

FFA INCLUSIVITY PRINCIPLES FOR CLUB IDENTITY

Creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for participants from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds

Football in Australia has a rich and diverse history which FFA wishes to acknowledge and celebrate. Many clubs were formed and have developed from particular local communities who have made significant contributions to the growth and reputation of the sport of football as a whole. These communities are reflective of the multicultural nature of Australia and the vast reach of the love for the “World Game”.

FFA celebrates diversity and multiculturalism in our game and wants to ensure that football in Australia is open, accessible and embracing of all participants from all cultural backgrounds. Every person should feel welcome, safe and included at their local football club.

The way a club identifies itself to the community (including through its name, logo, principles and actions) can have a significant impact on whether a person feels welcome and included at that club. It can also affect the broader reputation of the game.

Following consultation with independent industry experts, FFA recommends that clubs embrace broad identities that are not tied to a single specific culture. FFA understands the importance of clubs being able to respectfully recognise their heritage and the specific communities that were instrumental in establishing and developing such clubs. At the same time, clubs that celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and make people feel like they belong regardless of their cultural background are more likely to succeed.

FFA has developed the following Inclusivity Principles for Club Identity to provide guidance to clubs on how they can be more inclusive in the way they identify themselves as well as the practices and actions that clubs adopt in engaging with their members and the broader community. Importantly, these Principles are only a part of the development of a broader FFA Inclusion and Diversity framework which will encompass other matters that are fundamental for our sport to create an open and inclusive environment, such as promoting gender diversity and accessibility for people with a disability (to name just two examples). The Inclusivity Principles for Club Identity also provide guidance on how clubs may wish to recognise their heritage in ways that are not inconsistent with these fundamental objectives.

Inclusivity Principles for Club Identity

- (a) These Inclusivity Principles for Club Identity are not intended to be enforceable, strict regulations. Rather, they are guiding principles for clubs to refer to in seeking to be inclusive to people from all cultural backgrounds.
- (b) Clubs are encouraged to consider various ways to recognise and celebrate their heritage while still respecting and welcoming people from all backgrounds. Clubs that identify themselves in an all-embracing and inclusive manner that is open to all participants may be perceived as more welcoming than clubs with branding that is targeted to one single culture.
- (c) Club names that reflect the local geographical region they represent and do so in a way that is welcoming to people from all cultural backgrounds are encouraged.
- (d) Clubs may be more attractive to a broader range of participants if their name is:

- (i) in English rather than a foreign language; and
 - (ii) of broad appeal rather than solely associated with a particular cultural, political or religious group.
- (e) Clubs are encouraged to celebrate multiculturalism and diversity and make it clear to the community that they welcome people from all cultural backgrounds. Club names that reference another country or region (outside their locality) may indicate to the community that only people from that country or region are welcome (or are more welcome) to participate at that club.
- (f) Clubs are encouraged to use symbols and words in their logo or emblem that are of broad appeal to make it clear to the community that they welcome people from all cultural backgrounds. Clubs that adopt a logo or emblem with a dominant reference which is associated with a particular culture, religion, or political group may cause people who do not associate with that background to feel less welcome.
- (g) Milestone years for clubs present an opportunity for them to recognise their heritage and show the journey that the club has been on. This heritage could be acknowledged by displaying a temporary commemorative version of their old logo alongside their new current logo in marketing and promotional materials and on the club's website.
- (h) In seeking to acknowledge their heritage clubs should have regard to the FIFA Laws of the Game and relevant regulations in relation to playing kit which the club must adhere to, including any prohibition on political and religious slogans, statements and images.
- (i) Clubs should be aware of their obligations under federal, state and territory discrimination laws (including but not limited to the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)) and never give preference to one player over another on the basis of their cultural background or religious or political beliefs. The FFA Statutes (including the National Member Protection Policy and National Code of Conduct) also prohibit discrimination on these grounds.
- (j) Clubs should encourage positive, welcoming and safe support at (and in connection with) Matches and take all reasonable steps to discourage rivalry with another club on the basis of any actual or perceived cultural, political or religious affiliations to that club, including in relation to their supporters.

Discrimination and other prohibited conduct

To be clear, FFA has a zero-tolerance policy in relation to discrimination, vilification, hatred and violence on all legally recognised grounds including race, nationality, ethnicity, religion and political views. FFA strongly encourages anyone who becomes aware of these behaviours, including by any club, to immediately report these incidents to their competition administrator. There are also applicable federal, state and territory discrimination laws that clubs must adhere to at all times.

Any incident of this nature may be dealt with by the appropriate body in accordance with applicable rules and regulations including any local or FFA rule or regulation, such as the National Code of Conduct.

Clubs should note that, under the National Code of Conduct, they may be held liable for the actions of their supporters. Accordingly, clubs have an important role to play in ensuring that football matches in particular are played in an open, safe and welcoming environment for all participants and spectators.