

Implementing the VicHealth Gender Equality Quick Wins Checklist

The Centre for Sport and Social Impact from La Trobe University evaluated the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist.

This checklist was developed through VicHealth's Leading Thinkers initiative in 2018 and trialled by the Regional Sport Assemblies (RSAs) across 2019–2020, through the VicHealth Regional Sport Program. Regional Sports Assemblies provide volunteer support, information and training and development opportunities to local clubs in rural and regional Victoria.



Why was the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist developed?

- To support community sport clubs to be more inclusive and to champion women and girls to participate and lead in community sport (as players, coaches, officials, committees, and board members).
- To create more positive outcomes for all by fostering diversity in clubs that leads to more dynamic environments that are welcoming and can better respond to community needs.

What is the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist?

- The VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist (the Checklist) is a tool that helps community sport clubs to reflect on and assess how they perform across key gender equity action areas.
- The tool was designed to reflect a list of top 10 ideas to help sporting clubs achieve better gender equality. These ideas are aligned with some of the most advanced and cutting-edge global thinking in gender equality.
- Completing the Checklist generates a list of potential actions that clubs can implement to improve gender equity. These included: promotion, providing introductory sessions or social sport opportunities for women and girls, and supporting women in leadership.

How were clubs engaged to complete the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist?

Regional Sport Assemblies (RSAs) used 4 approaches to engage community sport clubs to complete the Checklist:

1. Club-led approach



Clubs completed the Checklist online by themselves after receiving an email or promotion inviting them to participate. This was the least resource intensive approach, however without the personal connection or invitation, clubs were less likely to engage with the Checklist. Not having an external person to discuss the Checklist with also meant those that did complete the Checklist tended to do it as a *tick the box* exercise rather than *meaningfully* engaging with the Checklist (i.e. reflect, assess, and make plans for action).

2. RSA-led approach



RSAs targeted individuals, clubs, and associations that they had existing relationship with, or those that they knew were interested in supporting gender equity. RSAs assisted clubs to complete the Checklist usually in person by facilitating discussion, giving context to each question and providing examples of potential actions. This was the most successful approach in terms of both engagement and quality of outcomes.

3. Community-partner approach



RSAs used the connections of partners (e.g. councils and facilities) to engage clubs. For example, councils promoted the Checklist through funding applications and facilities promoted it to their clubs.

4. Targeted approach to build awareness



RSAs engaged with clubs that were less *aware* and less *ready to change* and used the Checklist to open the conversation about gender equity and sow seeds for future action. This strategy may not have achieved the most impact in terms of completion of the Checklist and/or translation to action, but was used to help increase awareness and improve knowledge to prepare clubs for completing the Checklist or engaging in other gender equality initiatives in the future.



Top 3 do's and don'ts of successfully implementing the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist with community sport clubs

DO

1. Target messages to the interests and needs of each club and explain the benefits

2. Understand each club's *awareness* of gender equity and their *readiness to reflect and/or change* to:

- Develop targeted approaches to engage with the club to complete the Checklist.
- Target support. Help clubs that are *aware* and *ready to change* to implement new initiatives. If clubs are *less aware*, or *less ready*, then have conversation and educate them through completing the Checklist. This will raise awareness and increase the likelihood that these clubs will take action in the future.
- Use *ready* clubs to grow momentum in the area — use their stories to demonstrate change and engage other clubs.

3. Record what you did, what the clubs did, what works and what didn't:

- Staff turnover means knowledge can be lost.
- Ensure you learn from your mistakes and repeat what works.

DON'T

1. Don't rely on emails — connect personally with each club

2. Don't expect clubs to complete the Checklist by themselves. A support person (e.g. RSA team) can:

- Explain and talk about the concepts
- Be a critical friend and challenge the club's responses (*do you really do that?*)
- Discuss and work with clubs to come up with ideas to implement

3. Don't overwhelm clubs — there are lots of campaigns targeting clubs and they will have periods where they are busier than others, so try to time your approach when they will be most receptive (i.e., not at the start of the season).

Steps to Quick Wins Checklist success

The table below is intended to assist organisations looking to introduce and implement the Quick Wins Checklist with community sport clubs. This might include local governments, community health services, state sport associations, Regional Sports Assemblies and other organisations that work with community sport clubs.

The table provides 8 steps to consider when working with community sport clubs, based on the evaluation conducted by La Trobe University.

8 steps to Quick Wins Checklist success



1. ACTIVATE

Develop value propositions and activate the network

- Use your existing networks and partners to support club recruitment. For example:
 - Start by targeting clubs you have an existing connection with. Harder to reach clubs may get on board as momentum grows.
 - Ask regional and state associations to endorse the Checklist and support club recruitment. Associations can support and provide legitimacy during recruitment and completion of the Checklist.
 - Align to similar campaigns or organisations. If a sport or organisation is campaigning for women and girls, engage with them for support and activation.
- Take an individual approach to club recruitment. Develop a value proposition for each club based what you know about the club – consider their stage of *awareness* or *readiness* to move toward gender equity, and their needs, values and strategic approach.
- Most clubs want to increase memberships. Talk to them about how completing the Checklist could increase participation and retention in the club.



2. ENGAGE

Reach out to clubs beyond the email

- Club volunteers are inundated with emails. A general email from you could get lost or overlooked.
- Try to connect personally by tailoring emails to each club or volunteer.
- Follow-up with a phone call or personal contact at an event or network meeting.
- Face-to-face conversations and connection are always valuable, both in initially engaging the club (e.g., if you are at a meeting and you see them in person you could engage them then) and when explaining and completing the Checklist.



3. CONNECT

Find the right people in the club

- There are probably multiple committees and people with influence or power in every club. Identifying the right person/people to talk to about the Quick Wins Checklist is essential to getting traction on implementing initiatives.
- The *right person* will be the one who understands (or is ready to understand) the concepts of gender equity and who can identify the *right* initiative that will be accepted and actioned by club members.
- If possible, find 2 or 3 people at each club to engage with Quick Wins. If you connect with just one person in a club – what will happen if that if that person leaves? Will the initiatives be abandoned?



4. UNDERSTAND

Have conversations with clubs

- Not everyone will be aware or understand the language and concepts around gender equity. Providing resources that explain “what is gender equality” and “what is the problem” could be beneficial. Supporting clubs to understand through conversations can help. There are some tools and resources that could support you in having those conversations, for example:
 - VicHealth Gender Equality Health and Wellbeing (Available [here](#))
 - VicHealth Quick Wins for Sport Clubs (Available [here](#))
 - VicHealth Gender Equality, Health, and Wellbeing Strategy (Available [here](#))



5. CHALLENGE

Be a critical friend

- Clubs tend to answer the checklist positively. For best results, complete the Checklist with the club, get them to reflect on their responses, and take the important role of a critical friend.
- A critical friend can explain the concepts and challenge the club by asking if they *really* do the things in the Checklist.
- Explore the details of each question and potential action during this conversation. For example, women or girls training on different days to boys and men may seem like equal treatment. However, this can segregate the club. Everyone training on the same day could improve club and team cohesion.
- Make sure different clubs complete the Checklist consistently. ‘Very Limited’, ‘Limited’, ‘Adequate’, ‘Good’ and ‘Very Good’ should mean the same thing in different clubs.



6. ACTION

Develop solutions and plan actions

- After completing the Checklist, work with the club to choose 1 or 2 action areas to implement.
- Consider the club’s capacity, resources, interests, needs and strategy.
- Make sure the actions are realistic and timely (there may be short term and longer-term actions) so the club leadership group and membership will support them.



7. IMPLEMENT

Support action

- Support clubs to implement actions if necessary.
- Keep in touch with clubs and record their actions and outcomes (what they did, what worked, what didn’t). Build knowledge to improve future actions.



8. PROMOTE

Tell stories

- Promote clubs and their stories when they performed well or implemented new initiatives. This can:
 - Lead to other clubs engaging
 - Guide other clubs on how to complete the Checklist, generate ideas, and implement them
 - Positively promote the club (a great benefit)
- Clubs relate to stories from other clubs and the concepts (which can be abstract and hard to grasp) can be put into context. Promoting clubs rewards them for their positive action.

More information on the VicHealth Gender Equality Quick Wins for Sporting Clubs Checklist can be found on the VicHealth website:
<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/quick-wins-for-sports-clubs>



Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Level 2/355 Spencer Street
West Melbourne VIC 3003
T +61 3 9667 1333
F +61 3 9667 1375
vichealth@vichealth.vic.gov.au
vichealth.vic.gov.au

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