evaluate different approaches to promote inclusion and end discrimination to refine approaches and ensure they are effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jocks and Rocks (1999)</li> <li>- Sexuality Matters (2009)</li> <li>- Fair go, sport! Lit review (2010)</li> <li>- Come Out to Play (2010)</li> <li>- Equal Play (2014)</li> <li>- Out on the Fields (2015)</li> <li>- A Game for All (2019)</li> </ul>	Partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most programs and approaches used in Victoria have not been evaluated, or the evaluation has not been done using a methodology which provides data to determine impact, primarily due to a lack of funding to support the evaluations</li> <li>- The evaluation of Fair go, sport! was not able to measure change or ongoing impact</li> <li>- An evaluation of the AFL Pride Games was conducted offering some insights into change in attitudes of spectators.</li> <li>- The gay and inclusive rugby community self-funded a small, pilot evaluation of an education program which will be published soon</li> <li>- The AFL community, and corporations, also funded an evaluation conducted by Stand Up Events of the education programs its AFL ambassadors deliver</li> </ul>

Existing evaluations and reports provide useful context to inform further investment and development of initiatives. One of the most extensive initiatives focusing of LGBTI+ inclusion in recent years was the *Fair Go Sport* program detailed in Figure 10 and funded by Sport Australia (then the Australian Sport Commission) and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and delivered in partnership with Hockey Australia and Hockey Victoria in 2010-2011.



Case Study



**Fair go,  
sport!**  
Promoting sexual  
and gender diversity



**Fair go, Sport! Was one of the first major investments that placed LGBTI+ inclusion on the agenda of sporting associations within Victoria. It was also the first time in the world that an comprehensive intervention was developed and then evaluated. It was funded by Sport Australia and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and delivered in partnership with Hockey Australia and Hockey Victoria in 2010-2011**

**Objective:** *Fair Go Sport* aimed to increase awareness of sexual and gender diversity in hockey and promote safer inclusive environments, providing a model that could be used in other sporting codes. The project was delivered across 4 pilot hockey clubs who could tailor the work they undertook to best suit their needs. A key intention of the program was to foster cultural change at an association and community club level by facilitating greater understanding of the need for LGBTI+ inclusion strategies and a change in practices to make sporting environments more welcoming for individuals who identify as LGBTI+.

**Activities:** The intervention included the development of resources and promotional material, club level education, the establishment of LGBTI+ Rainbow Sock 'rounds' within local leagues to raise awareness of inclusion.

**Evaluation:** The project team worked intensively with clubs over a year long period but still felt they were only really at the starting point of fostering change and that continued investment was required to embed the work they had undertaken into the ongoing practices of the clubs and the state sporting association. The evaluation was not focused on measuring long term change. The evaluation concluded that the program:

- Had assisted in raising awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion within hockey clubs
- Prompted clubs and sporting association staff to have conversations about including individuals who identify as LGBTI+ within sport and reflect on why gay men in particular were either not participating or not open about their sexuality within their club
- Club representatives discussed being more willing to act on homophobic slurs such as 'that's so gay' because they had greater knowledge and awareness of the impacts.

***The key learning from the intervention was the importance of education and support for clubs, the value of allowing clubs to develop opportunities and projects suited to their local need and that ongoing resources and support are required to shift beyond increased awareness to cultural change within clubs.***

Figure 10: Summary of Fair Go Sport program and evaluation

Other notable evaluations of LGBTI+ initiatives within sporting contexts is the Pride Game study (LaTrobe University, 2017), which evaluated the impact of the elite level AFL Pride Game on promoting LGBTI+ inclusion. Pre-game surveys illustrated that around half of individuals who identify as LGBTI+ do not consider AFL games are a safe space for them, 58% did not consider them welcoming and 56% did not consider that games were inclusive. Nearly 3 in 5 who had attended games had witnessed verbal homophobia or transphobia. Individuals who attending the Pride Game suggested that they felt it was a safe space for LGBTI+ people (ranked 9.3/10 with 10 strongly agree), that it was inclusive (9.2/10) and it was welcoming (9.4/10). The evaluation suggested that people who did not identify as LGBTI+ increased their awareness of some of the issues impacting on the LGBTI+ community and were more likely to challenge friends using offensive language. The evaluation suggests an ongoing

commitment and ongoing exposure to LGBTI+ positive inclusion messaging is important in creating change moving forward.

Whilst not evaluating a specific program, there have been several reports produced relevant to the Victorian and Australian context more broadly that review LGBTI+ inclusion and propose strategies for improving inclusion within a sporting context. As part of the Fair Go Sport Evaluation, Fletcher, Smith and Dyson (2013) undertook a comprehensive literature review to inform the development of the Fair Go Program. The literature review emphasised the importance of policies to address homophobia that need to be enforced at every level of sport. The review also suggested that role modelling is important in creating behaviour change. Key people in sporting associations need to be seen to be acting within the spirit of these policies and promoting LGBTI+ inclusion. Additionally, awareness raising is important through events, posters, education to promote sport as anti-discriminatory and a safe and inclusive space for individuals who identify as LGBTI+.

Although not Victorian specific, Flinders University recently completed a report (Drummond et al., 2019) for Inclusive South Australia detailing barriers and enablers to sport for the LGBTI+ community. The report emphasises that at a community level, clubs require support to develop inclusive policies and implement them and education was essential to support clubs with developing more inclusive and LGBTI+ welcoming practices. Clubs considered this should be driven from the top down with endorsement and action from sporting associations, through to club presidents, committees and down. The report further emphasises the importance of engaging coaches in education as the key interface between the club and athletes, particularly young people. As such educating the coach to promote inclusive behaviour and address homophobic behaviour is important. Community based education also needs to engage with supporters of clubs as they contribute to overall club culture and attitudes towards inclusion.

Drummond et al's (2019) evaluation further illustrated the importance of coordinated governance of LGBTI+ inclusion within sport to encourage the lobbying of funding and a strategic approach to the development of initiatives in this space. These recommendations reflect a similar review conducted by Sport and Recreation services in ACT (2014). Using survey data collected from 318 respondents who identified as LGBTI, the report, similar to Drummond et al's (2019) conclusions, highlights the importance of supporting sporting organisations at all levels to promote member protection policies and enforce these, develop a range of strategies to address homophobic abuse and bullying within all sporting contexts and support sporting organisations to host and organise specific LGBTI+ events that can assist in celebrating and raising the profile of LGBTI+ identities.

## LGBTI+ inclusion, education and training

As illustrated in Table 5, a common recommendation across all the reports reviewed was the need for education to support LGBTI+ inclusive practices. However, despite education occurring, there is very little research that has examined the most effective educational approaches, including considerations of curriculum and pedagogy and also the broader impact on attitudes and behaviours. Matthey, McCloughan and Hanrahan (2014) detail an education intervention seeking to address homophobic bullying within youth volleyball clubs in Australia. The State Sporting Association in the study developed a workshop that focused on the nature of bullying, the role of homophobic language and casual slurs in bullying and the impact this has on individuals. The authors suggest that the education was useful in enhancing players' understanding of the negative impact of homophobic bullying but the study did not capture data regarding any changes in behaviour. Similarly, the same research team

examined the impact of education on coaches' capability to address homophobic bullying (McCloughan, Matthey & Hanrahan, 2015). This study similarly suggested that workshops were valuable for raising coaches' awareness of homophobic bullying and provided strategies to respond appropriately, but the study did not measure impact on coaches' practice.

Although education is an important area, Magrath and Stott (2019) researching anti-homophobia interventions in UK football suggest that there continues to be limited evidence for the effectiveness of education on improving attitudes and behaviour. Similarly, there is a lack of data illustrating the impact of education within a Victorian sporting context. Broader diversity training literature suggests that when developing education, consideration needs to be given to whether it is mandatory or optional, who delivers and their capacity to engage and communicate, the length and duration of training including whether it is one off or ongoing, the curriculum covered and the pedagogies utilised (Bezrukova et al., 2012; Kalinoski et al, 2013).

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- *Evaluations and reports examining LGBTI+ programs have generally made similar recommendations highlighting the need for policy development and enforcement, education, campaigns and awareness, specific programming and robust evaluations examining impact.*
- *Whilst the need for education is consistent at all levels of sport, there is limited knowledge of the impact of existing educational approaches on changes in practice and behaviour.*

## Conclusions and Future Directions

As outlined in the previous sections, multiple studies and reports on LGBTI+ inclusion and addressing discrimination have been published and contain consistent recommendations. Most recommendations remain as relevant today as when they were made in reports and studies beginning in 1998.

The following are recommendations for future areas of focus to support LGBTI+ inclusion in sport across Victoria. The available evidence would suggest that a focus on these recommendations will provide the greatest impact, and will support capacity building and future work, specifically the development of evidence-based programs that can be used by SSAs to drive change.

### Recommendation 1: Meaningful, long-term funding is needed to support programs designed to promote LGBTI+ inclusion and stop discrimination

One of the most consistent recommendations contained in nearly every report produced has been the need for dedicated, strategic, long-term funding to support ending discriminatory behaviours and promoting LGBTI+ sport inclusion. This is also echoed as necessary by the SSAs consulted with during the market analysis. It is important to note that recent research suggests that potentially 16% of the youth population identifies as LGBT or has been born with an intersex variation. This population group is significantly larger than other groups, which have received ongoing funding allocations in the Victorian state budget, to promote sport participation. In other areas of diversity, dedicated funding has been crucial in allowing the development of multi-layered approaches to begin to dismantle systematic disadvantage. As the section below suggests, education is an important part of supporting LGBTI+ inclusion but to address ongoing discrimination and exclusion of the LGBTI+ community education needs to be an element of a multi-level approach that is framed by discrimination and inclusion policies that are enforced, general awareness raising and campaigns to address

discrimination and promote LGBTI+ inclusion, the promotion of key advocates and diversity champions, targeted programs and development of safe opportunities for LGBTI+ communities alongside education to address the issues within current sporting spaces. This reflects the successful models used in other areas of diversity, most notably supporting the participation and inclusion of girls and women across the sports sector through initiatives such as *Change our Game* and *This Girl Can*.

Prioritising a funding stream for LGBTI+ sport inclusion work is important moving forward to encourage this type of multi-layered approach and encourage the sport sector to commit and engage more extensively with addressing homophobia and transphobia in sport and developing inclusive sporting spaces.

### Recommendation 2: Work with and support SSAs and other sporting bodies to develop and implement education programs that seek to address homophobic and transphobic discrimination, use of homophobic language and educate on approaches to supporting LGBTI+ inclusion in sport

The recommendations of previous evaluations and views of current SSA staff members suggest ongoing education and training is required. The market analysis suggests several factors should be considered in the development of a training package. SSAs are at very different stages of LGBTI+ inclusion engagement, requiring a differentiated approach to education to address the different learning needs across the sector. Several associations have been engaging in work in this space for some years and staff within these associations would require more than an introduction and overview to the area. The SSAs spoken to as part of the market analysis also suggest that there is a need for education and training to consider the diversity of identities with LGBTI+ inclusion. As an example, several suggested their clubs would like additional education on how to support transgender participants, whilst other felt there were different barriers for gay men compared to women who identify as lesbian and it was important for stakeholders in the sport sector to understand and be able to respond appropriately. This points to a need for more individualised training approaches that can build on the current knowledge and understandings.

Education, as one of several strategies, needs to be provided across all aspects of the sport sector, including at sporting association level, but also within clubs targeting volunteers, coaches, players and supporters. Education of coaches is particularly important given that they have considerable responsibility for and influence on player behaviour and team values. It is necessary to give consideration to what education is needed and likely to be most effective across the different target audiences.

Additionally, it is important to recognise that a number of associations are also engaging in education and training through Proud2Play who have developed an established training package to work with SSAs. Consultation with Proud2Play to ensure resources and information are not duplicated is crucial. What may be valuable is to consider resources and training [possibly online] that could support the current education Proud2Play is undertaking alongside assessing the impact of current educational approaches. Furthermore, widening access to training to reach a greater number of SSAs is important moving forward. As with any form of education, the ability to continue training staff is important to the SSA sector and do so at all levels of the organisation.

Education, as discussed, needs to be tailored to the varying needs of the sector but a package of training could cover the following areas:

- raising awareness of LGBTI+ exclusion including the impacts and prevalence of homophobia and transphobia,
- how to write and implement appropriate policies and practices within Associations and also within community clubs,
- the role of language in inclusion and how to address homophobic language, encourage inclusive language,
- increasing understanding of what practices can assist in making sports environments more welcoming for individuals who identify as LGBTI+.

Stakeholders at all levels need education regarding the importance of enforcing LGBTI+ discrimination policies and empowering those at a community level to ‘call out’ exclusionary and discriminatory language and behaviour. Opportunities and platforms to share good practice will be of ongoing importance in educating SSAs of what work can be undertaken in this space.

As detailed above, there is very little evidence of the impact of LGBTI+ inclusion training within sport, beyond some preliminary indication that it can assist in raising awareness of exclusion and inequity and strategies to promote greater levels of inclusion. Ongoing evaluation of education approaches, ideally through randomised controlled studies, is important for the ongoing development and enhancement of any training package. The evaluations reviewed demonstrate the importance of ongoing education at the community club level, currently Victorian clubs only access this when engaging with the Pride Cup. Facilitating SSAs to support and provide training to their clubs should be an important element of any SSA level training package.

### Recommendation 3: Collect sport participation data for the LGBTI+ population

The need for population-level data on sport participation by LGBTI+ people has been consistently identified, including by the recent Active Victoria strategy document. This data is the most important ‘outcome’ data that can be used to track the success of programs being used to create LGBTI+ inclusive sport environments.

Data from other countries suggest gay and bisexual males, and people who are gender diverse, participate in sport at much lower rates than their peers. It is likely that a similar disparity in participation is occurring in Victoria, but this has not been studied. An attempt by Sport Australia to collect participation data in 2017 was stopped after phone-surveyors conducting the AusPlay surveys were abused after asking participants about sexuality.

A different approach to phone surveys will need to be considered, including the consideration of approaches to collecting this data used in the United States and Canada. In those countries, questions about sexuality and sport participation are included in long-running surveys of high school students. This could be achieved in Victoria through including the same questions as the studies in these countries, about sexuality and gender identity and sport participation, in the biennial Victorian Student Health and Wellbeing survey when it is next conducted in 2020 as well as the National Youth Sexual Health and Wellbeing survey.

#### Recommendation 4: Fund and support rigorous, well-designed research to evaluate different approaches currently being used in Victoria to promote inclusion and end LGBTI+ discrimination

As detailed above, there is very little evidence of program impact that can be used to guide the creation of programs to promote LGBTI+ inclusion, or end discriminatory behaviour. Existing approaches being used in Victoria to promote sport participation by LGBTI+ people, and also to end discriminatory behaviour, should first, be refined to align with any evidence that is available. Once this is done, they should be rigorously evaluated via well designed research strategies across the sport sector and targeting gaps identified in this current report.

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## Appendix 1: Overview of LGBTI+ Sport Initiatives Operating in Victoria

Project	Organisations Involved	Activities Run	Duration	Funding Source	Evaluation
Pride Cricket	Cricket Victoria Proud 2 Play	Series of cricket opportunities for people who identify as LGBTI Development of 'Pride Rounds' within cricket	2017-Ongoing	Sport and Recreation Victoria	Yes but not yet available
LGBT Inclusion in Australian Cricket	Cricket Victoria	Research project examining LGBT inclusion across different forms of cricket	2017-2018	Sport and Recreation Victoria	Yes
Developing LGBT Supporter Groups in the Big Bash Cricket League	Cricket Victoria	Research project examining LGBT supporter groups in sport, and how to create them in cricket.	2018-2019	Cricket Victoria and University of Western Sydney	Yes but not available yet
LGBTI+ Inclusion	Netball Victoria Proud 2 Play	Development of Pride round at state and community level and build state-wide awareness. Building organisational capacity through education. Develop best practice	2019-2020	Sport and Recreation Victoria	No
LGBTI+ Education	Proud 2 Play Cricket Victoria Tennis Victoria Football Victoria Athletics Victoria Hockey Victoria	Education for SSAs provided by Proud to Play focusing on assisting sporting associations to implement more inclusive policies. Also providing club based education on dealing with discrimination	May 2019	Sport and Recreation Victoria	No
LGBTI+ Education workshop and research	Rugby Victoria	Education workshops covering fundamentals of LGBTI+ inclusion focusing on local government, clubs and sporting association stakeholders. Research examining approaches to changing homophobic language in sport	2019	Internal	Yes but not yet available
Addressing homophobic language in sport	Stand Up Events AFL	Intervention with junior male AFL teams in Victoria to address homophobic language	2018-2019	Internal	Yes but not yet available

Fair Go Sport!	Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Hockey Victoria	Initiative supporting clubs to undertake culture change to involve more LGBTI+ participants	2010-2014	Australian Sports Commission and Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission	Yes
Pride Cups	Hockey Victoria Pride Cup AFL VicHealth	Pride Cup rounds to promote awareness of LGBTI + inclusion, education and resources for clubs	2016 ongoing	VicHealth	Yes (AFL version)
Inclusive Basketball League	Basketball Victoria Proud 2 Play McKinnon Basketball League	Inclusive basketball league for LGBTI+ community	2016	Part funded Globe Melbourne	No
LGBTI+ specific clubs	Exist across various sports including Waterpolo Ice Hockey Tennis Soccer	Actively advertise as a safe space for LGBTI+ participants	Ongoing	Internal	No although some academic literature on this concept
Pride in Sport	Melbourne University Sport	Implement a governance structure to support the LGBTIQ community across all sport, fitness and recreational activities in the university. Pride events	Ongoing	Internal	No
Rainbow Sport Network	Proud2Play (facilitators) Athletics Australia/Victoria, Netball Victoria, Hockey Victoria, Melbourne University Sport, Football Victoria, Cricket Victoria, Tennis Victoria	Network of organisations, facilitated by Proud2Play who seek to share practice and provide a coordinated approach to LGBTI+ inclusion	2017- ongoing	Internal	No
Research and needs assessment	Proud2Play Football Victoria	Research project to examine how best to support community clubs to engage with LGBTI+ inclusion	2019	VicHealth	Project report to be developed

