

National Policy for Gender Equity in Governance

Lifting sector performance by increasing the number of self-identified women on boards



Purpose

40%

In 2018, Sport New Zealand announced a policy requiring all qualifying funded partners to have a minimum of 40% self-identified women on their boards by December 2021 or face a penalty.

“ We needed this quota to smash through the barriers and disrupt the status quo. ”

Why is it needed?

International research confirms women’s and girls’ participation in sport and recreation is increasing, but women are under-represented in leadership and governance roles.

There are many women with the skills and experience required for appointment to these boards but there was a ‘demand’ issue.

The mainly incumbent men on boards were recruiting new members from their mainly male networks.

For Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa, a ‘circuit breaker’ was needed.

Timeline

February 2012	2015-2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	December 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted monitoring of 72 boards commences Pool of women board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 more projects 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy consultation Board approved change to Policy (women only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy change consultation Refreshed pool of women Board approval - final Policy published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consequences for non-compliance agreed Final date for compliance
Recruitment support and annual audit						

Barriers

Barriers to meeting the Sport NZ policy for gender equity on boards:

- Attitudes and behaviours of incumbent board members
- Constitutions, trust deeds, board policies and processes
- Small, volunteer boards
- Poor understanding of good governance
- Women not putting themselves forward for board roles
- Lack of clear messages from Sport NZ

What worked?

Actions that worked to ensure the Sport NZ policy was met:

- Supporting boards to understand biases and reasons for quotas
- Supporting the role of chairs
- Quotas, deadline, penalties
- Building the pool of board-ready women
- Supporting boards with their recruitment processes

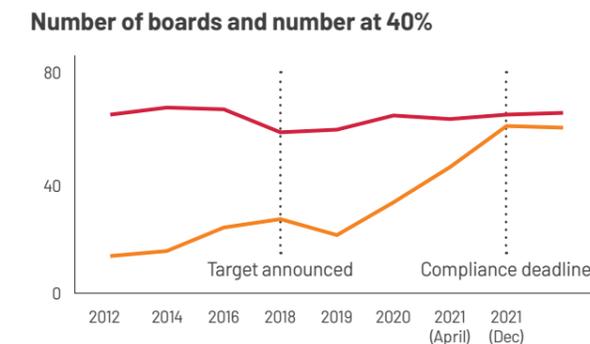
“ More women (on the board) have resulted in a different tone to board meetings. ”



Outcomes

65 out of 66

As of December 2021, 65 out of 66 qualifying funded partners achieved a gender balance on their boards of 40 percent or more self-identified women.



What are the impacts?

The result of more women on boards has been:

- Overall improvement in the quality of governance and board dynamics
- More women in Chair roles
- More consideration of biculturalism and wider diversity opportunities
- More conversations about women and girls at the board table, although **these have not yet translated into board strategies or targets.**

“ There are more complex and nuanced discussions, more thoughtful debate, a stronger people and player focus. ”

View report, recommendations, and further resources: sportnz.org.nz/board-gender-diversity/