



FOOTBALL COMMUNITY



AIA Vitality
MINI
ROOS



FOOTBALL COMMUNITY

FOOTBALL
PLAYERS

FOOTBALL COMMUNITY

All Australians who love, watch and play Football

SITUATION

Football reaches into more households, more parks and school grounds and more hearts and minds than any other sport in Australia. In 2015, the Football Community comprises 7.5 million Australians who have Football in their lives, including almost two million who actively participate in the game. When it comes to Football, they all love to talk about, watch, play, connect with and support the game and its participants. The community is truly national, incredibly diverse and welcomes all comers. Football is the face of modern Australia, inclusive of all genders, cultures and age groups.

CHALLENGES

Australia is one of the most multicultural nations in the world. It is a constantly evolving society that absorbs cultural, social and economic waves. Over the next 20 years Football needs to respond to:

Population growth and urbanisation. Australia will have a population of over 30 million people by 2035 and will become increasingly urbanised.

Football will become more than just a sport. It will have an increasingly important role to play in social cohesion, community integration, physical health and well-being, and international relations and economic development, particularly in Asia.

Personalisation. Australians will engage with Football on their own terms beyond the traditional club structures and will expect Football to be flexible to their needs.

Everybody's game. Men and Women will play Football to an older age and the game needs to accommodate the waves of non-European migration and Indigenous populations of Australia.

The Asian Century. The rise of Asia will mean changes to who populates Australia, who we trade with and where we source capital from, an evolution that will change everyday life in Australia.

These trends represent a great opportunity for Football and Football is perfectly placed to respond. It's a simple, safe and skilful game. It's fun for all shapes and sizes. It's inclusive and accessible. It can be practiced in a few square metres. It's the game we play in the global village.



TARGETS

In the future Football will;

- Have a Football Community of 15 million people that reflects the ever changing diversity of the Australian population.
- Meet the needs of participants who want to enjoy Football “Anytime, Anyhow, Anywhere”.
- Have one brand and a unifying identity that makes people feel like they belong no matter what format of Football they engage in.
- Take a lifetime view of participation so each individual stays part of the community even as they go through life stages as player, coach, parent, volunteer, referee or fan.
- Welcome newly arrived residents or people who develop a new found affinity for Football.
- Be seen by government and education authorities as a key sporting and social movement and a powerful force in achieving social cohesion, health and well-being and optimal international relations.

The Whole of Football Plan provides the platform for a game-wide approach to enhance participant experience and fan engagement, based on these principles;

- Invest in the Grassroots. Football must redistribute resources to focus on improving participant experience and providing pathways for our best players.
- Nurture a cohesive and coordinated movement. Football stakeholders must align their efforts on the same goals for the common good.
- Embrace Asia. Football will lead Australia’s sporting and social engagement with our neighbours across Asia. Football will provide a platform for both commercial partners and government to build meaningful relationships with our Asian neighbours.
- Recognise our stars. Not only the players on the pitch, but the people who make everything possible; volunteers, coaches and referees.
- Celebrate our history. Football must establish a Football Museum to acknowledge the history of Football in Australia and establish a strong connection between Football’s present and its past.

THE FOOTBALL COMMUNITY

A SNAPSHOT OF WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT FROM THE GAME

CHILDREN AND YOUTH PLAYERS



Children just want to have fun playing Football and make new friends. They should be free to acquire skills naturally while staying active and healthy, and at the same time develop important life and social skills. Children should be able to play as much Football as they want, without the imposition of a competitive environment.

Youth players over 12 years of age should be allowed to find their way into their level of skill, enjoyment and participation; elite development, community club based Football or social / informal Football. Whether it's outdoor, indoor, school or social.

CASUAL PLAYERS

Whether as part of traditional Football or social Football, casual players want affordability, enjoyment and exercise. To deliver these elements we need to provide facilities, coaching, administration and referees.



FOOTBALL FANS



Fans want to belong to their clubs and for their clubs to belong to their communities. They want to see world class Football played by their Australian heroes. They want to be valued, revered and included in every aspect of the game.



ELITE PLAYERS

Elite players, including people with a disability, need infrastructure that will enable them to reach their maximum potential and qualified coaches to guide their careers. Elite players require the coordinated support of clubs, associations and zones, member federations, FFA and government.

COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

Want direct relationships with the members of the Football Community and commercial connections that bring economic benefits for all. They want to be recognised for the critical role they play in supporting Football's ecosystem.



SCHOOLS

Schools want Football to provide participation opportunities that bring health, well-being and harmony within the school walls. They want all students to have the opportunity to participate in sport regardless of their physique, cultural or socio-economic background.

COACHES

Coaches want to educate and develop Footballers while providing the best experience possible for players. They need easy access to education and coaching infrastructure. Coaches need to be respected by the Football Community as a key element of participant experience and leaders of the game's technical development.





CLUBS

Clubs want to have a place in the heart of the Football Community, with active members and connections to like-minded organisations and sponsors. Clubs that grow and provide opportunities are the engine rooms of Football's future.

REFEREES

Referees need to be valued more than they are now and be seen as game facilitators, not law enforcers. Referees deserve RESPECT.



VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers want to make Football a fun and rewarding experience for participants and be recognised for their contribution. Volunteers need support and guidance. They need to feel part of something bigger.



PRIVATE PROVIDERS

Private providers, whether they be "for profit" or philanthropic, want to be acknowledged for providing a service and contribution to Football. Anyone wishing to help grow the game should be encouraged to do so, but should also operate within the framework of the game.





ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators need a clearly defined mandate and objectives that are transparent to their members and stakeholders. Administrators need to be held accountable in the implementation of strategies. They must work for the common good of the game and the broad interests of their constituents.

GOVERNMENT

They want to see Football as a partner to help deliver major social, community and health benefits. As Football grows as a political representative force, governments will expect consistency in policy and implementation.



Australian Government



PARTICIPATION - FOOTBALL PLAYERS

SITUATION

Football is the most popular team sport in Australia. Football has almost two million participants outnumbering the other football codes combined. The key factors contributing to Football's popularity are:

- **Simplicity:** Football is a simple and beautiful game, easy to understand and requiring the minimum amount of equipment.
- **Skill:** Football is a game that rewards technical skill, not merely athletic prowess or physical ability.
- **Accessibility:** Football is Australia's most accessible sport, as it caters to all genders, across all age groups, all shapes and sizes and seamlessly spans the barriers of language, religion and culture.
- **Safety:** Football is a low-contact sport, not a collision sport.
- **Multiple Formats:** Football can be played in a variety of formats to suit the location and occasion. Football is unique as a sport where game skills can be practiced by an individual alone.
- **The World Sport:** Football is the World Game and is universally popular. It transcends all divides and is a unifying force for good in the world.



CHALLENGES

In the face of strong, well-financed, competition Football needs to grow its participation numbers to maintain its place as Australia's most popular team sport. In this way, Football will help Australians stay active, healthy and engaged in exercise throughout their lives.

Football lacks funding and commercial income commensurate with its size and influence in Australian society. These historical factors have forced Football to be largely self-reliant for funding at the community level. This burden is reflected in the cost of playing Football, which is higher than it would otherwise be if external funding reached an optimal level.

Due to a shortage of opportunities and emerging trends in personalisation Football players have increasingly been looking to play football outside of traditional club structures. This has been evident by the growth in social Football. Currently, much of social Football is operated by private providers who operate outside the scope of Football's administration.

Football is yet to fully capitalise on female participation as the greatest growth opportunity. In 2015, females account for over 20% of registered Australian outdoor players or about 100,000 players, but the growth trajectory suggests removal of barriers and better promotion would see this number rise quickly.

Schools Football was historically the domain of other football codes, but Football's popularity now places demands on schools' infrastructure and expertise to cope with the boom.

TARGETS

The Whole of Football Plan evaluates key elements of participation, such as facilities and coaching in later sections, but, in addition to these elements, Football needs to have coherent and coordinated participation opportunities.

WOMEN

In order for Women's Football to reach its undeniable potential, Football must achieve the goals of having a girls' team in every club as soon as possible and then work to have a girls' and women's team in every age group within each club. To assist this process, every Member Federation, association and zone must have a dedicated women's Football development officer/s. In the US around 40% of participants are females, there is no reason why Australia with similar demographics can't achieve a similar ratio.

SCHOOLS

Schools are Football's biggest opportunity to grow the game. Football bodies need to provide schools with user-friendly tools to support the delivery of Footballing opportunities. The game must build a Football network within the schools system by educating and supporting teachers. Participants must seamlessly transition between schools and clubs. A national schools tournament along the lines of the FFA Cup should be established to provide a focus for development efforts.

COMMUNITY CLUBS

Football will support clubs by making club administration as easy and efficient as possible. Where necessary, administrators will also receive guidance on key club functions like finance and regulatory matters. Football needs to help traditional clubs deliver social football opportunities. Finally, existing administrations will assist new club development, especially in areas of population growth.

SOCIAL FOOTBALL

Football will support the growth in social Football by focusing on delivering suitable alternative facilities and participation opportunities. This will include working with businesses that own and operate social Football facilities and by helping traditional clubs to deliver social Football opportunities.

Futsal will be a key component of the growth in social Football. Futsal's small sided and dynamic nature makes it a perfect match to Australia's increasingly urbanised cities. The format's flexibility also means it can be efficiently delivered to Australia's more remote areas.

MINIROOS

Football wants participants to fall in love with the game. For this to happen, participants must have fun from the very first time they play the game. Football's introductory program MiniRoos will be affordable and at a price point equivalent to other sporting and leisure options. MiniRoos will also nurture our Football fans of the future.

SUMMARY

If Football were able to significantly improve the participant experience and address the key components that enable Football to be played and enjoyed, a total active participant base of four million people is achievable over a 20-year period, with two million of these being registered participants in formal structures of the game.

