

All Cultures Webinar 2 – Creating opportunities for participation by working together

Please find below a selection of questions posed both during and after Webinar 2 in the All Cultures Webinar series, and answers provided by our panel of guest presenters. If you have any further questions please contact the following people:

Ashley Comac: Volleyball SA, ashley@volleyballs.com.au

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For more resources go to: http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/all_cultures

Questions and Answers

Partnerships

What partners or key organisations are involved in making your programs successful? Have any of the presenters worked with Migrant Resource Centres?

Ashley:

- Multicultural Youth South Australia (MYSA)
- Office for Recreation and Sport (SA Government)
- Local Councils
- Multicultural Communities South Australia
- Community groups

Have you worked with local schools and/or Department of Education when creating junior programs?

Ashley: Yes, we have done quite a bit of work at schools. In particular schools that have a large number of CaLD students. We have done quite a bit of work with the Adelaide Secondary School of English and are starting to work with Therbarton Senior College.

Transition

The presenters have talked about a range of opportunities offered, some being short-term exposure activities and others being based around events and tournaments. What are the plans to transition this in to regular ongoing competition? Has this happened yet and what has been successful and just as importantly what has been unsuccessful?

Ashley: We run our volleyball program on Thursday nights at Campbelltown Leisure Centre. We are commencing a new recreational competition which is open to all (we previously had a rec competition there on that night but postponed the new season until the end of the multicultural program). Throughout the program we have been promoting the upcoming competition which simply takes the place of the program after it is finished. Same night, same time, same place. So far we have had 2-3 teams from the program express desire to play in the competition.

This will be happening in the next 2-3 weeks so we are hopeful of having success with this.

Ahmed: Over 100 kids have transitioned to regular clubs from participating in or watching the Australian Somali Football Championships. A lot of these new participants have been funded through the United through Football Program grants program set up by Football Federation Victoria.

Communication and Promotion

What avenues of promotion have you used to spread the word about your programs/clubs etc?

Ahmed: Facebook is very big in the Somali and wider Horn of Africa community and is a key method to spread the word.

Ashley: Word of mouth, website, local community papers and newsletters, etc.

Costs

The presenters mentioned a range of approaches related to costs eg free and subsidised activities. Do you have some ideas on what small clubs can do to reduce participant costs when we are already working in tough financial conditions?

Ashley: Apply for small grants, sponsorship, or maybe work out a plan whereby in exchange for the athlete's fees they do some volunteer work around the club.

Ahmed: The Championships are funded by a combination of corporate partners – (banking and mining), local government partners (The event is hosted across 3 council areas), state government, Football Federation Victoria and a host of in-kind partners including City West Water. The events are free to enable community access and each team is charged a \$500 entry fee of which \$250 is refundable upon participation.

Organisation Buy-In

Is the work you are doing part of an overall strategy from Volleyball SA? How does it fit with your other work?

Ashley: Yes it is. Simply put, our overall strategy is to get more people involved with our sport, whether it be as a player, coach, referee, volunteer, or simply as a casual volleyball lover. We have recognised CaLD communities as a very large untapped market which we previously were not actively engaging. We have now recognised this and are working to provide opportunities for anyone and everyone to get involved with our sport.

Females

Can you tell me how you broke down some of the barriers (including attitudinal) to getting young women from a CALD background involved in sport?

Ahmed: The Horn of African community is a conservative culture and we broke down the barriers by holding a Women's only event, refereed by women in an indoor closed environment with female role model supplied by Melbourne Heart.

All Cultures Webinar 3 – Is there a one-size fits all approach to inclusive sport? (Panel discussion)

Please find below a selection of questions posed both during and after Webinar 3 in the All Cultures Webinar series, and answers provided by our panel of guest presenters. If you have any further questions please contact the following people:

Kerin Cross: SA Office for Recreation and Sport, Kerin.Cross@sa.gov.au

Karen Pearce: Basketball Victoria, karen.pearce@basketballvictoria.com.au

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Garnag Bul: Basketball: Coach and player, g.arangk@hotmail.com

Questions and Answers

I've joined the webinar from South Africa and appreciate the cultural sensitivities more than most. In the webinar, it was proposed creating teams with a unique cultural identity, like a New Zealand Maori side. South Africa would never be able to create a Zulu rugby side or an Afrikaans cricket team. While I do appreciate heritage and identity; I also appreciate that we've (South Africa) still got very raw wounds from not too long ago and selecting a culturally unique side may only re-open those wounds.

This comment reflects the theme of the webinar, does one size fit all? It appreciates that there is a need to acknowledge cultural sensitivities in the delivery of any new program and that there will be different needs in every community. So what works in a particular community in Victoria, might not work in a community in Western Australia, or in South Africa! This is a good discussion point to inspire thinking and we heard the thoughts of a couple of panellists throughout webinar 3, and now give all of them the opportunity to respond.

Anne: Indeed, as in most areas of life, there is not a single solution. Our experience is that there is a place for all sorts of engagement. There are many culturally unique teams or tournaments, as the groups involved like to have the opportunity to engage and celebrate their culture across the sports that they love. However these same groups often engage in mixed activities as well, and Football United[®]'s experience is that sport can be a platform to foster cultural appreciation, and even healing, if carefully orchestrated. There are increasing number of programs working in just that space across the world, with research to support their impact.

Similarly, the current "community sport" and public school-based sport do not offer opportunities for all to engage, hence the need for parallel programs, such as Football United[®], with the need for them to be recognized for the role they play, and supported appropriately.

Karen: In a lot of cases, there is a need for segregated participation prior to integrating into "mainstream" programs. There are times when these parallel programs eventually integrate, but there is no best practice as to whether segregated or integrated programs provide the best outcome. In Basketball, our primary objective is to ensure that all participants participate under the auspices of one of our affiliated associations. In this way, everyone involved has the opportunity for support, be that monetary, through equipment or uniforms, or insurance as some examples. In Victoria we know of a number of communities that do not wish to play outside their own, and have done this happily for many years. Remember though that the pathway exists through integration.

Kerin: There is no one answer to this. In the Australian context the purpose behind the team or club plays a factor in the discussion.

Why are they playing sport? If it is part of maintaining their culture this is often outside the sport system but it could be an important part of assisting to settle in a new country. To participate within the sport system requires understanding of that system and the part you play in it. Sport should not be labelled as non inclusive if communities and other agencies opt to develop opportunities that are outside the system with no links to or education about sport and its structures. Sport pathways exist within the sport system not outside it.

How would a state sporting organisation get a full list of community organisations to help to plan for expanded services? Which organisations would assist with this planning?

There is not one location where you are able to get a full list of community organisations. Finding the right organisations differ in each region. Different state government, local councils, migrant resource centres, settlement centres and culturally specific sporting organisations, are available across the country. A good place to start would be to contact the Multicultural Office of your State Government or the state office of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship:

<http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/australia/>

<http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/multicultural>

<http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/>

http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/multicultural_policies_and_services_program_formally_eaps

<http://www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/multicultural/services-and-resources/multicultural-resource-directory>

http://www.dcm.nt.gov.au/strong_community/multicultural_affairs

<http://www.omi.wa.gov.au/>

<http://www.multicultural.sa.gov.au/>

http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cdd/for_and_about/migrant_and_multicultural_communities

www.cmy.net.au/MulticulturalSport/PublicationsandResources

Migrant resource centres – exist in all states and territories. They are non-government, community based organisations that support the settlement and participation of people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, particularly those who are new arrivals. MRCs also provide services for aged and disabled members of ethnic communities who prefer to access ethno-specific services. Many MRCs also conduct research and consultancy on a range of cultural and community issues.

The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) website

www.scoa.org.au/webapp_810627/Find_a_Member is a useful starting point to find local migrant resources centre. SCOA is the national peak body representing migrant and refugee settlement agencies across Australia.

Local government – many local government associations are heavily involved in providing services for multicultural communities. Many will have development officers, settlement officers and other similar staff that can provide assistance. They can also provide valuable information regarding local communities, which is extremely useful for sports who are wishing to work in particular geographical areas. The Australian Local Government Association website at www.alga.asn.au is a useful reference point for contact details for local government associations.

Funding opportunities

Information on a wide range of other Government and non-government funding and grants for community organisations, communities and individuals can be obtained from the Community Portal website at www.community.gov.au or by calling 1300 653 227.

Anne: The above list is excellent – I would comment on the latter part of the question, “Which organisations would assist with this planning,” to underline that there is no set formulae as to engagement – organisations will engage if they feel they are sincerely invited to be a part of the process such that they can influence the process to truly fit their needs; in relation to that, if they do not feel a need or a proposed process is not relevant to the organisation, it is likely they won’t engage. It should also be understood that many community-based organisations, and groups working with them, are extremely resource-challenged so while they may want to engage, they may not have the luxury of time or staff to do so.

Karen: Unfortunately I often think that the ever expanding list of community organisations is far too complex making one wonder which would best service our needs. The one thing to remember though is to form partnerships with those who have a similar objective to your own and whom are willing to share their ideas, resources, influence and control. Planning is the key and having partners on board as part of a steering group ensures that if you are new to this area that you won’t go through the inclusion process alone. Partnerships should also be reviewed on a regular basis as some partners are not necessarily required for the duration of the project.

Kerin: The above list provides much useful information. It is important not to try and be all things to all people. Have a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve in developing a participation opportunity. Local Government is a good place to start as they know who makes up their community. Once you know where, then seek out links to whom; community contacts and the relevant support services in that area. Be clear about the purpose of what you are doing. Are you targeting a specific community or are you creating an opportunity open to all? This will help identify who you should contact and what is needed from the relationship.

If they set up a community specific basketball competition, how do they involve the sports association and what are they expecting the sports association to provide? money? umpires? venues? uniforms? equipment?

Anne: I would venture to say frankly that expectations are minimal – but that hopes are high. In other words, community groups would most likely welcome support across all of the mentioned areas, but are realistic as to what is possible, based on experience. The fact of the matter is that once again, there is no one size fits all. In some cases local or regional sporting organisations work well to support additional activities such as community competitions, often with referees, space, gear. At other times there is more of a closed situation. One of the major inhibitors to community groups organising their own events is the funding necessary to hire venues and importantly fund the insurance necessary to cover the events. In relation to that, many venues require insurance for hire, so it is a “catch – 22” at times.

Karen: Insurance is the biggest reason to be linked to the sport and often partnering with sport provides the opportunity to utilise their insurance. In Basketball, we can often gain reduced or sometimes even free court hire through utilising our member Associations courts. I have thought for a while, that we probably only need to support the first generation of new arrivals, as after that they should have the ability to provide more for themselves, due to longer term employment, greater study opportunities etc. So therefore, sport in the interim needs to support in many areas and those mentioned are often the first to be required. However, expectation that this is a given should not be held, but this is where solid partnerships with community organisations, local government etc can often assist this process via financial assistance, uniform hire, equipment banks and so on.

Kerin: This question reflects the theme of the webinar and raises the concerns we hear from sport. Expectations are high in this area and continuous support is frequently requested. The reality is participating in sport has costs associated with it. The more involved and the higher the level of participation, the higher the cost. State sporting organisations, their member associations and clubs have differing capacity to provide support. Sport in general does not have the capacity to support the large number of requests received from the many different communities.

All parties need to be open in their communication and provide consistent messages when aligning expectations and deliverables. Seeking any support for a completion or event should occur in the early stages of planning.

Sports do not have the capacity to deal with and service every individual community group.

What about the role of developing partnerships? That is the key to inclusion happening.

The importance of making connections and developing partnerships is a key factor to inclusion. Partnerships were the topic of webinar 2. In this webinar, we explored three case studies and the presenters talked in depth about their experiences, successes, challenges and key learning's. If you were unable to join us for it the recording is available for viewing at:

https://secure.ausport.gov.au/participating/all_cultures/get_involved/cald_webinar_series/previous_webinars

Anne: While I agree that partnerships are crucial, one needs to be aware of the complexities involved in partnerships and the challenges that are inherent in trying to maintain them. Effective partnering requires investment of significant time and resources to maintain the partnership, open and honest engagement, commitment, communication, and significantly - trust. Research is abundant with learning in this area, and it is important to be realistic about what partnerships can accomplish, and be ready to invest the necessary to achieve positive outcomes, and maintain them.

Karen: As I mentioned above, I do believe partnerships are crucial, but as Anne said they need to be maintained and make sure your prospective partner can "bring something to your table". Be also wary of those who wish to partner because you have funding that they think they can tap into. It must be a win-win for all involved

Kerin: Partnerships are essential to developing ongoing participation pathways, sustainable programs and an understanding of the sport system. Parallel programs, community based teams and programs need at some stage to link into the mainstream sport system as this is where the pathways are. When partnerships and links are established early this is more likely to be a smooth process. Partnerships need to be relevant and bring something to the table. More partners does not necessarily mean better outcomes.

Creating links with the relevant state sporting organisation early on provides a solid foundation for ongoing development and participation within the sport system.

We will be on the right track when the majority of sports are funded to develop inclusive practises. Currently only those sports with funding grants are working on inclusion!

There are some sports that have a strong history of development of sport for multicultural communities (eg. AFL, Football). For many sports, this is a new target audience. The ASC is working with national sports organisations to build their capability to ensure that including people from multicultural backgrounds is part of their core business, and not a realigning of their priorities to access additional funding. Additionally, the ASC is working with NSOs to ensure that state associations and clubs are 'on board', committed to working in this area and resources are aligned.

Anne: Our significant experience indicates that, regardless of funding, major sporting bodies – no matter at what level - cannot fit the needs of all groups who aspire to engage in the sports they love. The sporting associations and clubs system is not built to cater to logistic, cultural and financial constraints related to special circumstances such as many CALD and disadvantaged groups encounter– all of which are enormous challenges that do not go away with a “one-off” contribution. The sport system, especially community clubs, manages competing priorities at all levels of the system, including:

- The economic realities of resourcing professional and semi - professional elite sport by national sporting codes who are then also expected to developed localised grassroots initiatives;
- The focus of all sports on developing their elite athletes;
- The level of competition between codes and local clubs to recruit and retain general participants;
- Managing large and complex systems of development, coach and official training and development, volunteer management;
- Government funding model tied to participation numbers in clubs with funding them diluted through 4-6 tiers of administration from NSO to club level;
- Limited funding directed to community sport let alone programs and initiatives for the disadvantaged;
- User pays business model at community level;
- A decreasing community sport volunteer sector with increasing demands around insurance, liabilities etc;

This complex set of factors mean that through no fault of their own; the sport industry cannot deal with even more complex set of circumstances in disadvantaged communities.

To foster social inclusion and multicultural harmony through sport, the sporting offerings need to be brought to where the participants are, and adapted to their needs. This means providing localised venues, free or minimal access fees, flexible playing opportunities, as opposed to stringent practice and playing schedules in community club structures.

Karen: Unfortunately I agree that sport is not inclusive. Basketball Victoria has clear objectives to assist our Associations to deliver initiatives that will improve the equity and access and increased opportunities for people from diverse communities. As part of our Strategic Plan, we offer the opportunity for our member Associations to develop their own Strategic/Business Plans that directly link, where identified to our Strategic Plan where Inclusion is a key Objective. We have found that too often, at the local level, Associations and Clubs focus on their competition and do not plan their future and because of this the diversity of programs and inclusive practices are not a priority. By providing localised demographical information and needs as part of our Strategic Planning Workshops, often highlights an opportunity for our members to broaden their horizons and offer participatory and development opportunities for the wider community often also through the identification of local partners. Our assistance in building their organisational capacity ensures that Basketball, especially here in Victoria, is on the way to being fully inclusive. Funding is not the key to the provision of better program deliverables, it is the education on inclusion that will eventually open the doors to a more diverse and sustainable sporting community. Initiatives at the grassroots level need to be further developed to uphold the pointy end of the pyramid as without this, sport will crumble.

Inclusion also goes beyond the national and state sporting association. For example, we have partnered with a University to ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and experience on inclusion prior to gaining fulltime employment in sport. Why is it left to sport to develop staff on inclusion, when the school system can begin the process? Isn't this a better model to having our youth understand inclusion and use it without question? My hope would be that the future sporting landscape, if all sports and schools undertook this principle, would see inclusion as best practice and not something someone doesn't have the time to think about.

Kerin: Here and now developing inclusive practices within sport is seen as being aligned to funding. For sports inclusion covers a broad spectrum; Indigenous, people with a disability, CaLD and believe it or not women and girls. Currently these are seen as sitting outside core business and as having higher costs associated with setting up programs and services. Funding does play a role in the early stages of new expectations.

For inclusive practice to occur within sport it will require willingness from sport to step outside existing structures and potentially to develop alternative entry level opportunities as well as appropriate policies, procedures and expectations that align with National sporting organisations, State sporting organisations and their member clubs and associations.

At the Office for Recreation and Sport there are four inclusion officers working with the industry to ensure an educated and aware sector, have effective planning, policies and inclusive practice high on their agenda.

Geoff:

There are challenges in a targeted approach. Filipino Basketball started with one group, now we have two and now we might become three. The original club looks successful, but most Filipinos are moving away from the main group, and now more non-Filipinos participate. Many Filipinos wanted majority Filipinos in 'their' club. To add to the complexity, the non-Filipinos that play in our club were introduced by the Filipinos themselves.

Anne: We have seen these same phenomena within football tournaments and teams that started out as culturally specific, but gradually changed as friends of team members joined, or as the teams increased their engagement. That didn't exclude the team from keeping its original identification with a specific culture – rather it indicated the desire of the newcomers to “join” in celebrating that culture. It is the coming together nature of a sport that enables engagement across cultures, and if the widening of participation occurs that should be a good thing, shouldn't it”

Karen: This is inclusion. May I offer my congratulations on the original segregated group broadening their horizons to offer people from other communities the chance to participate! A quote I often use is: “Sport can play a major role in developing trust and respect; the creation of unity and social cohesion; the provision of better health outcomes and the reduction of socio-economic inequality”. This attitudinal change and commitment to growth will only continue to strengthen your capacity – well done.

Kerin: This is a great outcome and the Filipino Basketball club is growing through inclusion. The question goes to the purpose of the club. Is it to play basketball or is it to maintain culture? The people who have joined the club have come to play basketball. The club is successful and is inclusive of all people. Were the club to be limited to people from a Filipino background it could be said the club is exclusive.