



Everyone's Game

**DIVERSITY,
INCLUSION,
& EQUITY
INITIATIVES**

Credit: markybusinessphoto

Saskatchewan Soccer Association (SSA) is an inclusive organization which welcomes all Saskatchewan participants who want to achieve their goals in soccer, regardless of ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, body type, physical characteristics, or athletic ability.

SSA, and our Member Organizations, encourage participation by players coaches, referees, board members and volunteers from diverse cultures, abilities, and genders, and gender identities. We are stronger because of our diverse nature, and we are proud to be community leaders who are fostering inclusion, diversity, and equity in Saskatchewan sport.

Everyone's Game

Inclusion strategies benefit teams and organizations by:

- ensuring that no one is left behind,
- bringing in a stronger mix of skills,
- increasing organization membership,
- breaking down barriers and promoting social connections, reducing potential for community conflict,
- increasing public support for the team and expanding the organization's volunteer base,
- enhancing the organization's brand and reputation, and providing the team with an enhanced ability to compete with other sports organizations for members, and
- increasing the organization's sponsorship opportunities.

SSA is committed to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in sport, and as a result we have developed defined strategies to support and encourage engagement from all participant groupings, with our Member Organizations across the province. Below is an overview of specific programs, services, and initiatives available within each member strategy. For more detailed information on each strategy, please visit [Sasksoccer.com](https://sasksoccer.com).



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Indigenous and Northern Member Engagement Strategy

The Indigenous & Northern Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member Organizations in engaging and supporting Northern Members, and which specifically serve Indigenous participants.



Growing Indigenous Membership with SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow the game with Indigenous participants and Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Coaches and Officials Program (ICOP) Support

SSA works with Member Organizations which serve Indigenous participants, to facilitate training and developmental opportunities for Indigenous peoples to become involved in sport as a coach or as officials, through the Indigenous Coaches and Officials Program (ICOP). This program is delivered through the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan.

Supporting Indigenous Competitions

SSA is a proud partner of the Indigenous Sport Enhancement Program (ISEP). Our partnership works to build and grow relationships between SSA and Indigenous communities, to both strengthen SSA teams and support ISEP's goal of raising the performance level of Indigenous athletes. Saskatchewan Soccer is honoured to support Indigenous competitions by providing officiating and technical competition support for the FSIN Soccer Provincial Championships and Tony Cote Summer Games, which are funded by ISEP.

Supporting Team Saskatchewan Soccer in North American Indigenous Games (NAIG)

Saskatchewan Soccer with support from Team Saskatchewan and SSA NAIG Working group provides leadership in the planning and preparation of Team Saskatchewan's participation in NAIG. Major activities include the selection of coaching staff, organization of player ID Camps, technical and administration support, and overall promotion of the game to our membership.

Working Relationship with the Northern Sport, Culture & Recreation District

Saskatchewan Soccer is proud to work with the Northern Sport, Culture & Recreation District to introduce and expand soccer and futsal to communities in Northern Saskatchewan.

Newcomer Member Engagement Strategy



The Newcomer Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member Organizations in engaging and supporting newcomer participants, and which specifically serve newcomer participants.

Growing Newcomer Membership with SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow the game with newcomers to our communities.

Newcomer Engagement & Inclusion: A Guide for Creating a Welcoming Space Through Soccer

SSA has worked with Cultural Bridges, a Saskatoon based consulting firm dedicated to building connections between cultures, to create a guide that provides recommendations and tips on increasing the participation of newcomers within Member organizations.

The Guide is available on our website, visit [Sasksoccer.com](https://sasksoccer.com).

As well, SSA website includes a [resource page](#) that offers multiple resources for engaging newcomers in soccer, and it includes a list of Saskatchewan's settlement agencies and Open Door Societies.

Adaptive Soccer – Strategy to Engage Participants with Disabilities

The Adaptive Soccer Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member organizations in engaging and supporting participants with disabilities.

SSA strives to provide all people with the opportunity to participate in soccer at every age, no matter their abilities, and this includes participants with disabilities. Soccer is an excellent sport for participants with disabilities because it can be easily adapted to meet participants' abilities and needs, no matter their age.

Growing the Membership of Participants with Disabilities, using SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow soccer and futsal programming for athletes with disabilities.

Adaptive Soccer Resources Webpage

SSA website includes a [resource page](#) that describes different adaptations that Member Organizations may implement for participants with different types of disabilities.

A Guide to Inclusive Soccer: Offering Soccer to Athletes of All Abilities

SSA offers the [Guide to Inclusive Soccer: Offering Soccer to Athletes of All Abilities](#) for Member Organizations that are looking to welcome athletes with disabilities onto their teams, and to coaches who have athletes with disabilities on their team. The guide provides useful strategies, and tools to engage athletes of all ability levels in soccer, with the best possible playing experiences, and is also useful for parents, guardians, caregivers or supporters of a participant with a disability.

Member Organization Access to Adaptive Equipment

SSA has a variety of adaptive equipment available for loan to Member Organizations. The equipment includes sensory balls (heavier soccer balls for athletes with sensory processing challenges), ringing balls, blindfolds, textured floor tape (for athletes who are blind or have visual impairments), and soccer guards for wheelchairs (metal and hard plastic), large balls, and goal posts (for athletes who use wheelchairs). Member Organizations may borrow equipment to test it and programming with athletes.

Diverse Gender Member Strategy

Member Organization Partnership with Special Olympics Saskatchewan



SSA is also proud to have a formal partnership with [Special Olympics Saskatchewan \(SOS\)](#). As part of this formal partnership SSA recognizes SOS participants as SSA members and encourages SSA Member Organizations to reduce the costs associated with participation by individuals SOS members, within SSA Member Organizations.

SSA supports its SOS partnership initiatives through MAP Grant funding, coach development, and helps SOS in reducing financial barriers to participation. SSA also works to support and encourage the growth of Special Olympics soccer programming, with its local SSA Member Organizations.

The Diverse Gender Member Engagement Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member Organizations in engaging and supporting people with diverse gender expressions and identities, including trans participants.

We welcome participants of diverse gender identities and expressions to participate in soccer and to strive for excellence at all levels and in all capacities.

In 2017 SSA was proud to enforce policies, allowing athletes to compete on teams that correspond with their gender identity.

SSA recognizes that discrimination, prejudice, and victimization on the basis of personal attributes, including gender identity and expression, is a violation of Bill C-16. Bill C-16 is a national bill, that extends to sports, and which has added gender identity and expression to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.



Special Olympics Provincial Championships

SSA is proud to offer the [Special Olympics Provincial Championships](#), in partnership with Special Olympics Saskatchewan during the indoor soccer season.

This competition offers teams from across Saskatchewan the opportunity to compete for the title of "Special Olympics Provincial Champion". The event is a celebration of soccer, an opportunity to compete against a variety of teams and to interact and engage with others from across the province who are also passionate about soccer.



Growing Diverse Gender Membership with SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow soccer programming for gender diverse athletes.

A Guide to Inclusive Soccer: Leading the Way: LGBTQI2S Inclusion in Sport

SSA offers a webinar for Member Organizations that are welcoming diverse gender participants onto their teams. The webinar provides useful strategies, and tools to help support and engage diverse gender participants in soccer, with the best possible playing experiences.

[Leading the Way: LGBTQI2S Inclusion in Sport Webinar presented by Canadian Women & Sport](#)

Women and Girls in Soccer Member Strategy

The Women & Girls in Soccer Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member Organizations in engaging and supporting women and girls' participation in soccer.

The [Rally Report](#) shows that sport participation levels for Canadian girls are much lower than boys. Among girls who have participated in sport, there is a dramatic dropout rate observed with 1 in 3 girls leaving sport by late adolescence. By comparison, the dropout rate for teenage boys (aged 16-18) is only 1 in 10. Sport participation rates for Canadian girls decline steadily from childhood to adolescence with as many as 62% of girls not playing sport at all.

This study is designed to inform, educate, and inspire action across Canada, and to keep girls in sport. We invite you to rally with us—to drive change and build the momentum we need to achieve gender equity. Let's use our collective voices to advocate for sport that is inclusive and reflects our values.

Female Mentorship Program

SSA offers a [Female Mentorship Program](#) to facilitate training and developmental opportunities for women and girls to become involved in sport at grassroots, competitive and high-performance levels. Interested applicants should [complete the form here](#).

Female Coaches in Competitions

SSA's standard of coaching to enable participation in Provincial Competitions, requires two team personnel of the same gender with a minimum of one holding a coaching leadership position. This requirement advocates for appropriate gender representation and access to more coaching opportunities for Female coaches.

Female Referee Entry Level Clinic

SSA offers a Female Referee Entry Level Clinic to provide training and developmental opportunities for women and girls, enabling them to become involved in sport as match officials at grassroots, community competitive, and high-performance levels.



Growing Women and Girls Membership with SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow the game with the participation of women and girls in their communities.

In addition, SSA offers several grant opportunities that female participants are able to access, including the [Female Development Grant](#), [Coaching Professional Development Grant](#), and [Referee Development Grant](#).



Keeping Girls in Sport – online course

Keeping Girls in Sport is a 90-minute interactive online course designed to help coaches, mentors, and leaders understand what girls need to feel included, be successful, and stay active. SSA is proud to offer Keeping Girls in Sport to soccer participants interested to take the course.

Many resources for coaching women and girls are available on our [Coaching Resources page](#).

Accessible Soccer Member Strategy

The Accessible Soccer Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives that specifically serve individuals with accessibility issues, including aging adults with accessibility challenges.

Growing Soccer for Aging Adults

SSA is proud to work with Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association to expand walking soccer for older adults across the province, and to offer walking soccer in the Saskatchewan Senior Summer Games.

Offering Walking Soccer 'Try It' Days

SSA offers Member Organizations with adult programming that provides the opportunity to host a [Walking Soccer 'Try It' Day](#). SSA will come to your community and help deliver a walking soccer event for participants who are interested in the modified format of the game. Try it today!



Rural Member Strategy

The Rural Member Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which assist Member Organizations in engaging and supporting rural participants.

Growing Rural Membership with SSA Grant Funding

SSA offers significant grant funding opportunities, (through the MAP Grant) for all Member Organizations, to grow the game with rural participants in their communities.

In addition, SSA offers several grant opportunities that rural participants are able to access, including the Female Development Grant, Coaching Professional Development Grant, and Referee Development Grant.

Rural Advisory Group

Open to anyone who is an organizer with a Member Organization located outside of Saskatoon and Regina, the Rural Advisory Group meets quarterly to share ideas, network, and provide feedback to SSA on its current and future program and service offerings.

SSA Rural Soccer Organizers Facebook Group

SSA Rural Soccer Organizers Facebook Group is open to anyone who is a volunteer, board member, or administrator with a Member Organization located outside of Saskatoon and Regina. The Facebook group is a great place to share ideas and network with other organizers from across the province.

Offering Rural Competitions

SSA offers several competitions for rural participants including: SK Four Corners Championships, SaskTel S4L Indoor Youth 6-Side Provincial Championships, and S4L Adult Provincial Championships.

Make it Official Strategy

The Make it Official Strategy defines the programs, services, and initiatives which work to ensure that everyone experiences a positive game time environment. The Strategy focuses on key attributes:

- **participate in sport respectfully** as parents, family, fans, athletes, coaches or officials – **all of us** have a role in creating a respectful environment in which **all children** can thrive;
- **get involved in sport as an official** – bring your knowledge and keep learning through training. You'll be active in the sport you love, and you'll be providing an opportunity for your sport to flourish, enabling others to participate; and,
- **support and recognize our officials** – let the officials in your sport know that you appreciate their efforts and recognize their importance to your sport.



For more information on
our Inclusion, Diversity
and Equity Strategy,
please contact:

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Saskatchewan Soccer Association would like to take this opportunity to recognize the support of our generous sponsors. It is through their support, we can continue to offer opportunities for people to play, excel, and succeed.



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Our sport is underway during the pandemic. It's a challenging time, but support from our partners allows us to offer opportunities for kids to play. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada. Nous reconnaissons l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.