



Australian Sports Turf Managers Association

Women in Turf Strategy

Industry Pathways Program
2022 - 2025



Australian
Sports Turf Managers
Association

Background

In 2022, the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association announced an industry first trade recognition and pathways initiative, the Women in Sports Turf Management Strategy.

This strategy has been developed in response to the disproportionately low number of females within the Sports Turf industry, which will further assist in addressing current challenges in workforce participation and retention as highlighted by the 2021 and 2022 Sports Turf Management Labour Resourcing Survey.

This program establishes the framework to develop a long-term approach to support female sports turf managers, the establishment of a pathways initiative to increase the number of females in the industry and a program of sustainable support and skills development to drive diversity and inclusion in the industry.

The **Women in Sports Turf Management Program** focuses on two target areas:

- 1. **Attract:** A strategy that will pioneer new and innovative ways to increase participation of women in Sports Turf Management.
- 2. **Retain:** The advancement of vocational opportunities, developing experienced and qualified workers through a series of pathway and support initiatives

The Women in Turf Strategy and associated initiatives will be informed by research, consultation and be data-driven to support initiatives that will increase the appeal of sports turf management to women, improve career pathways in workplaces and maximise vocational outcomes.

The Women in Sports Turf Strategy addresses key actions necessary to increase the representation of women in a non-traditional trade.

It is designed to strengthen relationships between industry, employers, schools and women's networks to ensure the best outcomes are delivered for women seeking a career in turf management.



Rationale

Addressing Diversity in Sports Turf Management

Women continue to be underrepresented in the sports turf management industry; with females making up only 1.4% of qualified trade workers.¹

Limited awareness of the trade as a viable career option, has led to shortages in skilled and trade qualified female turf managers, resulting from a disproportionately low number of females undertaking an Apprenticeship in Sports Turf Management.

At 1.4% of the workforce, this diversity rate is relative to, however below, that of comparative industries world wide, where in Canada, Europe, the United States and New Zealand, women represent between 4% to 7% of the industry's' workforce.²

Women face a range of barriers inhibiting their choice to participate in trades. The Productivity Commission recently commissioned White Paper, highlighting the serious economic and cultural issues these barriers present in addressing skills shortages in Australia.³

Evidence shows that there are deeply embedded cultural attitudes and perceptions about what roles are 'suitable' for women. The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association is committed to ensuring women have full access to opportunity and choice, are valued for their diversity, recognised for their contributions and are able to participate in all aspects of their working life freely and safely. The Women in Turf Strategy builds on this commitment to drive social, economic and cultural change in the sports turf management industry in Australia.

Women's participation in the trade workforce is crucial to the economic prosperity of Australia, as females play a vital role in addressing skills shortage in key industry areas and occupations. The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association will work with key industry stakeholders, trade partners, employers and advocacy groups to enhance trade qualification uptake and training opportunities for women.

The Strategy will redress the gender imbalance in sports turf management by:

- leading the way in increasing the appeal of sports turf management,
- facilitating networking & employment opportunities to drive cultural and societal change, and
- supporting women's learning to increase career opportunities

“There’s certainly a lot more resources, a lot more support nowadays... So if you have an interest in sport, or an interest in turf – get out there and give it a go. Ask questions and back yourself”

- **Geraldine O'Callaghan.**
Superintendent, Sandringham Golf Links



1 2022 Australian Sports Turf Managers Labour Resourcing Survey
2. Women in Turf: International Association reports 2022
3. Productivity Commission White Paper 2021. Rebooting the Economy



Inspiring diversity in Sports Turf Management

The Women in Sports Turf Management program focuses on three pillars of action based on research and consultation with members, industry stakeholders, government and advocacy groups



Increase the appeal of turf management to raise female participation



Facilitate change to remove cultural and societal barriers



Support women's learning to increase vocational and development opportunities

Key Messages

Women continue to make up a disproportionately low percentage of the sports turf management industry

Trade careers are rewarding and positively impact on the economic security of women

Continuous support and collaboration will encourage the growth of women in sports turf management

Strong relationships between the Association, government & industry will help redress the gender imbalance

What we will do

1. Establish the Women in Sports Turf Management Strategy as an advocacy platform for women in turf and ensure trade pathways for women are informed, accessible and supported from beginning to end
2. Implement strategies to increase awareness of gender diversity in workplaces to assist facilities and managers to support female employees and develop an inclusive working environment
3. Support existing female sports turf managers in career development and improve opportunities to support women to take the first step and transition into a career in turf management.

Implementation Plan



Increase the appeal of turf management to raise female participation



Facilitate change to remove cultural and societal barriers



Support women's learning to increase vocational and development opportunities

Desired Outcomes

- Increased awareness of the benefits of a career in sports turf management
- Improved exposure of trade qualification pathways for women
- Greater visibility of female sports turf managers as ambassadors within the industry

Actions

- Develop and implement a marketing campaign aimed at increasing women in the turf management trade
- Build resources that support diversity and inclusivity for females working in turf management
- Work with government agencies, trade partners, vocational education providers and advocacy groups to maximise promotion of women in sports turf management.
- Develop a mentoring network for new and existing female sports turf managers.

Desired Outcomes

- Greater numbers of women taking part and completing vocational education training for turf management
- Development of skills that lead to a career in turf management
- Increased awareness of diversity across facilities and workplaces in the industry

Actions

- Develop career pathways for women to complete a trade qualification in sports turf management
- Develop mentoring programs to support women undertaking apprenticeships and in the workplace
- Support and promote the contributions of women in sports turf management throughout the industry
- Leverage off existing vocational programs to increase uptake and completion rates of women in sports turf management.

Desired Outcomes

- Increased volume of females undertaking trade apprenticeships in sports turf management
- Stronger career development networks between education, employers, trade partners and women in the industry
- Reduced cultural and diversity barriers that deter women from entering the trade

Actions

- Support reskilling and upskilling of women in sports turf management
- Develop a series of leadership and support networking events for females in the industry
- Develop a careers awareness program in schools to maximise vocational opportunities for women in turf
- Foster an industry wide approach to vocational learning opportunities to assist students to transition to apprenticeships.

Key Enablers

Increased participation of qualified females in turf management

High quality training providers offering supportive and flexible delivery models

Members & employers promoting and supporting women in vocational education and training

Engaged Trade Partners, Governments, Industry, employers and sport & recreation stakeholders

Federal & State Government education and training support and investment



Key Initiatives

School Students

Educational Pathways Program

Program designed to increase awareness to females of career pathway options for year 10 – 12 students to a school-based apprenticeship in turf management

Regional Industry Engagement Program

Create connections between sport & recreation facilities and secondary schools to promote future career pathways for females while at school

Certificate II and School-Based Apprenticeships

Supporting Certificate II and Apprenticeships allowing year 10, 11 and 12 female high school students to commence a pre-apprenticeship program

Job Seeker, Career Changer, Mature Worker, Upskilling Worker

Careers Advisory Networks

Partnering with advocacy groups and employment networks to provide career advice and resources to promote women in sports turf management as a career

Mentoring & Support

Implement a mentoring network for females undertaking an apprenticeship and to support existing females in the turf management industry

Networking Opportunities

Program of educational seminars in each State to support and develop a network of females in the turf management industry

Increase Skills

Providing work experience programs, opportunities and scholarships to females in the turf management industry to further their skills, knowledge and professional development

Partners, Industry & Community

Engaging Trade partners, employers, facilities and organisations to offer employment, training, support and opportunities for females in the industry

Industry & Community

Trade Skills and Pathways Programs

Partnering with government departments and agencies to leverage skills development and establishing new trades pathways for women

Government Engagement

Working with government departments to develop/upgrade facilities to ensure modern and accessible workplace infrastructure for women

Advocacy Organisations

Partnering with community, state and federal advocacy organisations to educate, encourage, recruit and retain more women in turf management careers

Workplace Training

Establishing short and targeted inclusivity and diversity training for employers

Registered Training Organisations

Supporting RTO's to deliver supportive and flexible delivery models in sports turf management





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