



STARCLUB NT

Being a Welcoming Club

A strong membership base is important for clubs to grow and develop, so attracting new members and keeping the members you have should be a top priority.

How new and current members view your club and its culture is very important here.

It can be difficult for people to join a club, especially if they have a preconceived idea about what the club is like (whether those beliefs are true or not). So it's crucial to show both new and current members that yours is a welcoming and inclusive club with a positive club culture.

What is a club 'culture'?

A club's culture is made up of the values and beliefs of all its members. A positive culture is where members and volunteers feel appreciated and supported. This is what will help attract members and volunteers.

What is an 'inclusive' club?

Inclusive clubs welcome everyone, no matter their age, gender, race or ability. They make sure all members can participate at the level they choose. At an inclusive club, the environment is friendly and safe and free from any form of harassment or discrimination.

Other possible barriers for new members

People might have other beliefs about your club that are holding them back from getting involved. Consider these:

- Poor lighting—I'd feel unsafe at night.
- I can't train/compete at the times the club sets.
- Social activities seem to revolve around alcohol and drinking.
- It's not a great environment for kids.
- I can't afford the club's lump sum payments.
- There's no public transport near the club.
- Seems to be a lot of men and not many women (or vice versa).
- There's an existing clique.
- There may be homophobic/sexist/racist attitudes.
- There's a lack of information about the club.

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Whether they exist at your club or not, these beliefs can be addressed through the actions of your committee and members.

How can we be a welcoming club?

- Recognise that it's up to your club, its committee and its members to create a positive culture and show potential members that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Put yourself in the shoes of someone new to your area who's interested in joining your club.
 - How do they find out about you?
 - Is it clear who they need to contact?
 - What sort of introduction will they get to the club?
 - What beliefs or barriers might they have?
- Now consider those answers from different perspectives: a child/young person, an Indigenous person, someone with a disability, someone for whom English is not their first language and someone who is homosexual.
- Consider developing policies and procedures—such as a code of conduct, a welcoming procedure, an inclusive club statement and a committee induction kit—to describe what your club does and set the expectations of members. This will help guide your club towards being inclusive.

The benefits of being a welcoming club

- builds a positive club culture and improves the club's image in the community
- volunteers, officials and spectators will be easier to attract and retain
- club membership will increase, both players and social members
- extra revenue from new members and their families
- new skills within the club from new members and volunteers
- further sponsorship/grants may be easier to access.

More information

Download STARCLUB NT's templates for creating an **inclusive club statement** and conducting a **club culture assessment** of your club. You can also download a **member induction manual checklist** here.