

Our Ambition:
Women and girls are
Welcomed.
Valued.
Thriving.

Introduction

Golf New Zealand believes that golf can be the most inclusive and accessible game for everyone in New Zealand.

Golf offers a unique range of benefits, including spending time with friends and family, connecting with nature, and a wide range of health and wellbeing outcomes. Golf's handicap system allows individuals to play recreationally and compete equitably regardless of age, gender or ability. Further, the diverse range of golf courses, facilities, and flexibility in playing formats means there is truly something for everyone. Despite this, a disproportionate number of women and girls play, compete, and work in the game.

Golf New Zealand acknowledges there are challenges for women and girls in golf and that gender equity measures, alongside a robust and cohesive plan, are needed to close the gender gap.

In 2021, Golf New Zealand established a Women and Girls National Advisory Group. The group included representatives from Golf New Zealand, Professional Golfers Association of New Zealand, Golf Managers Association of New Zealand, Sport New Zealand, and a range of General Managers and PGA Professionals from the sector. Discussions considered a wide variety of insights such as international research, national insights, the New Zealand Government's Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, together with the voice of the participants. This group brought together a diverse range of perspectives, ideas, and experiences to create a plan for women and girls in golf called Our Ambition.

We are committed to Diversity and Inclusion in its entirety. Our Ambition for women and girls is not in isolation; it is an important component of a more comprehensive commitment to inclusion detailed in our Inclusion Charter. The Charter also identifies a focus on ethnicity and culture, disabled people, and the LGBTQIA+ community.

Our Ambition aims to inspire the whole golf sector to be collectively responsible for outcomes that will contribute towards a more inclusive culture for women and girls in golf. Change starts with a commitment to take action, and we are excited to work together with everyone in the golf sector that shares Our Ambition to ensure, **women and girls are welcomed, valued, and thriving in golf.**



Where are we now?

Participation

Desired outcome:

Opportunities to learn and play golf in a way that suits the needs, preferences, and lifestyles of a range of women and girls

2500+
women participated in She Loves Golf events in 2019¹

16% of total registered casual golfers are women²

Average rounds per year played³

29 Women
26 Men

"Now that we have engaged these women, the club's next step is to ensure its pathways meet their needs"
- Golf Club Manager⁵

"Golf for a beginner is pretty daunting. It would be great if clubs had introductory offers and tee times for beginners"
- Participant⁴



Top four things that would encourage women to play more:⁶

- Pay as you play events (e.g., twilight)
- More friends to play with
- Flexible playing options (e.g., play as many holes as you like)
- Membership that includes social playing experiences and coaching



Women (particularly those aged between 18 and 49) have more barriers to participation⁷

65% of women said they want to play golf all year round⁸



Confidence, competence, encouragement and having the opportunity to participate in activities of choice decreases as young women get older⁹

Club Environment

Desired outcome:

Golf clubs and facilities have an inclusive environment for women and girls

Women are more likely to disagree that their club:¹⁰

- Has an inclusive environment
- Reflects the cultural diversity of their community

"The biggest barrier to me is not being intimidated when other players are on the course. I don't like the feeling that I would be 'holding up' the 'real' golfers"
- Participant¹¹



"Our clubs' biggest barrier to growing female participation is the attitudes of some members and our dress code"
- Golf Club Manager¹²

Women who have little experience of golf clubs believe them to be **stuffy, elitist, intimidating and male-dominated**¹³

Top three most important things when choosing a club:¹⁴

- Having a friend or family member at the club
- Friendly staff and good customer service
- Tee time availability and flexibility

21% of adult club members are women¹⁵

17% of junior club members are girls¹⁶



86% of women in golf are aged 50+



63% of men in golf are aged 50+¹⁷

Profile

Desired outcome:

An enhanced profile for golf that recognises and values women and girls



"Encourage and support the women that we have, value their contribution and have a clear focus on eliminating gender bias and stereotypical old-fashioned attitudes towards strong and capable women"
- Golf Club Manager¹⁹

"A lot of women golfers probably wouldn't have dreamt about playing Augusta, and we've never really seen a woman do it. When they played the first Augusta National Women's Amateur two years ago it was great to see my own peers get that opportunity to play"
- Participant¹⁸



33%

Of all golf coverage by New Zealand media accounts for women's golf²⁰

2:1

There is an over-representation of males in media coverage for golf²¹

Top four things that attract women to golf:²²

- Playing with friends
- Being outdoors
- Health and exercise
- Playing with family

Golf New Zealand Social Media Followers²³



25% Female



75% Male

LOVE Golf Instagram Followers²⁴



42% Female



58% Male

LOVE Golf Facebook Engagement²⁵



47% Female



51% Male

Workforce

Desired outcome:

A skilled and diverse leadership, workforce and volunteer network

29% Of GMANZ members are women ²⁶

18% Of PGA members are women ²⁷

1% Of the New Zealand Golf Course Superintendents Association are women ²⁸

"Golf in general is led by people who are generally reluctant to change and embrace a new way of doing things"
- Participant ²⁹

"I feel supported when I have other female colleagues in the industry who I can trust and learn from and bounce ideas off"
- PGA Professional ³⁰

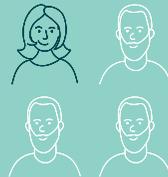
"It is important to not only create opportunities for women to sit on boards, but to empower women to have the confidence and skills to do so"
- Golf Club Manager ³¹



Leadership

Desired outcome:

Golf New Zealand leads by example



Fewer than 1 in 4 golfers are women and the golf industry is male-dominant ³²



"The leaders of the golf sector are predominately men. They are the most important people who can move the dial. Their role is to champion women"
- Participant ³⁴

"A barrier to our golf club encouraging more women to play is a lack of a long-term plan and not enough people to contribute"
- Golf Club Manager ³³

Golf New Zealand Staff



Golf New Zealand Board



References

Participation

- ¹ Golf New Zealand, 2019, She Loves Golf Participation Statistics New Zealand
- ² DatGolf, 2020, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ³ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ⁴ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ⁵ Golf New Zealand, 2020, LOVE Golf Stories Survey
- ⁶ Golf Australia, 2020, All-club approach builds effective culture change
- ⁷ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women Non-member Participants Survey
- ⁸ Sport New Zealand, 2020, Active NZ 2019 Participation Report, Wellington: Sport New Zealand
- ⁹ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women Non-member Participants Survey
- ¹⁰ Sport New Zealand, 2020, Active NZ 2019 Participation Report, Wellington: Sport New Zealand

Club Environment

- ¹¹ Golf New Zealand, 2019, Club Member Experience Survey
- ¹² Golf New Zealand, 2019, Club Member Experience Survey
- ¹³ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women and Girls Approach Club Survey
- ¹⁴ R&A, 2020, Women in Golf Charter FOREEveryone Toolkit

Profile

- ¹⁵ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women Non-member Participants Survey
- ¹⁶ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ¹⁷ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ¹⁸ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ¹⁹ Amelia Garvey, New Zealand Rookie Professional
- ²⁰ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Club Member Experience Survey
- ²¹ Media and Gender, Gender balance across sports media coverage in Aotearoa New Zealand July 2019-December 2020, April 2021, Isemita, Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa
- ²² Media and Gender, Gender balance across sports media coverage in Aotearoa New Zealand July 2019-December 2020, April 2021, Isemita, Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa
- ²³ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women Non-member Participants Survey
- ²⁴ Followers as of May 2021
- ²⁵ Followers as of May 2021
- ²⁶ Engagement as of May 2021

Workforce

- ²⁷ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ²⁸ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ²⁹ DatGolf, 2021, Membership Statistics New Zealand
- ³⁰ Golf New Zealand, 2019, Club Member Experience Survey
- ³¹ Tracey Koppens, New Zealand Golf Professional
- ³² Golf Australia, 2020, All-club approach builds effective culture change

Leadership

- ³³ R&A, 2020, Women in Golf Charter FOREEveryone Toolkit
- ³⁴ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women and Girls Approach Club Survey
- ³⁵ Golf New Zealand, 2020, Women and Girls Hui



Why are we focusing on women and girls?

Diversity in the sector builds stronger and sustainable businesses for the future

Strong, diverse and gender balanced leadership brings breadth of perspective, better decision making and create stronger organisations. Increased representation of women in the workforce, particularly in governance and leadership positions, provides increased visibility of role models and will attract a wider talent pool to shape the future of golf.

"Diversity is an important component to effective leadership. Companies with women on their boards perform better than those that do not: they are more innovative, have greater employee loyalty and more satisfied customers."

- Westpac New Zealand Diversity Dividend report

Golf in New Zealand is part of a bigger movement

In 2018, the Government launched a Strategy for Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation, which picks up the momentum of a global movement towards empowering women and girls through being active. Golf New Zealand is committed to contributing to this movement and aspires to a more inclusive culture within golf.

"Now is the time to provide strategic direction so as a country we can capitalise on that value and progress further, ensuring that the inequity and barriers women and girls face today will be a thing of the past."

- Hon Grant Robertson ¹

Golf has unrealised potential for growth

Research findings suggest that women hold an important key to the next generation of golfers and the future sustainability of the golf industry. With over 2.5 million women and girls living in New Zealand, there is an exciting opportunity to grow the game and enrich even more lives through golf.

Additionally, research reveals a 'female-junior multiplier effect', meaning that for every 100 new players, new female golfers will bring up to 72 more juniors into the game compared to new male golfers.²

Golf can send a powerful message

Golf can play an important role in supporting gender equality and challenging stereotypes. Through golf, men and women can be shown as equal and contribute to diverse and inclusive communities throughout Aotearoa.

"The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015) state that sport can contribute to eliminating discrimination against women and girls by empowering individuals, particularly women, and equipping them with knowledge and skills needed to progress in society. Sport can advocate for gender equality, address constricting gender norms, and provide inclusive, safe spaces"³

Golf can contribute to a healthier and happier Aotearoa

Research has found that playing golf helps prevent 40 major chronic diseases such as type II diabetes, heart attacks, strokes, and breast and colon cancer. It can also help to reduce anxiety, depression, and dementia while improving self-esteem, self-worth,

and self-confidence.⁴ Yet currently, only 5% of women in the country are playing golf.⁵ Golf New Zealand believes everyone should have the opportunity and access to the health and wellbeing outcomes golf provides.

¹ Hon Grant Robertson – Minister for Sport and Recreation <https://sportnz.org.nz/media/1549/women-and-girls-govt-strategy.pdf#4>

² Syngenta: The Global Economic Value of Increased Female Participation in Golf, 2016

³ Women, sport, and leadership. (2017). Global Women. <https://www.globalwomen.org.nz/news/women-sport-leadership/>

⁴ Golf New Zealand, Health Benefits of Golf Report

⁵ Active New Zealand Survey. (2018). Sport New Zealand

Our Ambition:

Women and girls are welcomed, valued, and thriving in golf.

Our Mission:

Empower and inspire women and girls to love golf and achieve their aspirations in the game.

Desired Outcomes:

1. Opportunities to learn and play golf in a way that suits the needs, preferences, and lifestyles of a range of women and girls
2. Golf clubs and facilities have an inclusive environment for women and girls
3. An enhanced profile for golf that recognises and values women and girls
4. Aspiring competitive players have the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their dreams
5. A skilled and diverse leadership, workforce, and volunteer network
6. Golf New Zealand leads by example

Golf New Zealand's Role:



Lead:

Lead a united approach to an inclusive sport for all women and girls



Support:

Provide support to the golf sector through research, data, insights, tools, and a range of best practice resources and guidelines



Partner:

Work with people, partners, organisations and funders who share the same values and goals to create equitable opportunities for women and girls



Invest:

Attract new investment and allocate resources towards programmes and people that support the outcomes of this plan

Outcome 1:

Opportunities to learn and play golf in a way that suits the needs, preferences, and lifestyles of a range of women and girls

Rationale:

Golf New Zealand recognises that every person develops at their own pace, values different experiences, and has different motivators to play golf. By providing a variety of year-round, well-connected, flexible and inclusive opportunities to learn and play, women and girls can make choices that meet their own specific needs and lifestyle.



We believe,

- **In continuously consulting with women and girls** to develop and design better experiences in golf
- **To create safe and inclusive learning and playing environments**, providing both women or girls only opportunities and mixed-gender opportunities will provide choices for a diverse range of women and girls
- **In playing the 'Its ok' rules** while learning or playing golf recreationally
- That the focus on providing opportunities for women and girls should be year-round
- **In a range of modified and shortened formats** to bridge the gap between learning and playing 9 holes
- In having the opportunity to play as a whānau

We will,

- **Position She Loves Golf as an initiative that provides year-round options to learn and play** from beginner to feeling fully confident on the golf course
- **Lead the implementation of Futures Girls**, a girls-only initiative that focuses on experiences for young women (under 19)
- **Invest in regional and local programmes and event delivery**
- **Lead regional She Loves Golf Networks** that connect women via social media and form communities
- **Partner with the PGA to provide further coach development** specific to the needs of women

Success looks like:



A positive trend in net promoter score



More women and girls engaged year round

Outcome 2:

Golf clubs and facilities have an inclusive environment for women and girls

Rationale:

Only 21% of total club members are women, and 17% of total junior members are girls. This presents an exciting growth opportunity. Inclusion goes beyond simply accepting women into a club. It involves creating an environment that makes them feel welcomed and ensures ongoing acceptance, involvement and a strong sense of belonging. Being more inclusive will lead to a more dynamic and vibrant culture within a club by bringing in new ideas, creativity, and innovation, ensuring clubs remain sustainable and relevant into the future.



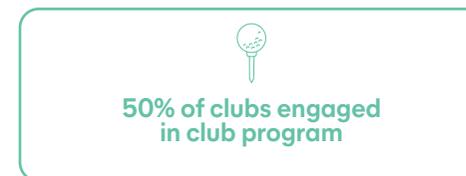
We believe,

- **In membership structures and playing structures that are gender-neutral** and consider lifestyle and confidence
- **In unrestricted access for women to play on course**, this means open playing opportunities for women/girls and men/boys with some allocated women and girls only tee slots
- In a mix of women-only and girl only club competitions as well as mixed-gender club competitions
- **In women and girls having the choice to wear activewear** that makes them feel confident and comfortable on the golf course
- **The voice of women and girls should be reflected within the decision-making process** when determining the future of the golf club regardless of membership category or age
- **In leadership and governance structures** that reflect the community of a club and have gender parity and age diversity
- **In a zero-tolerance** approach to discriminatory behaviour towards visitors and members
- That a culture of enjoyment and playing for enhanced social and wellbeing benefits are equally as important as competition and performance

We will,

- **Support clubs in working towards a welcoming, progressive and inclusive environment**, through the Golf New Zealand: Women and Girls Club Programme
- **Support women and girls in finding clubs and facilities** that meet their needs and aspirations through an informative centralised website
- **Celebrate people, facilities and golf clubs** who are working towards creating greater gender equality, to share learnings and inspire change within the golf sector
- **Share research and insights** to support golf clubs and facilities to understand better the motivations and barriers of casual participants and non-participants to inform the design of their recruitment and retention strategies and club member experiences
- **Advocate for diversified facilities** and diverse playing experiences

Success looks like:



Outcome 3:

An enhanced profile for golf that recognises and values women and girls

Rationale:

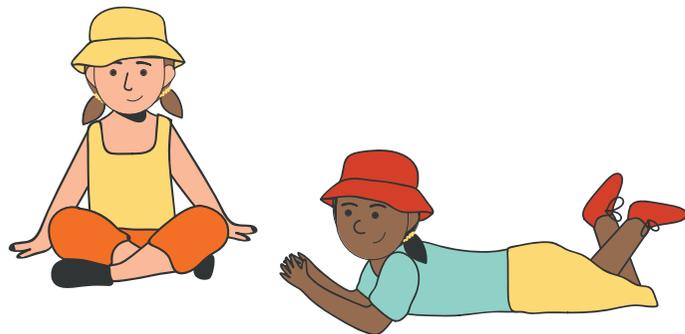
Golf New Zealand has an opportunity to create a strong bond with women and girls through the power of media and the stories told. By increasing the visibility of women and girls in the game, we can showcase positive role models and celebrate the value they add to golf. Furthermore, by listening to the voice of women and girls and demonstrating an informed appreciation of their barriers and motivations, we can challenge stereotypes, enhance perceptions and increase engagement with the game.

We believe,

- **Through our media, we can challenge perceptions and foster inclusivity** of women of all abilities, backgrounds, ethnicities, and ages
- In using imagery and stories that reflect New Zealand's diverse population
- In equal representation of men and women throughout media
- In sharing a balance between performance-based content and content that relates to recreation

We will,

- **Promote golf as an attractive sport and recreation option of choice** that is enjoyable, social, and has strong health benefits
- **Use an insights-based approach** to lead messaging that reflects and speaks to the motivations of a diverse range of women and girls throughout media and stories
- **Raise the visibility of a diverse range of women and girls** in the golf industry from grassroots and workforce to competing in golf to provide positive role models and inspiration
- **Lead the balanced representation** of men and women playing the game at all levels throughout media channels and stories
- **Partner with people, brands and organisations that share our values** in empowering women and supporting healthy, active lifestyles



Success looks like:



50/50 representation of women and men through golf media



Increased engagement from women on our media platforms

Outcome 4:

Aspiring competitive players have the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their dreams

Rationale:

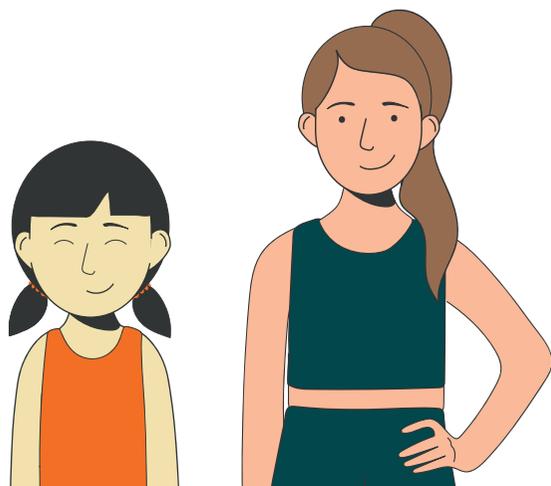
Champion Women like Lydia Ko can inspire New Zealand girls and women to develop their potential and achieve their aspirations. Women should have the opportunity to thrive in a welcoming and safe environment supported through inclusive tournaments and a talent development programme that meets their unique needs. This will ensure women are given the correct tools to compete on the world stage and inspire the next generation of New Zealand golfers.

We believe,

- **Quality tournament experiences** for women will encourage participation and engagement
- **More kiwi women winning domestic and international events** will inspire more young girls and women to look at golf as a sporting option when they are growing up
- **Women should be given the same opportunities to compete** as men
- **Women are as influential as men**

We will,

- Gain the voice of the participant by surveying our competitive and aspirational women
- Review national championships to ensure that women are given equitable development opportunities
- Support District tournament experiences and District Talent Development Programmes
- Work towards having a New Zealand Women's Open back on the tournament calendar
- Continue to deliver the four phases of the National Talent Development Programme
- Monitor the National Selection Policy to ensure women and girls, who have reached appropriate levels of performance and development, are provided opportunities to represent their country or enter the long term development programmes offered by Golf New Zealand



Success looks like:



A New Zealand Women's Open that young New Zealand women aspire to play in



Equitable tournament playing opportunities and experiences for women and girls

Outcome 5:

A skilled and diverse leadership, workforce, and volunteer network

Rationale:

Diversity in the workforce and leadership brings a significant variety of experience, viewpoints, and backgrounds, resulting in better decision-making. Women are currently underrepresented in the golf sector workforce. Through networks, education, and collaboration, we aim to build a sector of men and women that embrace diversity, promote inclusion, and inspire more women to be part of governance, leadership, and workforce structures, contributing to a thriving culture and stronger game.



We believe,

- **Golf is an incredible industry to work in**, and everyone should have an equal opportunity to be part of it
- More women working in golf provides more role models and influences the feeling of belonging
- The unique perspectives, backgrounds, and experience of a diverse range of women and men will keep golf relevant and add significant value to the future of the golf industry

We will,

- **Undertake research** to establish a baseline for women working and volunteering within the golf sector such as roles, remuneration, and workplace experiences
- **Partner with the golf industry** to support the development of women and inspire more women to work and volunteer in golf
- **Expand on a range of education and networking opportunities** for women and men in golf to connect and share their experiences and to learn from others in creating inclusive workplaces, governance and an inclusive game
- **Implement a national womens coaching network** in partnership with the PGA
- **Increase the visibility and celebrate women currently in the workforce** through stories and profiling to provide role models for future generations and demonstrate a culture of valued contribution

Success looks like:



More women in
governance positions



More women working
in golf

Outcome 6:

Golf New Zealand leads by example

Rationale:

Golf New Zealand is a proud signatory of The R&A's Women in Golf Charter and is committed to transforming golf into a highly engaging, accessible, and fully inclusive sport for women and girls at every level. Our organisation must continually strengthen its own approach to inclusion as a champion for change and inspire the golf industry to do the same. By working together, we can make the greatest impact.

We believe,

- **By actively fostering diversity and inclusion**, it will enhance the inherent value of the game for everyone involved
- **Gender equity is a collective responsibility**, and everybody has a role to play
- **Golf has an opportunity to lead by example** and inspire an excellent approach to gender equity

We will,

- **Demonstrate gender equality principles** across strategy, policy, governance structures, and leadership within the organisation
- **Invest funding and resources into people, programmes and initiatives** that support the enhancement of experiences for women and girls
- **Partner with organisations that strengthen and support golf's commitment to inclusion**
- **Undertake research and share insights** that reflect the voice of women and girls to increase our understanding and improve their experiences in the game
- **Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our collective work** to increase the engagement of women and girls in golf
- **Establish a National Advisory Group** with a diverse perspective and knowledge to review and monitor progress
- Share our ambition in partnership with influential men and women in the golf sector to be champions of change



Success looks like:



This ambition is shared by:

(With more organisations and clubs to come...)

Partners



National



District



Aorangi



Auckland



Bay of Plenty



Canterbury



Hawkes Bay



Manawatu/Whanganui



North Harbour



Northland



Otago



Southland



Taranaki



Tasman



Waikato



Wellington



**“Ehara taku toa i te
toa takitahi, engari
he toa takitini”**

Success is not the work of an
individual, but the work of many.

