

Sported
**Equality, Diversity and
Inclusion Action Plan**

July 2022



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Introduction

At Sported, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is instrumental to our success. We recognise the importance of this work not only as an organisation, but the impact it can have across our network and consequently in our communities.

Our [Reach, Include, Empower strategy](#) outlines one of our key priorities being tackling inequalities and it is with this objective, that we'll look to achieve our EDI goals. Predominantly through successful funding by the National Lottery Community Fund, we have formed an EDI team consisting of a Strategic EDI lead, Race Equity lead, a Wellbeing lead and Disability lead.

The aim of this EDI action plan is to outline our current and intended focus for this upcoming year 2022-2023. It will highlight what Sported are doing to fulfil its commitment of being a truly inclusive organisation and how we will work towards supporting and encouraging our network in becoming more equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

In addition to our EDI Action Plan, Sported have developed an [EDI framework](#) which will help inform our work at a strategic level, so we're able to deliver our EDI goals with purpose. The framework's main aims have been to focus our overall objective to help tackle inequalities and to do this by **increasing representation and participation of minoritised groups** both within Sported and our groups; encouraging and supporting our network to **adopt inclusive practices**; and to **drive and champion conversations around EDI** internally and externally.

We know many people experience multiple barriers, which is why we adopt an **intersectional lens** to our work around EDI. Our priority at Sported is to ensure we recognise these barriers and work towards overcoming them in partnership with experts and those with lived experience.

With every action plan or strategy, it is important to constantly review and evolve the content to ensure it remains relevant to the needs of our communities. We will therefore commit to reviewing our action plan annually and intend to mark our progress through this document.

A message from our Chair

Sported is a wide-reaching organisation which supports 2,937 sports groups across the UK in a variety of sports. 35% of these clubs are in the 20% most deprived areas in the UK. Our reach extends from Inner city Edinburgh to rural Cornwall. It is therefore essential that we place a conscious lens on the diversity and Inclusion of our organisation.

Sported are conscious of, and seek to include all individuals, groups, communities, and those with protected characteristics. We have a well-established history of supporting members and groups from ethnically diverse communities, women and girls, disabled people, but there is still much more to be done.

Sported continues to encourage increased participation for women and girls in Sport through several projects, a recent highlight has seen Sported partner with P&G through their Always brand to distribute funds raised through their Keep Her Playing campaign.

Our Include projects taking place in Glasgow and Northern Ireland seek to build on our disability reach increasing participation for young disabled people in grassroots sports.

We are proud to celebrate the achievements of the LGBTQ+ groups in our Network and this year we have teamed up with Stonewall to help increase knowledge and aid in making more groups welcoming and inclusive to those in the LGBTQ+ community.

Over the last 2 years and following with the BLM movement, every person within Sported's Staff, Executive team and Board has come to learn more about Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). We introduced Open 'Safe' Spaces, conducted Racism in Grassroots Sport Research, and arranged EDI training for all staff and trustees. We are hugely grateful to those members of Sported Staff who have shared personal details and lived experiences.

Sported continue to build on this important work to ensure that as an organisation, our staff, and member groups are continuously learning and improving on the commitments made in our Diversity Action Plan (DAP). Our 4-

year strategy, Reach. Include. Empower, places tackling inequality as a primary focus for Sported.

Predominantly through the National Lottery Community Fund, we have been able to turbocharge this commitment and we are so pleased and privileged to have a new Strategic EDI lead, as well as Race Equity, Wellbeing and Disability Leads on board to help navigate this work.

This has sharpened Sported's focus and helps everyone within the organisation look at all issues with the benefit of an EDI lens. Supported by Sported's new EDI Framework, we are committed to the needs and ambitions of our communities and can also therefore be held accountable.

A key element of this new strategic focus has been to establish a Black Leaders Network. This Network will ensure that black voices of community sport are heard. This was highlighted through our [tackling racism report](#) where our insights found that a network would be a key vehicle for change within the sport for development sector. We have secured funding for this project and are planning for the Black Leaders Network to launch as an independent body.

Our DAP has developed significantly since we published our first one in 2019. This transformation in itself is a testament to the good work that Sported are doing in this field. We recognise that there is no space here to stand still or for complacency. We must continue to listen to our communities and learn from those around us.

Championing diversity across our Board, Staff, Volunteers and Network remains a priority. Our aims in relation to each are set out below and we are personally committed to supporting the Board and Executive Team in the implementation of this Plan.

We are incredibly grateful to the EDI team for leading us in this space and also to our superb Executive Team and wider Sported Staff, all of whom have embraced our EDI work to help Sported as an organisation better serve the communities we work with now, and reach new ones in the future.

Simon Cummins – Chair, Board of Trustees

Rebecca Mills – Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead and Trustee

Our Board

Board Diversity

Sported's Board values the importance of diverse voices being central to its leadership. The [Board Diversity policy](#) highlights our commitment to this. Consequently, in 2022, Sported introduced a volunteer Trustee to the Board to ensure grassroots community sports voices were present in decision making.

At present the Board consists of 10 trustees The Sported Board is continuously exploring ways to be more reflective of the communities we serve. At present the Board is **age diverse** with ages ranging from early 30's to early 70's. 40% of the Board comprise of **females** and 60% of males. 20% of the Board are from **ethnically diverse communities**. No one on the Board has declared a disability.

We know we can better represent our communities, especially those who are disabled. We also recognise the importance of having economic diversity on the Board. We have therefore set the following actions:

| EDI OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | HOW | OUTCOME/KPI & REVIEW |
|--|---|--|--|
| Driving and championing conversations around EDI | For Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion to be reported on twice a year at the Board to monitor progress. | Our Board EDI lead alongside the Sported EDI lead will feedback on progress and actions. | For EDI to become a consistent thread to the work being done by the Board. Review in 2023. |
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | For Sported to actively encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds when a vacant Board position becomes available | Using a variety of channels including Sported website, charity jobs, LinkedIn, and recruitment agencies to encourage a diverse audience. | For Sported to have increased its Board representation in groups it currently under-represents by July 2024. |
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | Explore initiatives that will help increase representation of under-represented communities at Board level. | Working closely with partner organisations to identify ideas such as Board apprenticeships and disability inclusion. | To have created opportunities for disabled and other minoritised groups and to increase representation by July 2025. |
| Adopting inclusive practices | For the Board to undergo EDI (varied topics) training so they understand the barriers experienced in our communities. | External EDI training to be carried out as well as taking part in Sported staff upskilling (open spaces). Strategic EDI lead to attend Board meetings bi-annually. | Board members to have attended at least one form of EDI training every 2 years. Review in July 2023. |

Our Staff

Staff Diversity

Sported's staff team increased significantly over the last year with now 50 staff members employed. The team are based UK Wide covering all regions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Sported staff team are **age diverse** with ages ranging from early 20s up to mid-50s. 66% of staff comprise of **females** and 34% of **males**. 14% of the staff team are from **ethnically diverse communities**. 12% of the team have a **disability** and reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate any needs. LGBT+ diversity is at 10%.

Culture

An inclusive culture is paramount to the success of Sported as a place of work and we have developed initiatives over the year to promote this. This includes the introduction of a personal leave policy which allows employees to take time off for religious holidays as well as well-being. Flexible working is also encouraged to enable staff to achieve a good work-life balance.

The recruitment process has seen a preliminary review this year including making the application form accessible and actively seeking applicants from diverse backgrounds and those with lived experience.

Inclusion Champions

In 2021 we launched the [Inclusion Champions group](#) whereby members of the Sported staff team champion specific areas relating to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. This may include having expertise or a lived experience in one of the areas. Disability; Gender; LGBTQ+, Race & Religion/Belief; Mental Health and Well-being

This space has allowed EDI topics to continue holding momentum and for Inclusion to remain a priority in Sported culture. It has encouraged useful debate and conversation and introduced a learning space from those with lived experiences through our [open spaces](#).

We know there's more we can do to be better represented of the communities we serve and to become an even more inclusive workplace. We have therefore set ourselves the following actions:

| OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | HOW | OUTCOME/KPI & REVIEW |
|--|---|--|---|
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | To develop a fair and inclusive banding process, one which encourages staff development which in turn retains talent from diverse backgrounds. | The Head of Development and Delivery will lead an exercise, benchmarking against like for like organisations as well as exploring learning and development opportunities. | For Sported to have created the relevant pay banding and learning channels to improve talent retention and progression, especially within diverse communities. Review: July 2023 |
| Driving and championing conversations around EDI | For Sported to continue engaging in conversations around EDI, promoting an inclusive culture and workplace. Sported to engage in EDI conversations externally so we remain well informed and relevant. | To further upskill and develop the inclusion champions so they can confidently share learnings around EDI as well as communicating our ambitions clearly to all staff. To share our insight and knowledge through our website and conferences/events. | 80% of Sported's staff are satisfied with the commitment to Inclusion internally and feel it is an Inclusive place to work. Review July 2023. Sported to take part in an annual event to discuss insights and knowledge. |
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | Evaluating the inclusivity of our staff recruitment process so that we have a diverse and thriving workforce. | To align ourselves with best practice when recruiting inclusively and working with a diverse range of Partners. | Our recruitment process to be absent of barriers preventing people from diverse background applying. Review: July 2023 |
| Adopting inclusive practices | For 100% of Sported's staff to be trained on race equality and disability. | Training to be delivered by our Race Equity/Disability Lead or an external training consultant. | For all Sported staff to have an improved understanding of these topics and the barriers that exist for these communities. Review: July 2023 |

Our Volunteers

Sported's volunteers are crucial to our success as an organisation as it is their expertise and professional skills that support grassroots community groups survive. We currently have a total of 246 volunteers who work with our member groups. From the data we hold, our Volunteers are **age diverse**, with ages ranging from 25 – 81 years old. 67% of our volunteers are **male** and 33% are **female**. 9% of our volunteers are from **ethnically diverse communities** and 2% of our volunteers have declared a **disability**.

We want to be better representative of the communities we serve, especially through our volunteer base and so our key objectives this year is to increase the diversity of our volunteers, especially across ethnically diverse communities. Our main task is to collect further diversity data of all our volunteers, so we understand our current position. We will also look to explore innovative ways to promote our volunteer roles in diverse spaces. Our aims around volunteering are:

| OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | HOW | OUTCOME/KPI & REVIEW |
|--|--|---|---|
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | To increase the representation of volunteers from ethnically diverse backgrounds. | To collect further diversity data on our existing volunteers; to update our existing application process making it more inclusive and to work closely with a diverse range of recruitment channels. | 15% of Sported volunteers are from an ethnically diverse background by July 2024. |
| Adopting inclusive practices | For Sported volunteers to understand the barriers that exist in our communities and to have a rich understanding of inclusive practices. | Sported volunteers to attend training and upskilling sessions around EDI. | 70% of utilised volunteers to have attended training around EDI/Race equity by July 2024. |

Our Network

Our network reach over half a million young people around the UK. The potential to help remove barriers for young people experiencing inequality through sport and physical activity is significant. Our current Inclusion projects are highlighted in our [Annual report](#) and demonstrate our ambitions to make sure every young person has the opportunity to thrive. Our [impact report](#) also highlights what we are seeing as a result of this important work, and we will continue to work with impact in mind.

We know representation matters, which is why we want every young person to be able to see themselves in a role model. For us to understand the makeup of our network better, we are undergoing a key piece of work to collect more diversity data on our members.

We have secured funding to launch an independent Black Leaders network; a space which will act as the voice for Black participation in community sport. Other key Inclusion projects include our work with P&G through their Always brand to distribute funding and equipment to groups working with girls; Project 21 in Scotland which has placed a focus on disability Inclusion and our work with the GLA which has helped us grow our work around LGBTQ+ Inclusion. We also have further ambitions for our network:

| OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | HOW | OUTCOME/KPI & REVIEW |
|--|--|--|---|
| Driving and championing conversations around EDI | To publish a clear EDI framework and diversity action plan which demonstrates our commitment and progress in the EDI space. | To make sure this work is on our website and transparent to Partners and funders working closely with Sported. | A published and public commitment to EDI through our framework and DAP on our website. Review: July 2024. |
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | To support the development of the Black Leaders network, ensuring Black voices of community sport are heard. For Sported to also establish key partnerships influencing | The Race Equity lead to act as a facilitator in the growth of this network and for the working group to lead conversations within the sport for development sector. To meet with Partners regularly and to become a member of | For the Black Leaders Network to be launched as an independent body. Review: July 2023. To have at least 3 established partnerships with |

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| | the EDI sector in sport. e.g. Sport England, so we are continuously learning. | the sport for development coalition EDI working group. | organisations influencing the EDI space in sport. Review: July 2023. |
| Increasing participation and representation of minoritised groups | To develop a new member application form that enables us to capture diversity data accurately, ensuring we are representative of the communities we serve. | Sported will capture data through this system for new members and will request data from our existing members. | Diversity data held on 50% of group leaders. Review: July 2023 |
| Adopting inclusive practices | To further develop our EDI resources on the Sported Hub as well as delivering webinars for our members so they're able to create inclusive spaces for all. | For a designated space on the Hub to be focused on EDI, for our members to access resources, webinars, and signposting. | For our members to be more confident and better equipped in engaging and supporting young people from diverse backgrounds. Review: July 2024 |



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