CALD and Multicultural *Inclusion in Netball.*



Australia is a culturally diverse country, with communities representing more than 270 ancestries. This diversity is reflected across community netball, with people from many cultural, language, religious and social backgrounds participating in sport.

By understand and valuing this diversity, Associations and Clubs can create welcoming and supportive environments where people feel respected, included and able to participate with confidence.

A culturally inclusive netball organisation reflects the community it serves. It can strengthen participation, build community connections, attract and retain players, coaches, officials and volunteers, creating a stronger sense of belonging for everyone.

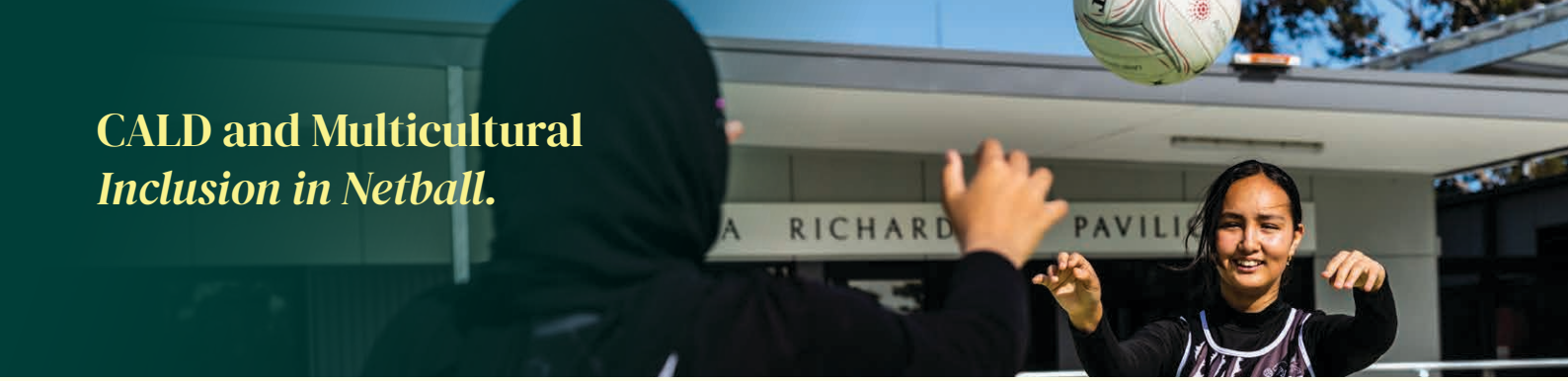
WHY CULTURAL INCLUSION MATTERS

Creating culturally inclusive environments helps ensure that people from multicultural, migrant and refugee backgrounds can access, enjoy and remain connected to netball.

Cultural inclusion can help organisations to:

- Create a stronger sense of belonging for participants and families
- Reduce barriers that may prevent people from participating
- Build trust and stronger relationships with local communities
- Attract new players, volunteers, coaches and officials
- Strengthen the organisations connection to its local community
- Create opportunities for people to share and celebrate different cultures
- Build a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued and respected

Sport can play an important role in helping multicultural communities build friendships, confidence and connections, while creating a sense of belonging and connection to the wider community.



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UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Understanding some key concepts can help Associations and Clubs build their confidence and capability in creating culturally inclusive environments.

Culture

Culture includes the values, beliefs, customs, languages and traditions that influence how people understand and interact with the world.

Sport is also an important part of Australian culture and, for many people, is a way of life. However, not everyone will have grown up with the same experiences, understanding or access to organised sport. For people from multicultural, migrant and refugee backgrounds, understanding how community sport works in Australia may take time.

Every player, parent, volunteer and official brings their own experiences and perspectives to netball. Recognising this diversity can help organisations avoid assumptions and create more respectful and inclusive interactions.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism recognises that people from many different cultural backgrounds live, work and participate in Australian communities.

Within netball, this means creating programs, policies and environments that welcome difference and provide equitable opportunities for people from all cultural backgrounds to participate

Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is understanding that cultural differences exist and may influence how people communicate, participate and engage with sport.

For netball organisations, this can include recognising potential barriers such as:

- Language and communication
- Unfamiliarity with Australian sporting structures
- Uncertainty about what participation involves, including weekly commitments, gameday expectations and who to contact if they cannot attend
- Fear of being judged, making mistakes or not being good enough
- Uniform requirements
- Cultural or religious practices
- Limited culturally appropriate food options
- Family or community commitments
- Cost and transport

Awareness can help organisations consider these factors when planning programs and supporting participants.

Cultural Safety

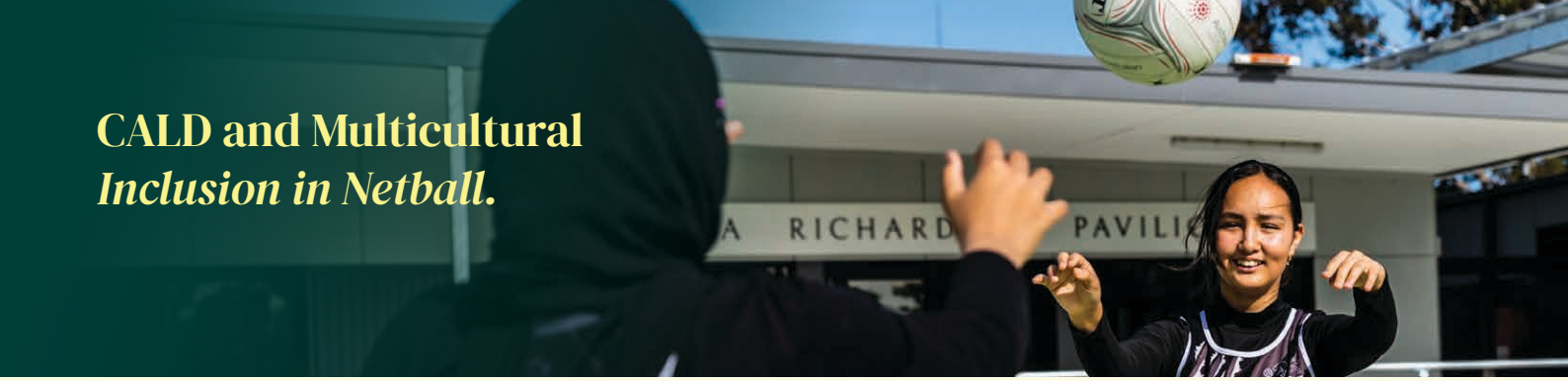
Cultural safety goes beyond awareness. It involves creating an environment where people feel respected, valued and free from discrimination or judgement.

A culturally safe netball organisation:

- Welcomes and respects cultural differences
- Creates opportunities for people to share their experiences and perspectives
- Responds appropriately to discrimination and racism
- Considers cultural needs when delivering programs and activities
- Prioritises the wellbeing and dignity of participants

Cultural safety is experienced by the individual. Organisations should listen to participants and communities and continually learn how they can improve.

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Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is the ongoing ability to work respectfully and effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds.

In community netball, this may include:

- Adapting communication and coaching approaches
- Using clear and accessible language
- Respecting cultural and religious practices
- Considering cultural preferences around uniforms, gender and participation
- Providing flexible opportunities where possible
- Seeking feedback from participants and communities
- Continuing to learn and build cultural understanding
- Seek training and resources from State/Territory Member Organisations or Netball Australia

Cultural competence is not about knowing everything about every culture. It is about being willing to listen, learn and adapt.

Language and Communication

Clear communication helps participants and families understand netball, feel confident and build connections within their Club or Associations.

Consider:

- Using clear, plain Standard Australian English
- Avoiding unnecessary sporting jargon and acronyms
- Supporting verbal communication with demonstrations, images and visual aids
- Providing translated information where appropriate
- Using bilingual support or interpreters where available and required
- Checking understanding rather than assuming information has been understood
- Providing information through different communication channels, such as email, SMS, social media and face-to-face conversations
- Using inclusive imagery that reflects the diversity of the local community

Good communication is not just about what is said, it is also about making sure people can understand, access and feel comfortable responding to the information.

Belonging

Belonging is an important part of participation. When players and families feel welcomed, recognised and supported, they are more likely to feel connected to their club and continue participating.

Clubs and Associations can build belonging by:

- Providing a genuine welcome to new participants and families
- Introducing new families to coaches, volunteers and other members
- Creating opportunities to meet and connect with others
- Recognising and celebrating the diversity of the community
- Providing opportunities for families to contribute beyond playing
- Checking in with participants about their experience
- Creating an environment where people feel comfortable asking for support

Netball is a place everyone can be themselves, on the court we are all the same, it does not matter what someone's cultural background is.

Equity and Equality

Equality means providing everyone with the same resources or opportunities.

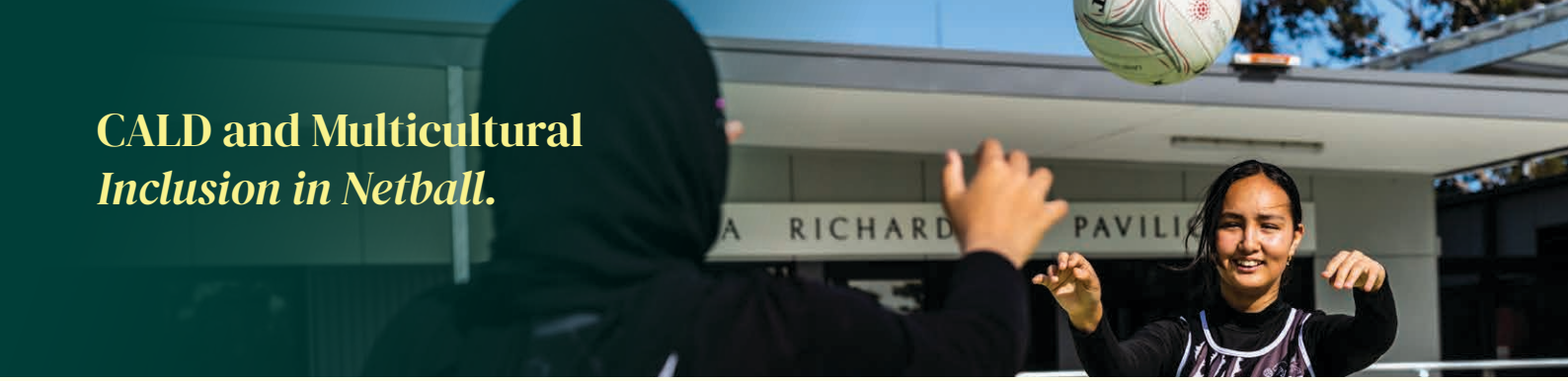
Equity means recognising that people may have different needs and providing the support required to create a fair opportunity to participate.

In community netball, an equitable approach may include:

- Flexible payment options
- Uniform flexibility in line with Netball Australia's Uniform Guidelines
- Translated or accessible information
- Flexible program and competition formats
- Additional support for new participants
- Considering cultural or religious commitments when scheduling activities

Providing additional support is not about giving someone an advantage. It is about removing barriers so everyone has a fair opportunity to participate.

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Intersectionality

People may identify with, or experience barriers associated with, more than one aspect of their identity or circumstances.

For example, a participant may experience barriers related to their:

- Cultural or linguistic background
- Age
- Gender or sexuality
- Disability
- Religion
- Socioeconomic circumstances
- Geographic location
- Trauma related to leaving their home country or seeking asylum

Understanding intersectionality encourages organisations to consider the whole person rather than focusing on a single aspect of their identity.

There is no one size fits all approach to inclusion. Individual needs and experiences should be considered wherever possible.

Community Engagement

Building culturally diverse participation requires genuine engagement with local communities.

Associations and Clubs can:

- Connect with multicultural organisations, schools and community groups
- Build relationships with community leaders and local services
- Ask communities about their interests, needs and barriers
- Invite community members to contribute to program design and delivery
- Develop partnerships that create pathways into netball
- Attend local community events to introduce netball and build connections
- Create pathways for community members to volunteer, including roles that match their interests, skills and availability
- Follow up and maintain relationships over time

Effective engagement is about more than inviting people to participate. It is about listening, building trust and working with communities to create opportunities that are relevant and accessible.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Cultural inclusion is about creating a netball environment where everyone feels welcome, respected and able to participate. By listening to communities, understanding barriers and making practical adjustments, Associations and Clubs can strengthen belonging, build meaningful connections and ensure netball reflects and celebrates the diversity of the communities it serves.