

# Community Strategy

2022 – 2025



**Melbourne Victory  
Football Club**





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# Executive Summary



Melbourne Victory has a proud history of supporting the Victorian community. We are the club for all Victorians, striving to lead, unite, connect and inspire generations through football. Although football is central to everything we do, we are more than football.

Caroline Carnegie  
Managing Director

The Community department, which sits within Melbourne Victory FC Academy Limited – the not-for-profit side of business has a focus on giving back to the football community with the commercial arms of Melbourne Victory (a separate entity) responsible for leveraging revenue to support what Melbourne Victory stands for beyond football.

As the A-League's biggest club, operating in the intersection of the world's biggest sport, in the world's sporting capital, we have an intrinsic social responsibility to leverage our position of privilege and strengthen our community creating a Victory family where everyone is welcome, and everyone belongs.

We are committed to growing and strengthening football across the state, whilst directly contributing to a happy, healthy and connected MVFC community. Our community programs use football as a vehicle to positively impact lives improving the health, wellbeing and life skills of Victorian youth, with particular emphasis on reducing barriers to participation by providing accessible and meaningful opportunities for those at greater risk of disadvantage.

COVID-19 has had (and continues to have) a significant impact on the lives of all Victorians.

Now, more than ever, it is important that we continue to support our Victory family. True to Melbourne Victory values, this strategic plan is bold in setting ambitious targets beyond COVID recovery. Acknowledging our position in the Victorian sporting landscape we have established a community focussed strategic plan that aims to build our organisational capacity whilst growing impact-driven community football programs.

As a community asset, we value the influence MVFC can have on global, national, state and local scales through supporting wider health policy. Understanding our role within the Victorian sporting landscape, our strategic priorities compliment wider objectives from Sport & Recreation Victoria, Football Victoria, Football Australia and wider Local, State and Federal Government policies that aim to support social impact. Our strategic pillars and success factors are informed by sport and community research and address the key recommendations of the 2019 Victoria University evaluation of MVFC's community football program.

Delivering a suite of programs that strengthen participation, cultural diversity, gender equity and education, we will drive Victorian youth to reach their potential, regardless of their personal circumstance. In doing so, Melbourne Victory will offer all Victorians a safe, enjoyable and empowering community for life.



# Snapshot:





## PURPOSE

Football is accessible and empowering to all.



## VISION

Through football every young Victorian has an opportunity to reach their potential whilst enjoying a happy and healthy life.



## MISSION

Actively reduce the barriers to accessing quality football experiences, improving the overall health, wellbeing and social connectedness of young Victorians.

### TARGETS:

PROGRAMS

**+50%**

PARTICIPANTS

**+50%**

SCHOOLS

**+100%**

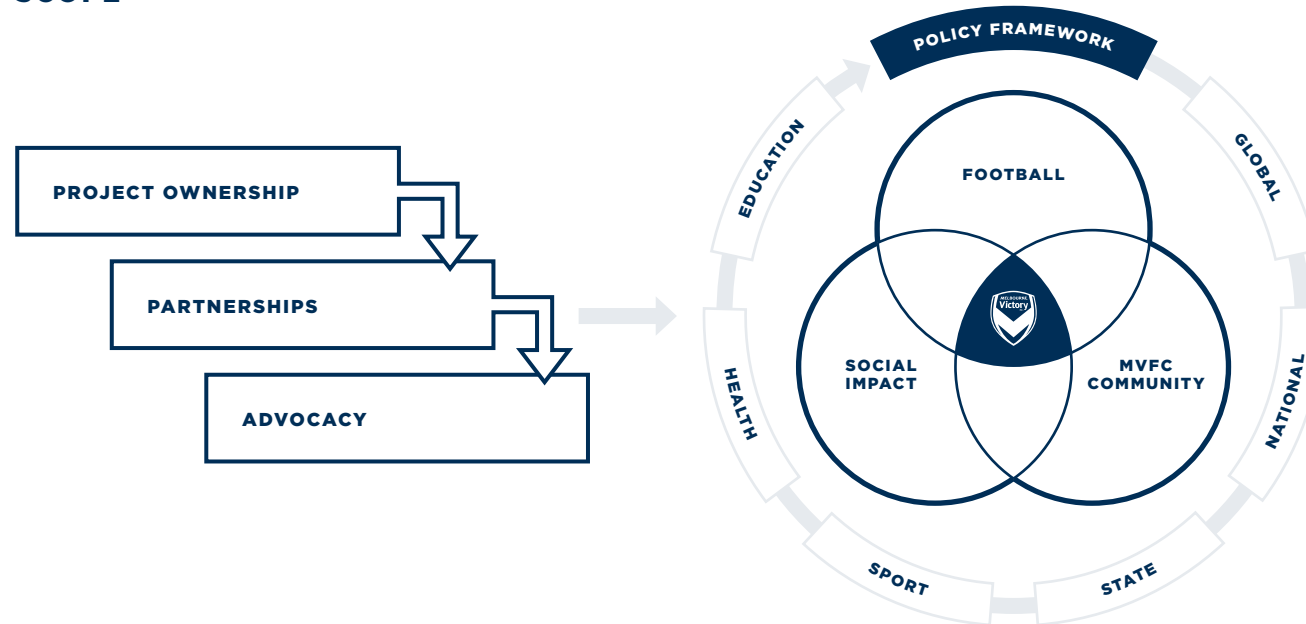
FEMALE

**+166%**

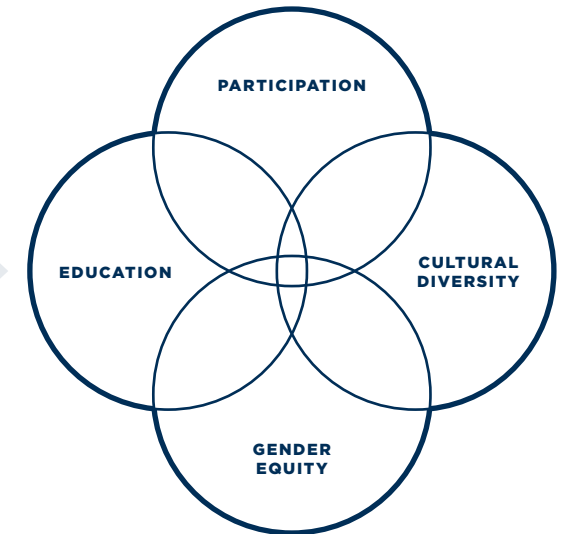
CALD

**+50%**

## SCOPE



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS:





# Strategic Plan



## PURPOSE

Melbourne Victory has an obligation to ensure football is accessible and empowering to all. We are responsible for stewarding a community that leverages football to positively impact lives.



## VISION

Committed to lead, unite, connect and inspire generations through football, Melbourne Victory will ensure every young Victorian has an opportunity to reach their potential whilst enjoying a happy and healthy life.



## MISSION

Creating a passionate and connected community where all people are welcome and all people belong, Melbourne Victory will actively engage disadvantaged/vulnerable Victorian youth in the development and delivery of meaningful football programs that lead to positive social impact. We will actively reduce the barriers to accessing quality football experiences, improving the overall health, wellbeing and social connectedness of young Victorians.







## TARGETS 2022 - 2025

Increase program delivery by

**50%**

From **70** to **105**

Increase program participants by

**50%**

From **15,000** to **22,500**

Increase grassroots football club engagement by

**10%**

Increase school program delivery by

**100%**

Increase MVFC football pathway program delivery by

**33%**

Increase female participation by

**166%**

Increase CALD program delivery by

**50%**

## SCOPE

Bridging the gap between sport development and sport for development, strategic priorities will focus on the intersection of football, social impact and the Melbourne Victory community.



### Social Impact

Social impact is at the core of all our projects and partnerships. Everything we do must have purpose and must bring about positive change to those who engage with us.



### Football

Football is our vehicle for positive change. It is what we do best, speaks all languages, unites people and is ultimately the reason why the community engages with MVFC before other organisations.



### MVFC Community

We are more than football; we are a community. Our community will shine through in all that we do and will provide a family for life where all people belong.



We believe this intersection is where resources will be best placed and impact maximised. Project delivery will occur across three broad streams:

- 1. Project ownership:**  
MVFC will lead in the co-design, development and delivery of projects.
- 2. Partnerships:**  
MVFC will support strategically aligned charities, community organisations and schools to add value to community led projects.
- 3. Advocacy:**  
MVFC will align itself with community driven initiatives to maximise exposure and impact in areas that align with our strategic priorities.







## RATIONALE

Football – as a global, team-based sport – is capable of providing incredible benefits to young people. Participation in football supports greater physical health, mental health, social connectedness, leadership skills and overall wellbeing. In addition, engagement with sport can contribute to greater development of life skills, cognitive function and language, strengthening educational and employability outcomes.

Despite the documented benefits of sport participation, many people encounter barriers to meaningful participation including cost, time and access. Individuals may also have experienced (or have perceptions of) barriers relating to enjoyment, self-esteem, risk and the physical environment.

Certain individuals and communities also face greater challenges in accessing meaningful sporting opportunities. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities (including First Nations communities), females, members of LGBTBI+ communities, people living with disability and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are at greater risk of encountering compounding barriers to sport participation due to the historical structure of the Victorian sporting ecosystem and cultural norms.

MVFC's strategic priorities aim to provide accessible and enjoyable football experiences for all by reducing the impact of these barriers.

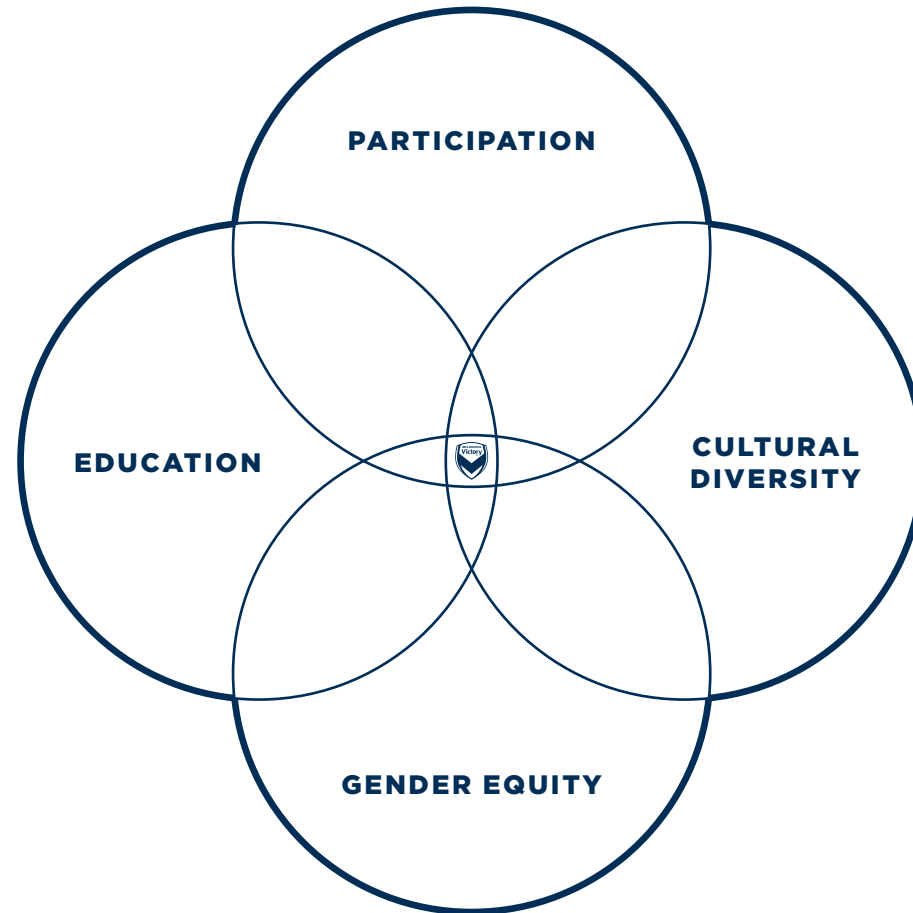
MVFC will actively engage with our diverse communities to inform programs, ensuring they meet the needs of the communities that will most benefit. We value our position of privilege as a community asset in sport and health, actively supporting the vast and interconnected global, national, state and local policy framework.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Using football to improve health, wellbeing, social connectedness and progression into adulthood we will focus on four intrinsically interconnected strategic priorities. Despite clear rationale behind each priority, project delivery will occur where strategic priorities intersect. By operating in the crossover of priority areas, resources will be best positioned to have the greatest impact.







## PARTICIPATION

As Australia's leading professional football club, we have a responsibility to strengthen and grow the game and positively contribute to the opportunities available to participate either as a player, coach, administrator, volunteer or fan. Our aim is to provide and support enjoyable, high quality football experiences to Victorian youth.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Expanded offering of MVFC football pathway programs – making MVFC more accessible to the wider population, improving the standard of football programs and providing employment opportunities for a diverse coaching workforce.
2. Improved capacity of Victoria's community football networks – growth of MVFC's Club Victory program to establish deeper connection with grassroots clubs and support increased participation of structured grassroots football.
3. Increased fan engagement – making MVFC's elite football programs and major events accessible to the wider community, providing enjoyable football experiences and creating a lifelong connection to the Melbourne Victory family.



## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Football is the global sport. It speaks all languages and unites people like nothing else. MVFC celebrates the diversity and proud multiculturalism of our community, and we have an obligation to ensure that football is safe, welcoming and accessible to all.

## GENDER EQUITY

Women and LGBTI+ communities continue to be significantly underrepresented in all aspects of football. This needs to change. We will strive for gender equity in football by providing accessible, welcoming and enjoyable opportunities for girls to play, coach and watch football. We will support representatives of LGBTI+ communities in breaking down cultural barriers and making football a safe environment for all.

## EDUCATION

Leveraging the gravitational pull of football, we will encourage vulnerable youth to better engage with their education. Integrating football into the Victorian school system, MVFC will support the development of skills for wider learning, work and life.

### OBJECTIVES CONTINUED:

4. Growth in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse programs and participants.
5. Growth in the number of First Nations' programs and participants.
6. Re-establish the Club's Community Ambassador program as a purpose driven co-operative.

7. Growth in the number of female participants and coaches.
8. Leading APL advocate for gender diversity in football.

9. Grow MVFC presence within schools to drive greater attendance, behaviour, engagement and educational outcomes of students.
10. Provide opportunities for students to undertake further education, volunteerism and employment.



## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Melbourne Victory's community program is broad and strives for meaningful engagement with participants. To achieve success, this strategy relies on a number of critical factors.



### 1. MVFC integration

MVFC community programming must be embedded in Club culture and operations. Integrated systems, financial support, access to Club infrastructure, staff and players is vital. Programs must be celebrated and promoted, using accessible communication channels.



### 2. Financial sustainability

In order to provide accessible football programs, a diverse and sustainable funding model needs to underpin all community programming reducing or removing the costs to participants wherever possible.



### 3. Co-design

Program design, development, delivery and review must occur in collaboration with the diverse communities we are supporting. Success will rely on all MVFC personnel being able to build genuine, trusted relationships with participants and the wider community, delivering programs when and where is best for the community.



### 4. Networks

MVFC must work in collaboration with an array of community stakeholders including local, state & federal government, state & national sporting organisations, community organisations & leaders, schools, grassroots clubs, registered charities, aligned corporate partners and philanthropists.



### 5. Program delivery

Programs must be delivered to very high quality, with football the vehicle for impact/purpose driven outcomes. For MVFC owned projects, it is important that participants are engaged multiple times to build a genuine, trusting relationship with deliverers whilst being given the best chance to develop over an extended period of time.



### 6. Workforce capacity

Programs need to be sufficiently resourced with appropriate numbers of qualified staff. Staff must be representative of the communities we work with and suitably supported to deliver high quality programs delivered within diverse and vulnerable communities.



### 7. Evaluation

Programs and operational systems must have the capability for evaluation with clearly defined objectives supported by both quantitative and qualitative feedback.







# The Next Steps

This strategic plan has been written with a conscious understanding of the Club's current position aligned with an ideal future state.

Objectives outlined within the Participation strategic priority are heavily focussed on the establishment of new football pathways. It is envisioned that these objectives will eventually transition to the Club's football operations and make way for participation-based initiatives focussed more on providing accessible football opportunities for vulnerable Victorian youth.

In doing so, the Club's suite of community programs will become entirely focussed on social outreach, paving the way for a change in corporate governance culminating in the establishment of a charitable entity.

Despite a three-year roadmap being presented within this plan, we are aiming to implement an earlier transition towards charitable status, as appropriate.



# Appendix

Snapshot of the key documents referenced in the executive summary / strategic plan (noting this list aims to provide a very brief insight into the policy currently influencing decision making, emphasising that is not exhaustive - our strategic plan will continue to support relevant policy as it evolves).

## EVALUATION

Engaging youth through Melbourne Victory Football Club's community football program, Dr T De Fazio (2019).

### Recommendations:

1. Continue to run and strengthen the CFP program.
2. Continue to draw on the range and breadth of dedicated Community Program Leader (CPL) involved in the CFP initiatives.
3. Review feedback and evaluation processes and resourcing in order to develop and adopt ongoing agile feedback that contributes to the quality improvement cycle.
4. Continue to ensure that MVFC and stakeholder staff reflect the diversity of the community so that participants have positive and successful role models.
5. Consider recruitment strategies with other educational and community groups to reach out to target cohort of vulnerable youth.
6. Strengthen and develop facilitated opportunities for youth participants to meet and interact with others

outside of their sphere/affinity groups.

7. Partner with stakeholders who have a clear and articulated mandate to support female football as part of their activities.
8. Track female participation in the various CFP programs to ascertain the extent to which females are taking up and continuing with their football development.
9. Undertake a specific female engagement evaluation to ascertain the challenges in relation to uptake and retention in MVFC female football initiatives.
10. Further develop a communication strategy between the Club and the CPL.
11. Continue to develop capacity building opportunities for CPL to enable more productive and impactful partnerships.
12. Continue to monitor and develop training/capacity building opportunities for CFP stakeholders to ensure safe and adequate responses to trauma and stress are responded to adequately.
13. Provide intercultural training to CPL and other stakeholders to ensure development of skills and understandings in working with CALD youth and stakeholders themselves.
14. Develop a process for providing ongoing feedback to inform an overall evaluation and debriefing process for CPL and stakeholders to assist in developing the quality improvement processes around the CFP.
15. Develop resources that capture the stories and experiences of various stakeholders (CPL, Youth, Sponsors, MVFC Staff etc.) to support program content, promotion, grants, marketing etc. through the power of storytelling.
16. Explore the development of training and resources to support further development of health and wellbeing aspects for stakeholders.
17. Investigate increased player contact with youth participants.
18. Explore the flow through influence of involvement in

a CFP initiative to taking up MVFC membership.

## GLOBAL POLICY

1. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations (2015)* - <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

### Objectives (sustainable development goals):

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and wellbeing
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals

2. *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity: 2018-2030, World Health Organisation (2018)* - <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf>

### Objectives:

1. Create active societies
2. Create active environments
3. Create active people
4. Create active systems



## NATIONAL POLICY

1. *Sport 2030, Australian Sports Commission (2017)* - <https://www.sportaus.gov.au/nationalsportplan/home>

### Objectives:

1. Building a more active Australia
2. Achieving sporting excellence
3. Safeguarding the integrity of sport
4. Strengthening Australia's sport industry

2. *We Are Football, Football Australia (2015)* - [https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/sites/ffa/files/2019-05/Whole\\_of\\_Football\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/sites/ffa/files/2019-05/Whole_of_Football_Plan.pdf)

### Objectives:

1. Football community
2. Coaching
3. Facilities
4. Refereeing
5. Administration
6. Fan connection
7. Competitions
8. Player development
9. National teams

## STATE POLICY

1. *Active Victoria 2022-2026, Sport & Recreation Victoria (2022)* - <https://sport.vic.gov.au/publications-and-resources/strategies/active-victoria-strategic-framework-sport-and-recreation>

### Objectives:

1. Sustained participation: More Victorians participate equitably in sport and active recreation.
2. Infrastructure: Victoria has inclusive, accessible, and respectful places and spaces for sport and

active recreation.

3. Sector capability: The sport and active recreation workforce is highly skilled and leads a strong, sustainable industry.
  4. Good governance: Sport and active recreation is a safe, inclusive, and resilient sector.
  5. High performance: Victorians can achieve success at the highest level.
  6. Events: Victoria maintains a strong pipeline of sporting events within the Victorian events calendar.
2. *Footballways Strategic Plan 2019-2022, Football Victoria (2019)* - <https://www.footballvictoria.com.au/sites/ffv/files/2019-03/Football%20Victoria%20Strategic%20Plan%202019-2022.pdf>

### Objectives:

1. Or clubs
2. Facilities and infrastructure
3. Enjoying our game
4. Promoting our game
5. Our people

3. *Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan 2021-25, State of Victoria (2021)* - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/strategicplan.pdf>

### Objectives:

1. Achievement: Raise standards of learning and development achieved by Victorians using education and training.
2. Engagement: Increase the number of Victorians actively participating in education and training.
3. Wellbeing: Increase the contribution education and training make to quality of life for all Victorians, particularly children and young people.

4. *Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2019-2023, State of Victoria (2019)* - <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023>

### Objectives:

1. Tackling climate change and its impact on health
2. Reducing injury
3. Preventing all forms of violence
4. Increasing healthy eating
5. Decreasing the risk of drug-resistant infections in the community
6. Increasing active living
7. Improving mental wellbeing
8. Improving sexual and reproductive health
9. Reducing tobacco-related harm
10. Reducing harmful alcohol and drug use

5. *Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2019-2023, VicHealth (2019)* - <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/vichealth-action-agenda>

### Objectives:

1. Encourage regular physical activity
2. Prevent tobacco use
3. Improve mental wellbeing
4. Promote healthy eating
5. Prevent harm from alcohol
6. Promote health equity, research and the arts

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