

# TACKLE *it*

**RUGBY LEAGUE'S ACTION PLAN ON INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY 2020-2025**



# ***HOW RUGBY LEAGUE BECOMES AN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION CAMPAIGNING SPORT***

There are x4 strategic goals:

- 1 Widen the reach and impact of Rugby League**
- 2 Diversify Rugby League's Talent Pool and Workforce**
- 3 Improve the culture of Rugby League**
- 4 Clarify processes, instil confidence in - and encourage - the reporting of discrimination, and ensure appropriate sanctions are in place – Rugby League has a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and unacceptable behaviour**

The goals and actions support all the protected characteristics (in the Equality Act 2010): age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. With a focus on areas requiring particular support at specific times.

The actions have been informed by players, coaches, volunteers, administrators, and a number of external partners who have generously given their time and expertise and shared their lived experiences. The TACKLE IT Action Plan is by the sport, for the sport with actions on us all. Thank you to all involved.

Progress on the Action Plan will form part of the objectives of the RFL Board, Executive and Management teams. The Action Plan will continue to flex and grow with continued input from across the sport. It will be public, and progress will be reported on at least twice yearly, at the Rugby Football League Council and published by the RFL and by partner organisations.

**Ralph Rimmer**, CEO, The Rugby Football League

**Dr Rimla Akhtar MBE**, Chair, RFL Inclusion and Diversity Advisory Board

## STRATEGIC GOALS

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	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TARGETS & MEASUREMENT	I&D STRATEGIC GOALS
PARTICIPANTS AND VOLUNTEERS	<p><b>Clubs that represent their communities:</b> Tailored support to Community Clubs in RL's most ethnically diverse communities to ensure their playing and volunteering groups are more representative of their communities.</p> <p>New playing offers in key areas identified in RL Development plans.</p>	RFL AND FOUNDATIONS	<p><b>Minimum of x5 Community Clubs</b> in areas including Leeds, Bradford, London will be supported with resources each year.</p> <p><b>New playing offers will launch:</b> Blackburn, Preston, Trafford and Manchester over the period of the plan.</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>1 2 3</b></p>
	<p><b>Inner city schools:</b> New work with Schools Academy Trusts to embed Rugby League competitions in targeted inner-city high schools.</p>	RFL	<p><b>Minimum of x 12</b> new and diverse high schools over the period of the plan.</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>1 2 3</b></p>
	<p><b>Grow the number of Women and Girls playing:</b> all formats of Rugby League using the inspiration of RLWC2021.</p>	RFL, CLUBS AND FOUNDATIONS	<p><b>'Inspired by 2021'</b> - using the inspiration and legacy of the World Cup year to increase the number of women and girls playing all formats to 21,000 during the period of this plan.</p> <p>(Pre-Covid the aim was to achieve 21,000 by the World Cup; this will now take longer).</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>1 2 3</b></p>
	<p><b>Grow Physical Disability (PDRL) and Learning Disability (LDRL) participants.</b></p>	RFL AND FOUNDATIONS	<p><b>5% growth</b> in player registrations year on year over the period of the plan.</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>1 2 3</b></p>
	<p><b>Improve data collection on all protected characteristics</b> - participants, volunteers and RL workforces (including Club Boards; and League Management Groups) to ensure solid baselines for targeted interventions.</p> <p><b>Regular reporting</b> on participants and protected characteristics.</p>	RFL AND CLUBS	<p><b>Work with player champions</b> to encourage more players and volunteers to opt into providing protected characteristic data on registration e.g. ethnicity; sexual orientation etc.</p> <p><b>Annual survey of clubs</b> re: Boards and workforces.</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>2</b></p>
	<p><b>Training:</b> A range of I&amp;D training modules and resources freely and easily accessible to all in Rugby League from professional players to volunteers.</p>	RFL AND ALL CLUBS	<p>To engage all coaches and professional players by end 2021. To engage 50% of lead volunteers by end 2021 - with modules on the Our Learning Zone platform.</p> <p>All clubs' and Foundations' workforces to engage in I&amp;D and Unconscious Bias modules by end 2021.</p> <p><b>Use player champions to share their lived experiences and insights</b> with SL players by end 2020; and with Championship and L1 players in 2021.</p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>3</b></p>
	<p><b>Career support:</b> Work with BAME players in x3 divisions to identify their educational and career progression needs, including supporting and implementing positive action programmes to challenge for roles in the professional game.</p>	RL CARES AND PRO-CLUBS	<p><b>Player progression measures; player satisfaction survey</b></p>	<p>GOALS</p> <p><b>2</b></p>

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	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TARGETS & MEASUREMENT	IGD STRATEGIC GOALS	
COACHING	8	Extend the 'Reach into Coaching' programme for L1 female coaches (who coach Primary RL); and the number of women accessing L2 courses (who coach 12-18 year old girls and provide role models).	RFL AND COMMUNITY CLUBS	'Reach into coaching' programme to double over the period of the plan. Recruitment plan in conjunction with playing leagues and on-going support through club network.  All L2 learners to include minimum 10% women throughout the period of the plan.	GOALS 1 2
	9	New 'Introduction to Rugby League' course and content for individuals and communities unfamiliar with Rugby League.	RFL AND RLWC2021	Building on RLWC2021 content on what Rugby League is and its history, the sport will make content freely available to all individuals and groups being introduced the sport for the first time.  This will include further specific resources for Teachers.	GOALS 1 2 3
	10	Increase the number of BAME parents who are encouraged by clubs to access L1 coaching courses.	RFL AND COMMUNITY CLUBS	RFL to offer 'at cost' or free L1 courses to underrepresented groups and report on numbers accessing via this route across the period of this plan.	GOALS 1 2
	11	Grow the number of coaches with a disability.	RFL AND CLUBS	By 50% over the period of the plan.  RFL to offer 'at cost' or free L1 courses to underrepresented groups and report on numbers accessing via this route across the period of this plan.	GOALS 1 2
	12	Diversify coach tutor workforce: Increase the number of BAME and female coach education tutors within the RFL workforce.	RFL	By 50% in the 2021-2022 academic year	GOALS 2
	13	RFL Coach Development programme for BAME and female coaches who are working in, or have the aspiration to work in Talent and performance programmes.	RFL	Programme to be developed in 2020 for rollout in 2021 Up to 8 coaches per cohort.	GOALS 2
	14	Trainee Teacher and Teacher continuing professional development programme.	RFL	100 trainees/teachers in 2021 with a 20% increase per year in the period of the plan.  Diversity monitoring, and targeting to encourage diversity in the participants who elect to take part.	GOALS 2
	15	Coach education: I&D training and continuing professional development for all Rugby League coaches - as part of their licence.	RFL	Mandatory annual requirement for all holding a coach licence, with annual training and development.	GOALS 3
FANS	16	Work with Fans' Groups to promote positive behaviours; and partnerships with local stakeholder groups including: LGBTQT organisations; BAME community groups; and disability charity/organisations.	ALL CLUBS	Fans' forum and/or communication with focus on anti-discrimination each season. All pro-clubs to develop active local stakeholder relationships with appropriate local LGBTQT, BAME and disability organisations alongside the RFL's national partnerships, during the period of the plan.	GOALS 3

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	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TARGETS & MEASUREMENT	I&D STRATEGIC GOALS				
17	Regular public reporting on diversification of the Rugby League talent and performance pathway using Sport England framework.	RFL	<p>The principles of Sport England's talent objective of inclusion are that regardless of background or circumstance, young people with potential should be able to access the Talent Pathway; this means all groups - women &amp; girls, BAME, LSEG (lower socio-economic groups), geographical location.</p> <p>The England Performance Unit will report regularly on the diversity of the pathway to England Men, England Women, England Academies, Wheelchair, DISE, club scholarship and academy programmes. And on work to address barriers to progression.</p>	GOALS <b>2</b>				
				TALENT INCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT				
18	Embed and celebrate diversity using the profile and activities of RLWC2021 with new RLWC2021 schools education materials - free to all schools; and RLWC2021 content featuring participating nations.	RLWC2021	Throughout 2020 and 2021 and central to the RLWC2021 D&I plan (launching Oct 2020); with post-event legacy continued by the RFL.	GOALS <b>1 3</b>				
				PROFILE				
					19	Increase the profile of leading BAME players across Rugby League and wider channels.	RFL, SLE, AND CLUBS	GOALS <b>1 3</b>
								20
					21	Sport-wide celebration of success in I&D in Rugby League with specific and shared campaigning content featuring players and the paid and voluntary workforce; and using the key events and platforms in the sport.	RFL, CLUBS, FOUNDATIONS, RL CARES AND RLWC2021	
22	Sport wide anti-discrimination campaign launching in October 2020.	RFL, SLE AND CLUBS	GOALS <b>1 3 4</b>					
			23	Increase the number of BAME match officials.	RFL	Double the number in the period of the plan.	GOALS <b>2</b>	
24	Yearly I&D and anti-discrimination training for match officials.	RFL					All officials. With a focus on appropriate and sensitive reporting.	GOALS <b>3 4</b>
			25	Ensure that event volunteering opportunities are promoted to the most diverse audience possible and different needs taken into account.	RFL, CLUBS, RLWC2021, RL CARES	Monitor volunteer data (protected characteristics) and take positive action to target under-represented groups. The learning from the inclusive volunteering plans for RLWC2021 will be mainstreamed into the RFL, clubs and RL Cares.		GOALS <b>2</b>
				VOLUNTEERING				

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	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TARGETS & MEASUREMENT	I&D STRATEGIC GOALS	
GOVERNANCE	26	Continue to have a RFL Board Sub-Committee (I&D Advisory Board) with responsibility for making recommendations to the Board and the Sport on I&D matters. To include external representatives, including player representation, and to be diverse.	RFL	Terms of reference and work of the I&D Board to be communicated to the sport regularly.	GOALS 1 4
	27	<b>Social media responsibility:</b> Ensure existing codes of conduct and social media guidance for all participants and workforce at all levels of the game are communicated and sanctions understood by all.	RFL AND CLUBS	Assess understanding via player and club surveys and qualitative research each year	GOALS 3 4
	28	<b>Encourage reporting</b> both to the club or league and to the RFL and ensure all in the game know how and where to report any concerns.	RFL AND CLUBS	Clear information about the reporting processes (both within the club and to the RFL) to be shared with players and all club employees/volunteers regularly and visibly.	GOALS 4
	29	<b>Deal with discrimination:</b> In addition to the formal disciplinary processes, continue to explore alternative mechanisms including education and restorative justice programmes where appropriate for dealing with allegations of discrimination with the game.	RFL AND COMMUNITY LEAGUES	Sharing results and learnings across the sport regularly.	GOALS 4
	30	<b>Ensure that all boards (including club boards) and representative forums are working towards the diversity requirements in the Code of Sports Governance.</b>	RFL, SLE AND CLUBS	Monitoring twice yearly during the period via surveys.	GOALS 1 2
	31	The RFL has adopted a target of, and is taking all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum 30% of each sex on its Board; and is demonstrating a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving gender parity and greater diversity generally on its Board, including, but not limited to, Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) diversity, and disability.	RFL	In accordance with Tier 3 Mandatory requirements, section 2 (2.1 to 2.3) of the Sports Governance Code.	GOALS 2
	32	<b>Excellence in recruitment:</b> Ensure all workplaces in Rugby League adhere to best practice in open and transparent recruitment for all roles. The RFL will continue and extend positive action to increase the number of BAME staff members at the NGB Clubs and Foundations will aim to have workforces that are reflective of their regional ethnic diversity.	RFL, SLE, CLUBS, RLWC2021, RL CARES	All organisations in the sport to use best practice information and processes which adhere to CIPD guidance on equal opportunities. Resources made available via club hubs - and take-up monitored. The RFL has set a target of minimum 10% BAME staff members at the national governing body during the period (currently 3.3%).	GOALS 2
	33	<b>The RFL to achieve the Advanced Level of the Equality Standard for Sport.</b>	RFL	Review and published audit of Intermediate Level Advanced Level achieved by the end of the period of the plan.	GOALS 1 4
	33	<b>Professional clubs to achieve the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport.</b>	CLUBS	Preliminary Level achieved by the end of the period of the plan.	GOALS 1 4
	34	<b>Increase diversity in the individuals engaged in the whole compliance function</b> (includes disciplinary panels, match review panel, operational rules tribunal).	RFL	With a focus on growing the number of women and BAME individuals over the period by 10%	GOALS 4

# **TACKLE *it***

**MAKE RUGBY LEAGUE AN  
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION  
CAMPAIGNING SPORT**

## **REPORT UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE OR BEHAVIOUR**

Without individuals reporting unacceptable language or behaviour of a discriminatory nature, potential breaches will not be investigated and sanctioned where breaches have occurred. We are all responsible for the profile, perception and growth of our game.

If you have any concerns regarding unacceptable language or behaviour of a discriminatory nature from a Rugby League participant please email **compliance@rfl.co.uk** with as much information as possible. This inbox is monitored daily by the team.

When attending a Professional Game you should report to a steward, or through the text service the home Club provides.

At a Community Game the referee and the Game Day Manager should be informed.

Should you see anything which constitutes a hate crime or poses an immediate danger to you or others, you must report it to the social media platform and also the police. The Government website provides detail in this important area: **<https://www.gov.uk/report-hate-crime>**

For Community Club support including training and resources please contact National Clubs Manager **John.McMullen@rfl.co.uk**

For more information on the TACKLE IT Action Plan and campaign, and how you can get involved, please contact **enquiries@rfl.co.uk**