

# Evaluating LGBTI+ Inclusion within Sport and the Pride Cup Initiative

## Final Report

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## CONTENTS

Table of figures .....	4
Table of tables.....	4
Acknowledgements .....	5
Executive Summary .....	6
Introduction.....	6
Methodology.....	6
Online Survey Findings .....	6
Interview findings.....	7
Quantitative Club Members Survey Findings .....	9
Conclusion and recommendations .....	10
Introduction .....	12
Brief literature review of existing studies .....	12
Methodology.....	13
Online Survey with Pride Cup Clubs.....	14
Method .....	14
Findings.....	14
Club Motivations and reasons for involvement .....	14
Resources .....	15
Impact .....	15
Challenges .....	16
Qualitative Data Collection at Pride Cup Clubs .....	18
Methodology.....	18
Findings.....	19
Effectiveness of the Pride Cup.....	19
Awareness raising.....	19
Creating inclusive environments and engagement in LGBTI+ inclusion .....	19
Benefits to clubs.....	20
Effectiveness of Pride Cup Support.....	21
Effectiveness of the Pride Cup Handbook .....	23
Engagement with additional LGBTI+ initiatives .....	24
Sustainability of the Pride Cup Event .....	25
Quantitative Club Members Survey.....	26
Methodology.....	26
Sampling .....	26
Measures.....	27
Findings.....	28

Demographic and Descriptive Findings.....	28
Personality traits.....	30
Club culture.....	30
Attitudes toward LGBT people .....	32
Attitudes toward Transgender participants.....	33
Efficacy to Intervene or React Negatively .....	34
Summary.....	34
Methodological limitations of survey data.....	35
Discussion of Key Findings .....	36
Value of Resources – Education.....	36
Value of resources: Handbook.....	36
Impact of engagement in the Pride Cup on Community Clubs.....	37
Conclusion and recommendations .....	39
References.....	41
Appendix 1 .....	42
Survey Scale description .....	42
Attitudes toward language.....	42
Norms .....	43
Empathy.....	43
Attitudes to LGBT people.....	43
Efficacy .....	44

## TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Motives and outcomes for running the Pride Cup .....	15
Figure 2: Club members are able to be open about sexuality as a result of Pride Cup.....	16
Figure 3: Challenges facing administrators of Pride Cup in clubs .....	17
Figure 4: Resistance to hosting a Pride Cup.....	17
Figure 5: Participant empathy levels toward the experiences of LGBT people in sport.....	32
Figure 6: Proportion of participants who believe Trans women have an unfair advantage when playing on a female sport team .....	33
Figure 7: Efficacy levels of male participants to intervene or react negatively to homophobic language or behaviour at their club .....	34

## TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: Overview of Interview Participants .....	18
Table 2: Demographic statistics about participants .....	29
Table 3: Mean scores of participant personality traits .....	30
Table 4: Frequency of homophobic, sexist, and transphobic language and attitudes toward the use of homophobic language .....	31
Table 5: Median scores for injunctive norms .....	32

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

The Pride Cup was established in 2012 by Yarra Glen Football and Netball Club, intended as a visual demonstration of support for a player, Jason Ball, who had recently come out to his teammates. From this, the concept of the Pride Cup has grown into an Australian wide movement. The aim of the Pride Cup is to ensure that individuals who identify as LGBTI+ feel included and welcomed in sport and broader society.

In July 2019, VicHealth commissioned researchers from the Faculty of Education, Monash University to undertake an evaluation to measure the impact of the Pride Cup program and resources.

Existing research highlights the lower participation rates of people who identify as LGBTI+. Gay and bisexual teenage males play team sport at less than half the rate of their heterosexual peers, whilst girls who identify as lesbian are known to experience discrimination and exclusion within some sport settings (Drury, 2011). Transgender young people frequently report negative and exclusionary experiences when seeking to participate in sport (Hargie, Mitchell, Somerville, 2017).

The evaluation contributes to an understanding of what works in LGBTI+ inclusion approaches within sport and why, in relation to changing long outdated attitudes and behaviours. Despite the problem of LGBTI+ discrimination and exclusion from sport being well studied, there is very little research focused on finding effective solutions.

### METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team undertook a mixed method approach utilising surveys and interviews to gain data from participating clubs. The evaluation team distributed an online survey to organisers at all clubs who had participated in a Pride Cup within the calendar year up to September, 2019. This survey examined club understanding of the Pride Cup, the value of provided resources and thoughts about the impact of Pride Cup on the club environment.

More detailed data collection was also undertaken at 6 Pride Cup clubs representing the sports of AFL/Netball, Cricket, Roller Derby and Hockey. Interviews were undertaken with committee members, coaches, players and volunteers at these clubs with a total of 20 interviews completed. These interviews focused on examining club culture, awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion, perceived impact of the Pride Cup, value of resources and support, intentions to continue engaging in LGBTI+ inclusion, impact on club members and engagement with LGBTI+ community.

Paper based surveys were also completed at the 6 case study clubs with members over 18 years of age. The survey captured data regarding attitudes towards homophobia, use of homophobic language and confidence to challenge homophobic behaviour. Paper based surveys were also completed at 6 non-Pride Cup participating clubs enabling an important comparison that helps to establish the effects of the Pride Cup on attitudes and awareness towards LGBTI+ people.

### ONLINE SURVEY FINDINGS

#### **Club Motivations and reasons for involvement**

Motivations for participating in the Pride Cup focused on including and supporting the LGBTI+ community, whilst promoting inclusion more broadly. The majority of organisers felt they completely achieved the objective of including and supporting the LGBTI+ community.

### Resources

A little over half the organisers found the education program to be moderately or extremely useful in helping the club learn about LGBTI+ inclusion. 40% however were unaware of the education program and 11% found it to be of no use. Limited written feedback was provided for improvement. More sessions, greater audience interaction and the importance of quality presenters were emphasised.

The handbook was considered moderately or extremely useful for supporting the organiser in undertaking the Pride Cup by 72% of the organisers. 11% found it of no use or little use while 17% were unaware of its existence.

### Impact

The vast majority of organisers felt that hosting a Pride Cup created greater awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion and sent a strong message that homophobia would not be tolerated. All but three organisers moderately or very much agreed that significant people in the club had been educated about LGBTI+ inclusion. Three of the eighteen organisers did not or only slightly agreed with the statement 'because of the Pride Cup, there is greater support for the LGBTI+ community at the club'. Fifty percent of organisers did not or only slightly agreed that because of the Pride Cup, LGBTI+ members could be open about their sexuality at the club. Organisers were either unaware (n=11), felt there had been (n=2) or felt there were not (n=5) any changes to policies or practices related to LGBTI+ inclusion at the club. Just over half of the organisers indicated that they made connections with LGBTI+ organisations in the local community.

### Challenges

All organisers felt club members were either moderately or extremely supportive of running a Pride Cup. Organisers felt the time taken to organise and the resources required to be the most challenging aspects. Generally the survey suggested there was limited resistance but it could be challenging getting members on board.

## INTERVIEW FINDINGS

### Impact of Pride Cup: Awareness raising

The interviewees suggested that holding a Pride Cup had assisted in raising awareness amongst club members of LGBTI+ exclusion within community sport, as well as providing a mechanism to celebrate LGBTI+ participation and raise awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion within the clubs' local community. The Pride Cup has encouraged clubs members to have discussions about LGBTI+ inclusion and to consider some of their practices (such as addressing negative language).

### Creating inclusive environments and engagement in LGBTI+ inclusion

Interviewees discussed the importance of the Pride Cup in enabling their clubs to pro-actively engage with LGBTI+ inclusion. Additional activities held as part of the Pride Cup events, particularly the lunch and dinners, were felt to have helped clubs in ensuring positive messaging about LGBTI+ inclusion reached beyond club members and to the wider community. Spectator attendance at Pride Cup games was higher than for any other games in the season and attendance at the additional functions ranged from 100 to 400 people. Interviewees believed that the Pride Cup could play a valuable role in increasing the visibility of LGBTI+ members.

### Benefits to clubs

All interviewees were in agreement that the Pride Cup had assisted with raising the clubs' profile within the local community and enhanced their clubs' reputation as community minded and engaged with social justice issues. Interviewees also discussed how the Pride Cup had provided opportunities to make connections with a range of businesses and community partners. A number of clubs outlined how their involvement in the Pride Cup had helped them gain greater levels of sponsorship from community organisations and due to the higher spectator attendance

at Pride Cup games, benefit financially from sales of food, drink etc. Clubs had engaged with LGBTI+ members where possible, or the LGBTI+ community more broadly to varying degrees.

### **Effectiveness of Pride Cup Support**

The interviewees felt that they had received valuable support and guidance from the Pride Cup team and acknowledged that Pride Cup staff were highly responsive to addressing volunteer queries and concerns. All interviewees were positive about the Pride Cup education sessions and felt they had been useful in raising awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion amongst members and identifying some of the key ways that LGBTI+ members may be excluded within sporting contexts. An important function of the education sessions was highlighting the damaging impact of homophobic and exclusionary language, with all interviewees indicating that they, and their club members, had greater levels of awareness of the detrimental impact of language. Subsequently, volunteers suggested that they and other club members would be more willing to call out and challenge the use of such language within the club environment because of the training. The interviewees suggested that the deliverers' pitched the education session at an appropriate and accessible level for club members.

One of the challenges was encouraging all club members to participate in education. Seven interviewees had not attended the education and whilst clubs generally reported good attendance (around 50 club members on average), the education was not thought to be having a whole club reach at some clubs, an issue reinforced by the organisers and members' surveys. Interviewees highlighted the need for ongoing education and the importance of undertaking 'refresher' sessions even when the club had hosted a Pride Cup the previous year. It was suggested refresher sessions should take place at least once a year.

### **Effectiveness of the Pride Cup Handbook**

There was mixed engagement with the handbook across the Pride Cup interviewees. Some were unaware and had not used the handbook at all, others had used it as a reference guide, whereas some had relied quite heavily on the handbook to help inform them as to how to develop their Pride game and what work needed to be undertaken within the club. The volunteers who had used the handbook, valued the templates and the direction it provided on areas such as correct wording for promotional material. The lack of engagement by some clubs with the handbook might suggest a need to provide a shorter, very accessible version with the 'must do' aspects for clubs that would not engage more fully with the broader handbook. Alternately a different handbook targeted towards different audiences may be an option worth exploring.

### **Engagement with additional LGBTI+ initiatives**

The Pride Cup was the only LGBTI+ inclusion initiative that case study clubs were involved with, illustrating its importance in placing LGBTI+ inclusion on the radar of community sport. All clubs were additionally very active in supporting other inclusion focused activities including initiatives seeking to reduce violence against women, improve mental health and promote Indigenous participation and reconciliation. There was a tendency within some clubs to suggest that through the Pride Cup, LGBTI+ inclusion was 'done' and they would then move their focus onto the next issue.

### **Sustainability of the Pride Cup Event**

All of the clubs wanted to continue to deliver Pride Cup events in the future. They all spoke of their commitment to do so, with several indicating they would continue until they reached a point where LGBTI+ inclusion was so commonplace it wasn't necessary to have a 'special event' to raise awareness. At each club, there was a key diversity champion and driver who had been responsible for suggesting the club should host a cup, pulling key stakeholders together and bringing other club volunteers on-board. The reliance on a champion can leave inclusion work vulnerable, particularly if that individual leaves the club or takes a step back from their role.



There was little discussion of how LGBTI+ inclusion would continue to be enacted beyond the Pride Cup event. Most clubs spoken with indicated they had either a small number of LGBTI+ members or none and there were very few openly gay men. Interviewees acknowledged that although they felt that their club was welcoming and inclusive of LGBTI+ participants, this may still not be the perception amongst the LGBTI+ community. There were not many examples of further activities that were seeking to encourage LGBTI+ individuals to join the club. The data would suggest that the cup has not yet prompted further engagement in LGBTI+ inclusion. It's important to acknowledge however, that for clubs who were engaging for the first time this year (3 of the 5 clubs involved in interviews), it is still early in the culture change process. Engagement in the Pride Cup appears to provide a valuable platform from which clubs could engage in further inclusion work.

### QUANTITATIVE CLUB MEMBERS SURVEY FINDINGS

This aspect of the research compared survey result from sport clubs that have held Pride Cups and received education from the Pride Cup organisation in 2019 (treatment clubs), with six randomly selected clubs that had not held these events (comparison clubs) on key variables linked to inclusion.

There were no statistically significant differences between the comparison and treatment groups on any of the demographic or team composition variables. Surveys conducted at Pride Cup clubs suggested that 38% of Pride Cup respondents attended the education delivered by the Pride Cup organisation, with only a few able to identify the core message as being about LGBTI+ inclusion.

#### Club culture

The survey asked whether participants' perceived diversity and inclusion are core values at their club. A strong majority (n= 175; 67.6%) at treatment clubs 'completely' agreed with this statement, compared to less than half of participants (n = 111; 43.5%) at comparison clubs

#### Language use

There were statistically significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs on all measures related to language use. These differences were due to responses from male participants. Overall, there were low levels of homophobic language use among female participants, and they also viewed this language as unacceptable in both comparison and Pride-Cup clubs. Males at the treatment clubs were half as likely as those at the comparison clubs to report using homophobic language themselves, as well as witnessing teammates use this language at least once in the two weeks prior to completing their surveys. Participants at the treatment clubs were also significantly less likely to report they had heard transphobic language being used by teammates in the past year.

There were also significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs in the attitudes of male participants toward the acceptability of making jokes about gay people and using homophobic slurs. At the comparison clubs, nearly 1 in 5 male participants thought it was acceptable to use this language, compared to one in twenty participants at the treatment clubs. There were large, significant differences in sexist language use, with male participants at comparison clubs significantly more likely to report they had heard others use this language in the last year. Male participants at comparison clubs were also significantly more likely to believe it's acceptable to make jokes about women.

#### Injunctive Norms

Females were more likely than males to believe their teammates would react negatively to the use of homophobic language. At comparison clubs, on average, male participants thought 60% of their teammates would be critical of this behaviour, whereas at the treatment clubs, participants believed 70-80% of their teammates would be critical. This difference was not statistically significant.

### Empathy

There was a significant difference between the comparison and treatment in levels of empathy shown toward the experiences of LGBTI+ people in sport for all participants, with empathy levels higher at treatment clubs.

### Efficacy to Intervene or React Negatively

Male participants from the treatment clubs were significantly more likely to express confidence they would react negatively to homophobic language and behaviour by others, than those in the comparison clubs. No significant difference was found in responses to this question from female participants.

Overall the survey found statistically significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs for males on all measures related to the frequency of homophobic, sexist, and transphobic language as well as attitudes toward the use of homophobic language. Participants from Pride Cup clubs were significantly less likely to use or witness the use of discriminatory language than participants from comparison clubs. This suggests the Pride Cup may potentially reduce discriminatory and exclusionary behaviours related to language use.

Whilst the Pride Cup may have moderated exclusionary language it didn't remove it, suggesting more work is needed. Over a quarter of males belonging to clubs that participated in the Pride Cup reported witnessing homophobic language used by teammates in the past two weeks. A figure significantly lower than comparison clubs but still potentially harmful. A similar number of males from Pride Cup clubs reported being the target of homophobic language in the past year at the club.

Overall, the survey suggests that the Pride Cup has the potential to impact positively towards creating more supportive environments for the LGBTI+ communities. Low rates of attendance at education programs suggest there is perhaps greater scope for the Pride Cup to meet its stated objectives.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pride Cup can make an important contribution to supporting LGBTI+ inclusion within community sport. The evaluation suggests that clubs involved experience a range of benefits and positive impacts from their participation and the Pride Cup offers an accessible and structured way for them to engage and consider LGBTI+ inclusion. The following recommendations have been developed from the research findings:

- The Pride Cup initiative is the main intervention seeking to promote LGBTI+ inclusion within community sport. It is important to continue to support this initiative to continue to connect with more sports clubs. The Pride Cup provides a tangible and accessible way for clubs to consider LGBTI+ inclusion, an area volunteers often consider is sensitive and are wary of engaging with. The Pride Cup provides a framework for engagement that can assist clubs in overcoming their concerns and lack of knowledge regarding how to engage in LGBTI+ inclusion.
- The education component of the Pride Cup is important but the data suggests attention should be given to examining ways of promoting greater engagement. This may be with regard to working with clubs on scheduling of sessions, indicating the importance of attendance and ensuring all committee members and coaches attend education to ensure consistency amongst those in leadership positions within clubs.
- There is a need for ongoing education amongst existing clubs to continue to reinforce the key knowledge and learning. The content may be similar if club members have experienced

turnover but there is also potential to develop education that continues to build knowledge and provides clubs with resources to help with changing their practices.

- The club members' survey suggests that homophobic attitudes within clubs are relatively low but there is a need to change the social norms that exist within sport that position the use of homophobic language as normal, acceptable and part of masculine 'banter'. Education needs to continue to highlight these damaging norms and provide volunteers with strategies for challenging them within community sport contexts.
- Clubs who have been involved in Pride Cups have considerable levels of organisational knowledge that may be useful to share with new clubs or those contemplating becoming involved. It would be valuable to consider ways to connect existing and new clubs to allow conversations between Pride Cup organisers to occur.
- The handbook is a useful resource but greater direction and case studies on how to operationalise the information provided would be valuable. It may also be valuable to contain within the handbook some 'quick reference' or infographic guides, to provide a basic overview for volunteers who will not necessarily engage with a larger and more detailed resource.
- The involvement of the LGBTI+ community in the planning and organisation of the Pride Cup is crucial in designing events that are reflective of the needs of LGBTI+ individuals and are genuinely inclusive. Engagement with LGBTI+ members, community groups and organisations should continue to be advocated for through the handbook and education and in discussions with organisers, stressing that this is a fundamental aspect of organising a Pride Cup.
- Clubs have generally been very successful at hosting Pride Cup events but require further support and encouragement to translate this engagement into a deeper commitment to facilitate change within the club environment. Club's need encouragement, guidance and examples of how they can begin to change policies and practices to be more inclusive of LGBTI+ members as an embedded part of their everyday activities. Clubs sharing resources and ideas may be a useful way to prompt this process.
- To achieve a broader cultural shift, clubs are likely to require ongoing support but it is recognised that the Pride Cup team have limited resources and therefore struggle to provide ongoing and extensive support to clubs. There is however, a lack of specific expertise within the sector more broadly, particularly local government and State Sporting Associations to undertake this work. Reflecting the findings of the market analysis, providing support to upskill professionals working in the sector who can provide more sustained assistance to sports clubs is an important in supporting sustained culture change at club level.
- In order to evaluate the effectiveness of intensive interventions like the Pride Cup and to justify ongoing support or resource development, evaluation designs should be carefully considered. If evaluation is well resourced and embedded prior to a wider roll-out phase (often following pilot testing), it is not too difficult to pre-test and randomly assign clubs to treatments and controls (noting controls can get the program at a later date). This layer of evaluation will allow for more concrete conclusions to be drawn about the impact and effectiveness of important initiatives like the Pride Cup.

## INTRODUCTION

The Pride Cup was established in 2012 by Yarra Glen Football and Netball Club, intended as a visual demonstration of support for a player, Jason Ball, who had recently come out to his teammates. From this, the concept of the Pride Cup has grown into an Australian wide movement. The aim of the Pride Cup is to ensure that individuals who identify as LGBTIQ feel included and welcomed in sport and broader society. Pride Cups offer 'visual displays of hope and acceptance to LGBTIQ players' (Pride Cup Handbook, p.7). The Pride Cup team provide support, guidance and education to community sporting club, assisting them in hosting a Pride Cup and to engage with LGBTIQ inclusion.

In July 2019, VicHealth commissioned researchers from the Faculty of Education, Monash University to undertake an evaluation to measure the impact of the Pride Cup program and resources, particularly focusing on the following areas:

- Effectiveness of Pride Cup Handbook;
- Effectiveness of Pride Cup Support;
- Effectiveness of Pride Cup events;
- Sustainability of Pride Cup events;
- Awareness and understanding of LGBTIQ issues and acceptance of LGBTIQ community;
- Existing initiatives that aim to increase inclusion of LGBTIQ community in local sporting clubs.

Existing research highlights the lower participation rates of people who identify as LGBTIQ indicating that individuals can experience overt and subtle forms of discrimination (Symons et al, 2014; Trussell, Kovac & Apgar, 2018). Gay and bisexual teenage males play team sport at less than half the rate of their heterosexual peers, whilst girls who identify as lesbian are known to experience discrimination and exclusion within some sport settings (Drury, 2011). Transgender young people continually report negative and exclusionary experiences when seeking to participate in sport (Hargie, Mitchell, Somerville, 2017).

The evaluation contributes to an understanding of what works in LGBTIQ inclusion approaches within sport and why, in relation to changing long outdated attitudes and behaviours. Despite the problem of LGBTIQ discrimination and exclusion from sport being well studied, there is very little research focused on finding effective solutions.

## BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW OF EXISTING STUDIES

As the market analysis report documents (Jeanes et al., 2019), there are an increasing number of initiatives seeking to address homophobic behaviour and promote LGBTIQ inclusion in sport within Australia and internationally. Few of these have been subject to research or evaluation. In a search of peer-reviewed published studies, there were only two that have examined the impact of an anti-homophobia intervention on participants. Matty, McCloughan and Hanrahan (2014), detailed an education intervention that sought to address homophobic bullying within youth volleyball clubs in Australia. The State Sporting Association in the study developed a workshop that focused on the nature of bullying, the role of homophobic language and casual slurs in bullying and the impact this has on individuals. Education was useful in enhancing players' understanding of the negative impact of homophobic bullying but the study did not

capture data regarding any changes in behaviour. Similarly, the same research team examined the impact of education on coaches' capability to address homophobic bullying (McCloughan, Matthey & Hanrahan, 2015), suggesting that workshops were valuable for raising coaches' awareness of homophobic bullying and providing strategies to respond appropriately. The study did not measure impact on coaches' practice.

Beyond peer reviewed articles there are very few evaluation reports documenting the impact of LGBTI+ initiatives in sport, particularly studies that undertake pre and post intervention testing. The Pride Game evaluation examined the impact of the elite level AFL Pride Game on promoting LGBTI+ inclusion. Pre-game surveys illustrated that around half of individuals who identify as LGBTI+ did not consider AFL games to be a safe space for them as spectators, 58% did not consider them welcoming and 56% did not consider that games were inclusive. Nearly 3 in 5 who had attended games, had witnessed verbal homophobia or transphobia. Individuals attending the Pride game suggested that they felt it was a safe space for LGBTI+ people (ranked 9.3/10 with 10 strongly agree), that it was inclusive (9.2/10) and it was welcoming (9.4/10). The evaluation suggested that people who did not identify as LGBTI+ increased their awareness of some of the issues impacting on the LGBTI+ community and were more likely to challenge friends using offensive language. The evaluation suggests ongoing exposure to LGBTI+ positive inclusion messaging is all important in creating change.

One of the most extensive initiatives focusing on LGBTI+ inclusion in recent years, was the *Fair Go Sport* program, funded by Sport Australia (then the Australian Sport Commission) and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission. In partnership with Hockey Australia and Hockey Victoria in 2010-2011, the project was delivered across 4 pilot hockey clubs with flexibility to tailor the work they undertook to best suit their needs. A key intention of the program was to foster cultural change at an association and community club level by facilitating greater understanding of the need for LGBTI+ inclusion strategies and a change in practices to make sporting environments more welcoming for individuals who identify as LGBTI+. The evaluation concluded that the program had not necessarily yet led to cultural change but had assisted in raising awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion within hockey clubs. It did so by prompting club and sporting association staff to have conversations about including individuals who identify as LGBTI+ within sport. It also prompted reflections on why gay men in particular, were either not participating or not open about their sexuality within their club. Club representatives discussed being more willing to act on homophobic slurs such as 'that's so gay', because they had greater knowledge and awareness of the impacts. The key learning from the intervention was the importance of education and support for clubs, the value of allowing clubs to develop opportunities and approaches suited to their local needs and that ongoing resources and support are required to shift beyond increased awareness towards cultural change within clubs.

Beyond this, and as outlined in the evaluation team's initial market analysis report (Jeanes et al., 2019), there are no evaluations that detail the impact of LGBTI+ inclusion in sport initiatives. As such, the current evaluation represents an important opportunity to develop an evidence base examining the influence of interventions delivered in sporting contexts.

## METHODOLOGY

The evaluation had two separate but complementary objectives. The first objective was to evaluate the services and resources provided to community clubs by Pride Cup as an organisation. The second was to determine the impact of Pride Cups on clubs. The evaluation team undertook a mixed method approach utilising surveys and interviews to gain data from participating clubs. The evaluation team distributed an online survey to key contacts at all clubs who had participated in a Pride Cup within the calendar year up to September, 2019. This survey

examined club understanding of the Pride Cup, the value of provided resources and thoughts about the impact of Pride Cup on the club environment.

More detailed data collection was also undertaken at 6 Pride Cup clubs representing the sports of AFL/Netball, Cricket, Roller Derby and Hockey. Interviews were undertaken with committee members, coaches, players and volunteers at these clubs with a total of 20 interviews completed. These interviews focused on examining club culture, awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion, perceived impact of the Pride Cup, value of resources and support, intentions to continue engaging in LGBTI+ inclusion, impact on club members and engagement with LGBTI+ community.

Paper based surveys were also completed at the 6 case study clubs with members over 18 years of age. The survey captured data regarding attitudes towards homophobia, use of homophobic language and confidence to challenge homophobic behaviour. Paper based surveys were also completed at 6 non-Pride Cup participating clubs enabling an important comparison that helps to establish the effects of the Pride Cup on attitudes and awareness towards LGBTI+ people.

This report is structured to discuss the key findings from each methodological approach before synthesising and discussing the findings collectively. The report concludes with a summary of implications of the overall study. Each section provides a detailed overview of the research methods utilised.

## ONLINE SURVEY WITH PRIDE CUP CLUBS

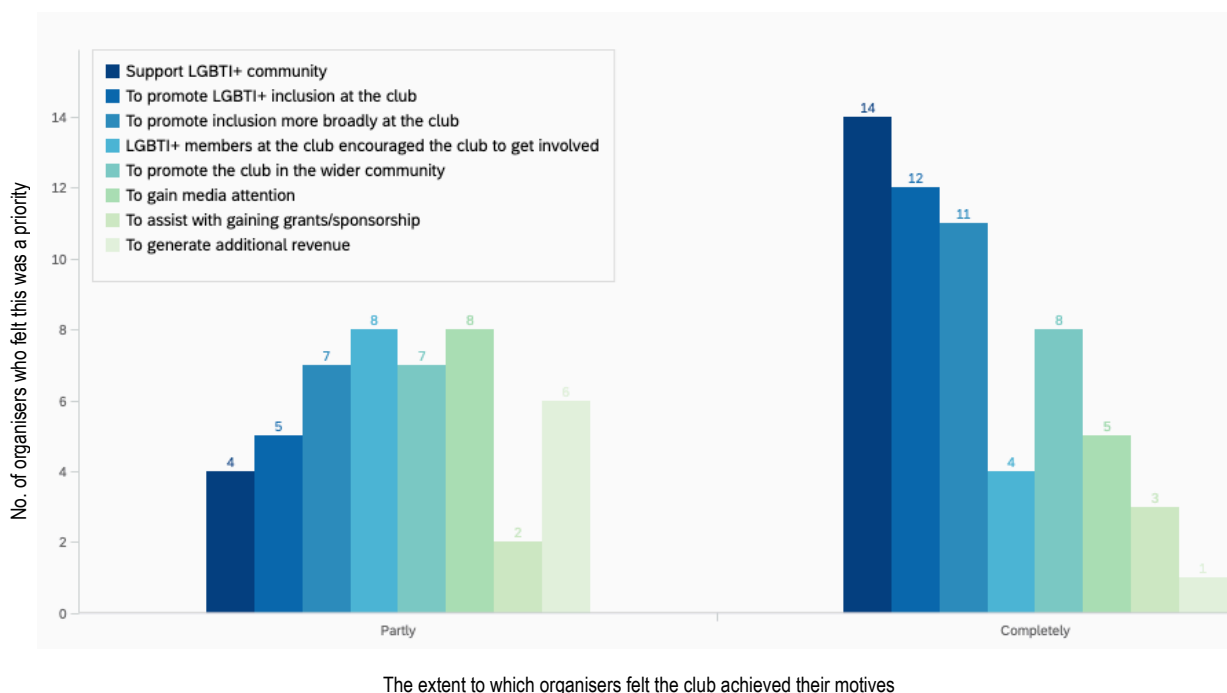
### Method

An online survey was emailed to key contacts at Pride Cup clubs via the Pride Cup team. The survey collected data regarding views of the handbook, support/service received, what activities they undertook as a result of engagement within the Pride Cup, levels of engagement with the LGBTI+ community, how they consider the Pride Cup has affected the club and intention to continue to engage in Pride focused activities in the longer term. The survey was hosted on the Qualtrics platform where descriptive statistics were also analysed. Nineteen organisers whose club had conducted a Pride Cup completed the survey, [a response rate of 61%] the majority were committee members, the club president or volunteers. Organisers were representing a narrow range of sports including Hockey (n=7), AFL only (n=5), AFL/Netball (n=4), cricket, softball and basketball (n=1). Most came from urban/metropolitan clubs (61%), with the rest evenly split between suburban/outer metro and rural/country based clubs. Pride Cup organisers were primarily (n=14) from smaller clubs (<200). When asked how many people were actively involved in running the Pride Cup, most organisers (n=9) suggested it was down to a small number of participants.

## FINDINGS

### CLUB MOTIVATIONS AND REASONS FOR INVOLVEMENT

Motivations for participating in the Pride Cup focused on including and supporting the LGBTI+ community, whilst promoting inclusion more broadly (see Figure 3). Also important was promoting the club to the wider community. Sponsorship, media attention and generation of revenue were considered non- or weak motives for participation. The majority of organisers felt they completely achieved the objective of including and supporting the LGBTI+ community (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1: Motives and outcomes for running the Pride Cup*

## Resources

A little over half the organisers found the education program to be moderately or extremely useful in helping the club learn about LGBTI+ inclusion. 40% however were unaware of the education program and 11% found it to be of no use. Just over one quarter of organisers (27%) said nobody had participated in Pride Cup education sessions. Another 27% had up to 5 people involved while 45% had more than 10 people attend education sessions, suggesting these are either poorly or well attended. Limited written feedback was provided for improvement. More sessions, greater audience interaction and the importance of quality presenters were emphasised.

The handbook was considered moderately or extremely useful for supporting the organiser in undertaking the Pride Cup by 72% of the organisers. 11% found it of no use or little use while 17% were unaware of its existence. Only two organisers provided feedback on the handbook. One participant wanted to see an example of a speech they could read, greater support for communication and a whole of league strategy. The same member suggested resources that could be printed and distributed to support.

## Impact

Data in follow up questions suggested that the vast majority of organisers felt Pride Cup created greater awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion and that hosting the Pride Cup sent a strong message that homophobia would not be tolerated. All but three moderately or very much agreed that significant people in the club had been educated about LGBTI+ inclusion. Three of the eighteen organisers did not or only slightly agreed with the statement 'because of the Pride Cup, there is greater support for the LGBTI+ community at the club'. Fifty percent of organisers did not or only slightly (n=6) agreed that because of the Pride cup, LGBTI+ members could be open about their sexuality at the club (see Figure 2). Organisers were either unaware (n=11), felt there had been (n=2) or felt there were not (n=5) any changes to policies or practices related to LGBTI+ inclusion at the club. Just over half of the organisers indicated that they made connections with LGBTI+ organisations in the local community. In summary, not all organisers felt the Pride Cup made

clubs safe for LGBTI+ participants or garnered greater support for LGBTI+ community from within the club, it did provide an opportunity to educate, increase awareness and give clear messaging. Support from the community appeared to be strong with some organisers suggesting there was much more crowd support than normal (44%), moderately more (11%) or slightly more than normal crowd support (33%). With respect to general inclusion, organisers felt their clubs were most inclusive of females and people from lower SES. There was a mixed rating for culturally diverse members and most work was needed to be done with disability.

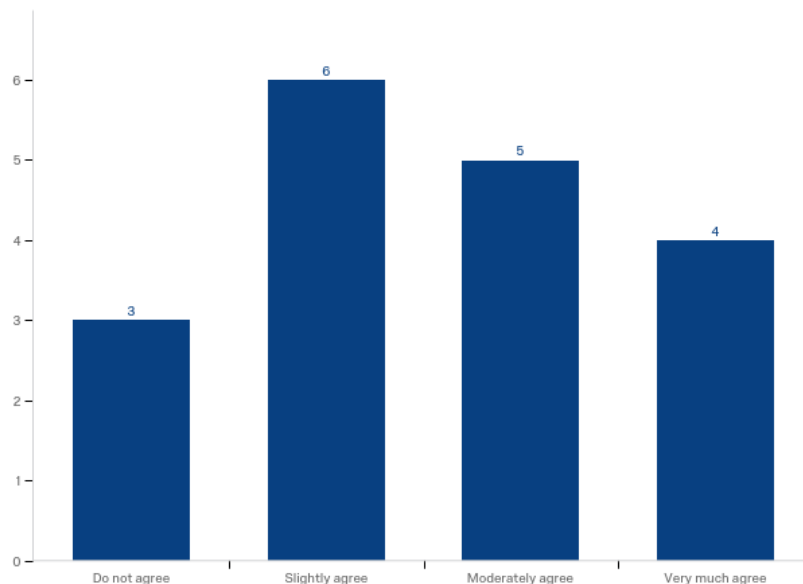


Figure 2: Club members are able to be open about sexuality as a result of Pride Cup.

### Challenges

All organisers felt club members were either moderately or extremely supportive of running a Pride Cup. Organisers felt the time taken to organise and the resources required to be the most challenging aspects (see Figure 3). Resources and volunteers were also important issues. In the few written responses provided (n=5), one organiser suggested communicating with the opposition, being an outsider to the club, scheduling and internal politics were issues.



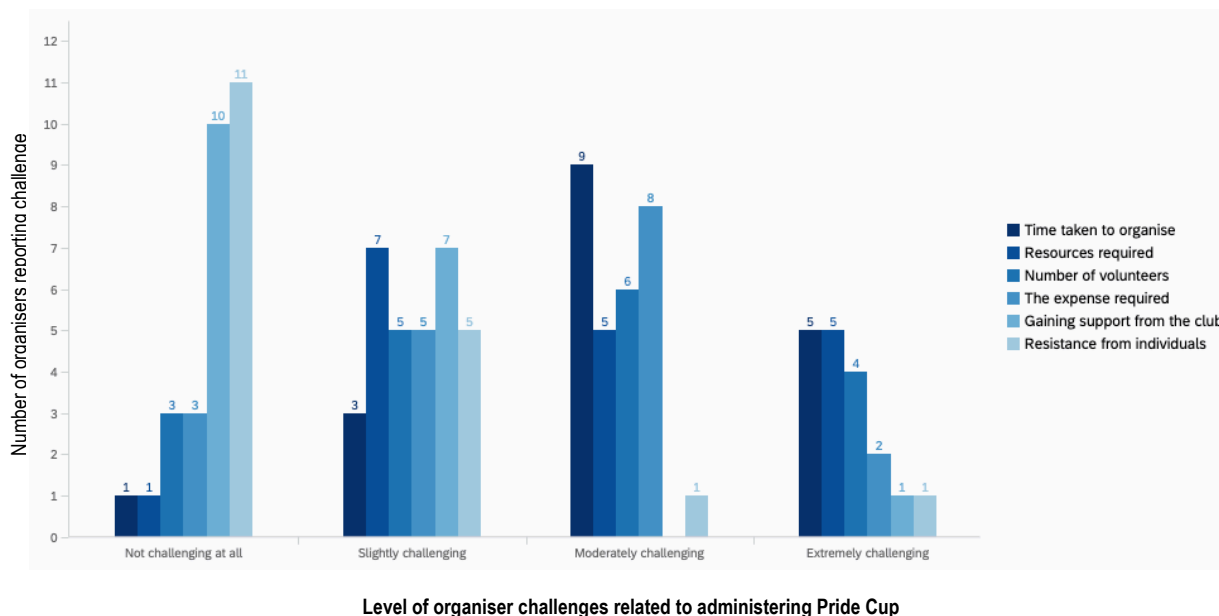


Figure 3: Challenges facing administrators of Pride Cup in clubs

Whilst findings in Figure 3 highlight limited resistance from individuals were noted amongst most organisers, a later question focused on resistance suggested there was resistance to Pride Cup from individuals for 50% of the organisers (see Figure 4). Sources of resistance at committee level included non-executive committee members (easily convinced), difficulties in funding elements, stretched committees (volunteerism), and ‘the uneducated’. Amongst players, the opposition players and masters’ men were singled out as being less enthusiastic. Amongst spectators and the wider community, there were comments on social media and via private messages to FB that were admonishing. Amongst parents, one organiser singled out junior parents.

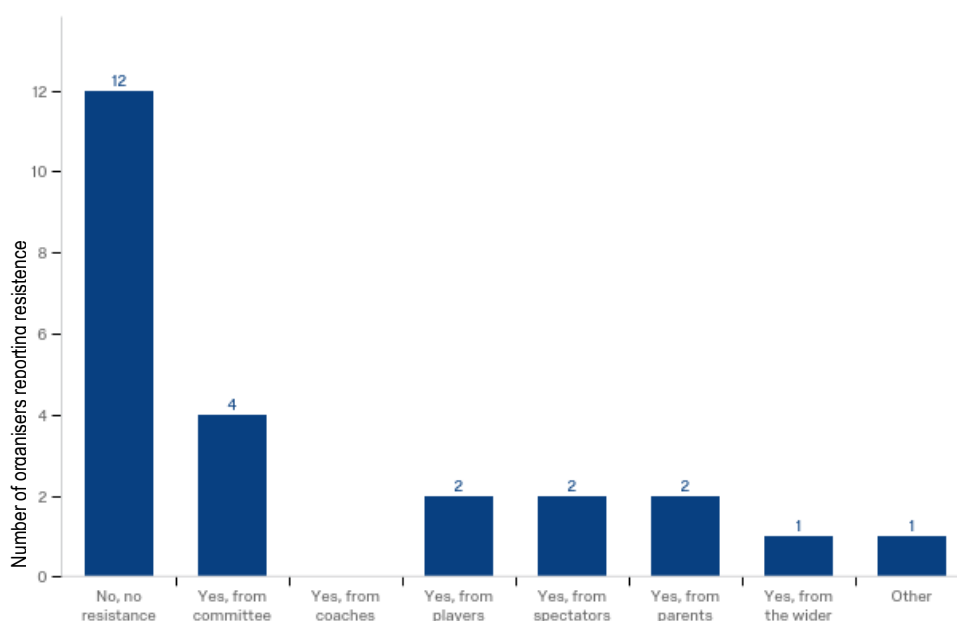


Figure 4: Resistance to hosting a Pride Cup

## QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AT PRIDE CUP CLUBS

### METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted at five Pride Cup clubs to allow for a deeper understanding of the survey data and club members' experiences of involvement. The research team invited a selection of club members at each of the five Pride Cup clubs to undertake interviews, particularly targeting club presidents, volunteers, coaches, team captains and, where possible, club members who identify as LGBTI+. In total 20 club members were interviewed as detailed in Table 1. These interviews focused on examining club culture, awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion, perceived impact of the Pride Cup, value of resources and support, intentions to continue engaging in LGBTI+ inclusion, impact on club members and engagement with LGBTI+ community.

Pseudonym	Position	Gender	Club No.	Rural/Metro	Sport	Club Involvement in Pride Cup
P1	Health officer	Male	1	Rural	AFL/Netball	1 <sup>st</sup> in 2019
P2	Health Officer & Cttee member	Female	1			
P3	President	Male	1			
P4	Former President	Male	2	Rural	AFL/Netball	Multiple
P5	President	Male	2			
P6	Player	Male	2			
P7	CEO	Male	3	Metro	AFL	1 <sup>st</sup> in 2019
P8	Player	Female	3			
P9	Player	Female	3			
P10	Player	Male	3			
P11	Player/coach	Female	4	Metro	Hockey	Multiple
P12	Player	Male	4			
P13	Player	female	4			
P14	Player/coach	Male	4			
P15	coach	Male	4			
P16	Player	Male	4			
P17	Player & social inclusion officer	Male	4			
P18	President	Female	5	Rural	Roller Derby	1 <sup>st</sup> in 2019
P19	Player	Female	5			
P20	Vice President	Female	5			

*Table 1: Overview of Interview Participants*

Interviews were between 15 and 45 minutes long and transcribed verbatim. NVivo qualitative analysis package was used to support data analysis with two members of the evaluation team independently conducting a thematic analysis of four transcripts to ensure cross referencing and internal validity of the subsequent coding framework. All transcripts were then coded using the coding framework from the thematic analysis. Inconsistencies were noted during this analysis.

## FINDINGS

### Effectiveness of the Pride Cup

The interviews illustrated the enthusiasm and commitment of volunteers and club members to host an effective Pride Cup. Most clubs had held multiple Pride games, played on the same day and also incorporated hospitality activities such as lunches and dinners. All had used the latter to provide an opportunity to address a large audience, through guest speakers, about the importance of LGBTI+ inclusion. Speakers at these events ranged from LGBTI+ club members through to government ministers. A key feature of Pride Cup events has been the rainbow branding which interviewees talked about effusively as providing a visual illustration of their support for the LGBTI+ community. Interviewees discussed how players wore rainbow socks and jerseys, pitches had rainbows painted on them and at some clubs, community organisations and businesses also showed their support by displaying rainbow branding in their shop fronts in town centres in the lead up to the Pride Cup. There was a sense from the interviewees that the rainbow branding had allowed clubs and the local community to provide a visual display of support for the LGBTI+ community in a way that would not have been possible without the impetus of the Pride Cup.

### Awareness raising

The interviewees suggested that holding a Pride Cup had assisted in raising awareness amongst club members of LGBTI+ exclusion within community sport, as well as providing a mechanism to celebrate LGBTI+ participation and raise awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion within the clubs' local community. As will be discussed in more detail in the education section below, the Pride Cup has encouraged clubs members to have discussions about LGBTI+ inclusion and to consider some of their practices (such as addressing negative language).

*We don't talk a lot about LGBT issues, at least in my experience with the club... But, I think it's good to sort of raise awareness of it and let people know that if they're maybe struggling with their sexuality or identity or anything like that, that they're accepted, that it's okay, and you know there's people to talk to and allies and all of that. So, I think it's good to just sort of raise awareness. You don't necessarily have to talk about it all the time but just so that people are aware that it's a safe and welcoming environment and there's people to talk to and people who understand. (P13 Club 4)*

### Creating inclusive environments and engagement in LGBTI+ inclusion

As the previous quote suggests, there was a perception amongst the interviewees that engagement in the Pride Cup enabled the club to be seen as somewhere that was safe and welcoming for LGBTI+ individuals. As will be discussed further in the report, this has not necessarily translated to increases in LGBTI+ members yet, or at least a willingness to come out, but the Cup has enabled clubs to provide a front facing illustration of their support and commitment to LGBTI+ inclusion. Furthermore, involvement was felt to have led to the challenging of negative behaviour, particularly homophobic language.

*Just the language you know like; "oh you stupid poofers" and when you do something you used the term gay as a put down, so that was happening. And that really didn't stop happening until we had the Pride Cup. (P4 Club 2)*

Interviewees discussed the importance of the Pride Cup in enabling their clubs to proactively engage with LGBTI+ inclusion. As one interviewee suggested 'I think the Pride Cup really shows that they're proactive rather than being reactive to things that have gone wrong' (P9 Club 3). The Pride Cup provided an important role in helping the clubs illustrate their stance on inclusion as captured in the following quote,

*I think especially now...because it very much is [Club 4] sending a message saying, you know, this is where we stand on the issue. You know, very clear cut on it. Especially sends a message*

*saying like, no we aren't going to tolerate anything less than, you know, we are being inclusive to everyone. (P16 club 4)*

The additional activities as part of the Pride Cup events, particularly the lunch and dinners were felt to have helped clubs in ensuring positive messaging about LGBTI+ inclusion reached beyond club members to the wider community. All club interviewees discussed how their spectator attendance at Pride Cup games was far higher than for any other games in the season and attendance at the additional functions ranged from 100 to 400 people. As one interviewee commented, 'we get more people coming to that game than any other game. So the message is still getting to a wider audience' (P4 Club 2). One interviewee from club 1, who had been part of the organising committee but not a club member, discussed how for him, the Pride Cup was the first time he had attended a game at the local club and as a gay man he had previously believed the club was not a safe or accessible space for him. He also indicated that he'd seen other members of the LGBTI+ community at the game who were also visiting the club for the first time,

*Because we had a group of people up there from the LGBT community who had never been to the club ever. So the fact that they had a positive experience that, and when [club 1] is mentioned within the community, they'll go, "Look, Club 1's great. We went to their Pride Cup lunch, it was a fantastic event. (P1 Club 1).*

There was a feeling amongst the interviewees that the Pride Cup could play a valuable role in increasing the visibility of LGBTI+ members. Several clubs had encouraged their openly out players to undertake speeches at their dinners and lunch events, with one club outlining how powerful it was for club members and the local community to hear about the experiences of one of their Transgender players, who provided strong messaging around why inclusion is so important for the LGBTI+ community.

*It's like trans people should be visible in all sports. LGBTQI people should be visible in all sport. That shouldn't be something that's a thing, it should be just the way it is. And so I think that obviously right now in this business there's the Pride Cup in all sports. So kind of prompting that conversation. And I think right now it's incredibly necessary. But my hope is that by the time my kids are adults, it's just not even something that is bothered about. It was just, you know, another part of society. That's just the way it is. (P19 club 5)*

There were mixed feeling amongst club interviewees regarding visibility and whether LGBTI+ members should be compelled to be visible, acknowledging some did not wish to be singled out and positioned as different. Several interviewees discussed the need to respect members who may prefer not to disclose details of their sexuality. The reluctance of some members to be open about their sexuality within the club environment does point to some of the ongoing challenging of assuring individuals that the club will genuinely provide a safe and welcoming environment, regardless of diversity.

### Benefits to clubs

All interviewees were in agreement that the Pride Cup had assisted with raising the clubs' profile within the local community and enhanced the club's reputation as community minded and engaged with social justice issues. The feelings of the interviewees were summarised in the following quote,

*It's probably good for their [Club] reputation. I think in the community you see organizations like the [Club] showing that they care deeply about the issues that face the LGBTI community, I think a lot of the community.....really get behind a club like that and I think it helps us with reputation within that area. (p10 club 3)*

Interviewees also discussed how the Pride Cup had provided opportunities to make connections with a range of businesses and community partners. Club 1 for example, had partnered with a local community health trust in delivering their event which had allowed for strong health

messaging and promotion of health services as part of their activities. Interviewees at club 1 also discussed having greater connections with a local LGBTI+ community organisation as a result of the cup,

*And also I would think that probably the relationship between [community organisation] and the club has been strengthened, probably developed and strengthened in this time because there probably wasn't much of a relationship before other than that they sort of occur in the same geographical proximity. And so I would hope that the club is able to benefit and [community organisation] able to benefit (P1 & 2 Club 1).*

A number of clubs outlined how their involvement in the Pride Cup had helped them gain greater levels of sponsorship from community organisations and due to the higher spectator attendance at Pride Cup games and benefit financially from sales of food, drink etc. For several clubs, their involvement in the Pride Cup had helped improve their relationship with the local council and allowed them to access grants and funding.

*To be brutally honest it's financially to save the club. We were a struggling club. In 2007 when [x] first came here, they hadn't won many games and it's really improved since then, the facilities have improved. I guess when you talk about by products, our relationship with the council, it's very important as a sporting club that we need support. And they're being very supportive, they let us use their offices for meetings and stuff like that and when we apply for grants and things like that, we're a positive message to use and we've done very well in terms of getting grants. I don't know if it's made a difference but I suspect it may. Certainly, on the council they're very supportive of us, which is important (p4 Club 2)*

Clubs had engaged with either LGBTI+ members where possible, or the LGBTI+ community more broadly to varying degrees. Clubs with openly LGBTI+ members had generally sought to involve them in the planning and organisation of the cup when members were willing. Club 5, who ran a highly successful cup in terms of numbers attending their events (over 400 attended their Pride Cup dinner), consulted extensively with their LGBTI+ members and local LGBTI+ organisations as well as ensuring they had representation on the organising committee. As the following quote indicates, this club felt this was essential in ensuring that the cup was run in a way that was respectful to the LGBTI community, met their needs and also allowed the community to feel empowered within the process,

*So yeah, I'm not saying that your entire event needs to be run by people who are outside of your club, but happen to be connected to the LGBTQI community, because that's also not a practical, realistic expectation. But if you're not connecting to local groups, if you're not connecting to local stakeholders and partners in health services and that sort of thing, all you really are doing is putting up some rainbows. (P.18 Club 5)*

Club 5 suggested that their ethos was ensuring all their work was 'with not for' the LGBTI+ community. This club stood out in this regard, with their careful planning of how they would ensure the LGBTI+ community shaped and influenced the development of their event.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF PRIDE CUP SUPPORT

The interviewees felt that they had received valuable support and guidance from the Pride Cup team and acknowledged that Pride Cup staff were highly responsive to addressing volunteer queries and concerns. A key theme across interviews was how easy the Pride Cup team had made it for clubs interested in running a Pride Cup to become involved. As this club member explained,

*I think that what they're [Pride Cup team] doing in enabling clubs to host events and making it as easy as possible is definitely an asset for these volunteer clubs. There's not much of an excuse to not hold something or, at least, put a team in colourful socks or have a rainbow flag. It's very easy to support it, which I think is the key (P.17 club 4).*

All interviewees were positive about the Pride Cup education sessions and felt they had been useful in raising awareness of LGBTI+ inclusion amongst members and identifying some of the

key ways that LGBTI+ members may be excluded within sporting contexts. An important function of the education sessions was highlighting the damaging impact of homophobic and exclusionary language, with all interviewees indicating that they, and their club members, had greater levels of awareness of the detrimental impact of language. Subsequently, volunteers suggested that they and other club members would be more willing to call out and challenge the use of such language within the club environment because of the training. Several volunteers also noted that the education had raised their awareness of using gender-neutral language and given them a vocabulary to be able to do this.

*It's actually been amazing. It's really, I think within our club, everyone's been really supportive that we're all on a journey right now, a lot of us didn't really know the right terminology to use or the right things to say. The Pride 101 forum was really good for that, for we encouraged all of our members to go to that and the majority of them did and so, because that talks a lot about you know, provided alternative ideas of the sorts of things that you can say to replace, as I said, instead of saying Hey guys or Hey girls, you know other words that you can say when you're addressing a group of people. So and also just understanding the impact that that kind of language has on certain people. (P19 club 5)*

The following quote captures the sentiments echoed across of number of interviewees, outlining the importance of the education sessions in encouraging club members to challenge poor behaviour,

*so I'd like to think that from that moment on, that it would be in their mind to not speak in that manner and use different words. So rather than saying that's gay, maybe just call it and say that's shit. Excuse my language, but yes, I believe that messaging has come through, but yeah, actually myself hearing it, I couldn't say that I have, no. (P1 and P2 club 1)*

Several interviewees outlined that the education session had made them aware of their capacity to be change agents and promote LGBTI+ inclusion,

*so that's part of it and so being informed and being able to adjust if you need to adjust or just generally just understanding the impact that we can have as change agents. I think that's the other thing and how we can go about calling things out or just pulling things up or just correcting and that's really powerful as well because that's then when we then spread the message. It's not just I'll get more informed, I'm gonna be respectful but actually to be able to out and that's my knowledge and I've learnt from being involved in this footy club through the Pride Cup, I can now go away to my own local footy club or my own chess club or my own, you know, my friends catch up on a Friday night and comments made there. Well I can call that out because of the experience and the learning that I have had. (P7 club 3)*

One interviewee from a roller derby club outlined the instant impact the education had on changing how club members spoke with each other during training,

*I think that was really an eye opener for a lot of our members..... We had a big thing in our training sessions leading up to that where we would kind of politely...pull each other up if we were using gendered language without realizing and just kind of say, "Oh, did you mean they or did you mean skater?" You know? Instead of saying get her or get him just saying, get them, you know? (Participant 19 club 5)*

The interviewees suggested that the deliverers' pitched the education session at an appropriate and accessible level for club members. The interviewees suggested the deliverers were engaging and whilst several mentioned that at times the content was confrontational (particularly information regarding LGBTI+ mental health), they felt that this was necessary to encourage club members to understand the seriousness of promoting LGBTI+ inclusion and why they were there. A number commented that the presenters delivered the sessions in a way that encouraged participants to feel that it was a safe space and one where they could ask questions and acknowledge their ignorance on certain issues without fear of judgement.

Clubs' had various approaches to promoting and scheduling the education sessions, one club committee had more or less made it mandatory for all committee members and anyone involved in their Pride Cup event to be involved. This included staff who would be involved in running their gala dinner attached to the Pride Cup because they felt it was important that everyone who was part of the event had knowledge and awareness of what the Pride Cup was seeking to achieve and how to behave. Other clubs had organised the training so that their members and their cup opposition team members could attend. They felt all Pride Cup clubs should be encouraged to do this to increase the reach of the education and to encourage other clubs to consider hosting their own cup in the future.

One of the challenges identified by the interviews was encouraging engagement with education across their clubs. Seven interviewees had not attended the education and whilst clubs generally reported good attendance (around 50 club members on average), the education was not thought to be having a whole club reach at some clubs, an issue reinforced by the organisers and members' surveys. Several interviewees outlined the importance of the committee attending and promoting the education sessions. It was also evident from the interviewees that whilst the education session was an important starting point, the position of club leadership in enforcing appropriate language and not tolerating homophobic behaviour was critical in creating change within clubs.

Interviewees highlighted the need for ongoing education and the importance of undertaking 'refresher' sessions even when the club had hosted a Pride Cup the previous year. This was felt to be necessary due to the turnover of players, club leadership and committee members and also to continue to reaffirm the importance of LGBTI+ inclusion to all club members,

*They're a good reminder. Throughout the year, things can sort of get forgotten or people might get a bit ... fall back into old ways.....I know that sounds bad but people can pull back and it's a bit of a reminder. Like, "Hey." Especially as it's our club which has been the leader in that. (P6 club 2)*

Overall the education has been welcomed and thought to be valuable in highlighting how LGBTI+ exclusion occurs, the impact of this on the community and the importance of addressing and challenging homophobic language within sport contexts. The interviewees found the Pride Cup team to be highly engaging, supportive and accessible.

The interviewees did not have many suggestions for how the content of the education session could be improved but several suggested that in future they would place greater expectation on all club members to attend.

*And that expectation that all your players do need to go through that education, or all your leadership or even your families that wrap around that club, some of your key spectators, all that sort of stuff. (P18. Club 5)*

A number of volunteers during interviews also discussed the value of establishing a community of practice with other Pride Cup clubs and offering guidance and support to new clubs getting involved. Several, suggested it had been valuable for them to attend education sessions at other clubs to gain an insight into what to expect and to increase their knowledge before they began to organise their own event. Volunteers who had done this, found it extremely useful to talk with more experienced Pride Cup organisers to gain insights into what to do and what to avoid doing.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRIDE CUP HANDBOOK

Similar to the education sessions, there was mixed engagement with the handbook across the Pride Cup interviewees. Some were unaware and had not used the handbook at all, others had used it as a reference guide, whereas some had relied quite heavily on the handbook to help inform them as to how to develop their Pride game and what work needed to be undertaken

within the club to make this happen. The volunteers who had used the handbook, valued the templates it provided and the direction it provided on areas such as correct wording for promotional material. This interviewee reflected the comments of volunteers who had used the handbook,

*the handbook was really valuable. And I think we didn't use all aspects of the handbook, but there were certain key things in there that we did reference to make sure that we were ticking the boxes and getting things right for the event. The media release was really good at the back. (P3 club 1).*

Several clubs also discussed the value of the handbook as an ongoing reference to give to new volunteers, pointing to the changes that occur each year in club committees. One volunteer explained that it was useful to be able to handover the handbook to the organiser the following year to be able to give them a guide and a checklist of what they should be doing.

When asked about improvements, the interviewees did not have many suggestions but a few indicated they would like more templates if possible, particularly to support the development of LGBTI+ inclusive policies and what these might look like. A couple of volunteers suggested it might be valuable to have a shorter, quick reference guide as well as part of the handbook for volunteers who might not necessarily engage with the handbook in depth. A few felt that the information might be overwhelming for some volunteers.

*I would think that we need to remember who we are dealing with.... You're dealing with a majority, they are all volunteers.....so therefore we have got to make it succinct, so it's a great handbook, there is a lot of information if people want to go to the depth and the detail and do all that but I think it's important....., we need to be pretty on point with the advice and the tips and the guidance and the resources that we provide volunteers so what I would suggest is to....., ensure that it just doesn't sit there and then get dusty each year it is kept fairly simple ....., because it can be overwhelming.*

This issue was not raised by many interviewees, but the lack of engagement by some clubs with the handbook might suggest a need to provide a shorter, very accessible version with the 'must do' aspects for clubs that would not engage more fully with the broader handbook. Alternately a different handbook targeted towards different audiences may be an option worth exploring.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH ADDITIONAL LGBTI+ INITIATIVES

The Pride Cup was the only LGBTI+ inclusion initiative that case study clubs were involved with, illustrating its importance in placing LGBTI+ inclusion on the radar of community sport. All clubs were additionally very active in supporting other inclusion focused activities including initiatives seeking to reduce violence against women, improve mental health and promote Indigenous participation and reconciliation. Whilst their engagement with these initiatives signalled the clubs' broader commitment to all aspects of inclusion, some volunteers expressed their concern that it prompted short term 'inclusion work' that supported a cause, rather than representing full culture change within the club community. There was a tendency within some clubs to suggest that through the Pride Cup, LGBTI+ inclusion was 'done' and they would then move their focus onto the next issue. The following quotes illustrate the volume of initiatives that clubs are responding to,

*It's probably not specific to LGBTIQ, but there's women's rounds, which is bounced against women and promoting sort of equality across sort of female gender and also there's men's round, which is focused more around suicide for men and the sort of stigma around talking about mental health and things like that. (P12, Club 4)*

*There are other things that were done around mental health, with Beyond Blue, we did that last year. There's other things that we have done for other just organizations or initiatives around disadvantaged youth through the Les Twentymen Foundation so there is different themes and different focuses that we have throughout the year. We try to narrow the focus because there are*



*so many good things that you gotta try to contribute in a quality way and also just kind of social issues like gambling in sport and gambling in general and just responsible gambling focuses and things like that (P7 club 3)*

## SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PRIDE CUP EVENT

All of the clubs wanted to continue to deliver Pride Cup events in the future. They all spoke of their commitment to do so, with several indicating they would continue until they reached a point where LGBTI+ inclusion was so commonplace it wasn't necessary to have a 'special event' to raise awareness. The support that clubs have received in their first year has been important in equipping them with the skills to continue to run Pride rounds in the future. All volunteers felt that they were now familiar with what they were doing and had plans on how they would extend and enhance the Pride Cup in the future. This included engaging more collaborators in the delivery of the event, particularly LGBTI+ organisations within their local community and increasing their promotion of the event to again engage more of the community in attending the event. Clubs who have undertaken Pride Cups offer a valuable range of knowledge on how to do this effectively and particularly in identifying how they overcame any challenges with this process that might be of value to clubs getting involved in the first time. The existing clubs can also play a powerful advocacy role in engaging other clubs, by illustrating what is possible within the constraints of a voluntary organisation. As this volunteer explained,

*I just really hope that this is kind of the beginning of something...it feels like there's a lot of momentum that's been gained...it would be great if...other sporting clubs who might not have someone with the passion and energy from the beginning...had some resources and support in putting something together, because not everybody has a [champion driving initiative] on their side. (P19 Club 5)*

As is hinted at in the above quote, clubs talked of several factors that would impact on future sustainability. At each club, there was a key diversity champion and driver who had been responsible for suggesting the club should host a cup, pulling key stakeholders together and bringing other club volunteers on-board. This individual was recognised as crucial in ensuring club members engaged and that the practical and organisational aspects were managed effectively. The reliance on a champion can leave inclusion work vulnerable, particularly if that individual leaves the club or takes a step back from their role. However, there were several examples where clubs had already undertaken succession planning and champions had recruited others to support them in the future to ensure that their work continued. Interviewees at club 1 for example, discussed how a previous president had been responsible for their initial involvement within the Pride Cup but he had done this with other committee members so when he stepped down, the new President was equally as committed and continued to drive his club's engagement. The format of the Pride Cup as a one off event, helps with ensuring sustainability. Once clubs have held one Pride Cup and have a process in place, it is relatively easy for the committee to ensure it becomes a regular part of the club calendar. The club members' interviewed also suggested that whilst there was turnover on a yearly basis across their committees, generally at least 2 or 3 committee members would continue, allowing for some consistency and the retention of organisational knowledge to organise the Cup that could be passed on to new committee members.

In contrast to the organisers' survey, the interviewees did not discuss resistance and most felt that they had not encountered any resistance. For the interviews more practical factors were felt to impact on sustainability, particularly financial resources and support. Several suggested that they needed to continue to obtain sponsorship from local businesses and community groups to assist with running the Pride Cup and associated activities, as well as to fund the educational component.

What was less clear from the interviews was the sustainability of impact on club culture once the Pride Cup was complete. As is detailed above, Pride Cup is one of several inclusion initiatives that clubs engage with and there is a tendency to see inclusion as something that is enacted through the delivery of a particular competition 'round' and then is complete. Club interviewees could articulate the value of the Pride Cup for raising awareness, starting conversations within clubs regarding some of the barriers to LGBTI+ inclusion and making members more aware of the language they use. These are all important outcomes, however, there was little discussion of how LGBTI+ inclusion continued to be enacted beyond the Pride Cup event. Most clubs spoken with indicated they had either a small number of LGBTI+ members or none and there were very few [2 in total] openly gay men. Interviewees acknowledged that although they felt that their club was welcoming and inclusive of LGBTI+ participants, this may still not be the perception amongst the LGBTI+ community. There were not many examples of further activities that were seeking to encourage LGBTI+ individuals to join the club. There was a general belief that hosting a Pride Cup was enough to signal that the club was inclusive and limited consideration to what may need to take place beyond this to encourage more LGBTI+ community members to become part of the club. One club interviewee indicated that they had a new member who identified as lesbian join because she had seen that they had held a Pride Cup and felt that the club would provide a welcoming environment for her. Two clubs also discussed how their involvement had encouraged the committee to review and amend their policies to support LGBTI+ inclusion and acknowledge that homophobia will not be tolerated within their codes of conduct.

*And there's been a few things since then that we've put in place that weren't the case when we first started. So we've put a disciplinary process in place, and also a Code of Conduct, which has been established by our members.....Just to kind of regularly reference at the start of each Skate Fit term and then during the year with League it's always up on the wall. So that kind of way, that was basically in a nutshell, don't be a douche bag and welcome everybody. But it kind of pretty clearly says certain things about that, you know, there's no sexualized language, there's no derogatory comments, you know, discrimination is not tolerated all that sort of thing. (P19 Club 5)*

The data would suggest that the cup has not yet prompted further engagement in LGBTI+ inclusion. It's important to acknowledge however, that for clubs who were engaging for the first time this year (3 of the 5 clubs involved in interviews), it is still early in the culture change process. Engagement in the Pride Cup appears to provide a valuable platform from which clubs could engage in further inclusion work.

## QUANTITATIVE CLUB MEMBERS SURVEY

### METHODOLOGY

This aspect of the research compared survey result from sport clubs that have held Pride Cups and received education from the Pride Cup organisation in 2019 (treatment clubs), with six randomly selected clubs that had not held these events (comparison clubs) on key variables linked to inclusion. A quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group post-test-only design was utilised.

### SAMPLING

Victorian Clubs who had participated in the Pride Cup program in 2019 (had received an education program and held a Pride Cup event), were randomly assigned to a sequentially ordered list. This list contained community-level Australian Football clubs, elite-level Victorian Football League (AFL) clubs, and community-level field hockey, cricket, and roller derby clubs. Working down the list, from top to bottom, a club representing each type of sport/level was

subsequently invited (via the nominated contact) to participate until a total of six Victorian clubs had agreed to be part of this phase of data collection. No clubs indicated they were not able to be involved.

To serve as a point of comparison, the research team identified clubs that did not participate in the Pride Cup but were considered appropriate for comparison based upon sport type, membership size and geographical location. From these groups, comparison clubs were randomly selected and invited to participate. In total, 14 comparison clubs indicated they were unable to participate, or did not respond within 48 hours to an invitation, in which case another club was randomly drawn and invited. The process continued until 6 comparison clubs of equivalent sport, size and location to the selected Pride Cup clubs had been recruited to the study.

Coaches, volunteers and committee members from sampled Pride Cup clubs were invited to complete a survey comprising a range of measures that collectively aimed to capture attitudes, awareness and behaviour towards different forms of diversity including gay, lesbian and transgender individuals. The survey data also aimed to capture feelings of safety, security, inclusion and belonging within the club. The survey also collected data on players' experiences when participating in the Pride Cup. Comparison clubs were invited to complete the same survey, minus questions specifically referring to the Pride Cup. Participants 18 years of age and older were approached in person to complete a paper/pen survey attached to a clipboard, whilst attending the club at a time nominated by the club contact as the 'best time' to capture the biggest sample. This was generally prior to normal weekly training. A total of 516 participants returned completed surveys. An average of 3 potential participants at each club either refused to participate in the survey or were unable due to arrival late to training or needing to leave immediately after training. This sample represents a completion rate of approximately 94%. Completed surveys were labelled, scanned and data was entered using Remark Office OMR 10, imported into SPSS Version 25 and errors were cleaned ready for analysis.

## MEASURES

The survey collected data on age, ethnicity, sexuality, education, vocation, and the role (s) a participant has at the club (e.g., player, committee, coach). The survey asked what gender was listed on the birth certificate of participants, and whether they identified as a different gender now. This method was chosen to provide trans and gender diverse individuals with an opportunity to self-identify. Data was also collected on athletic and religious identity and conservative ideology. These traits that have been found to be associated in other research with higher levels of prejudice and discrimination toward LGBTI+ people (Herek and McLemore 2013; O'Brien, Shovelton, and Latner 2013). Questions related to core values, athletic identity, religious identity and conservative ideology that have been found to be associated in other research with higher levels of prejudice and discrimination toward LGBTI+ people were included (Herek and McLemore 2013; O'Brien, Shovelton, and Latner 2013). In order to gain an indication of whether the treatment and comparison clubs had a similar composition, we asked questions about aspects not directly related to LGBTI+ inclusion such as questions relating to sexist language use.

The survey measured the following aspects, full details of the scales and measures used for each of these aspects are provided in Appendix 1

- Homophobic language use by participants
- Homophobic language use by others at the club
- Transphobic language

- Victimization by language
- Sexist language
- Attitudes towards homophobic language
- Attitudes towards sexist/racist language
- Injunctive norms (what others think is approved/disapproved behaviour)
- Empathy towards LGBT people in sport
- Homophobic attitudes
- Attitudes towards trans people
- Efficacy to react negatively to homophobic language

Once data were screened and cleaned for errors, they were analysed for suitability for parametric testing within SPSS. Many of the scales violated assumptions for parametric testing due to skewed distributions, consequently non-parametric testing was used in most cases where differences between Pride Cup and comparison clubs were explored. Reversed items were re-scored and items summed for analysis according to procedures outlined for each measure. Descriptive statistics were collated and reported to summarise findings for the different scales.

## FINDINGS

### Demographic and Descriptive Findings

Demographic and descriptive variables are displayed in Table 2. There were no statistically significant differences between the comparison and treatment groups on any of the demographic or team composition variables. Most participants in the study were Caucasian ( $n = 468$ ; 96.5%) and identified as either male or female. Just one participant (.2%) identified as non-binary, and was not included in the analyses due to the insufficient sample size. No participants reported their current gender identity to be different to that on their birth certificate, suggesting there were no transgender participants. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 67 years old, with a median age of 24 years. Just seven male participants (2.5%) identified as GBQ, compared to 32 female participants (15%). One male AFL player self-identified as gay, however, it appears that player was not 'out' to all at his club, as three out of 33 male players at his club responded that they had a gay teammate. Similarly, one male cricket player identified as gay, where two other players from that team (out of 13) were aware they had a gay teammate. Relative to the other sports, there was slightly more gay and bisexual males who played hockey ( $n = 4$ ) than the other sports, however, the difference between sports (1 person versus 4) was not statistically significant.

Surveys conducted at Pride Cup clubs suggested that only 38% of Pride Cup respondents attended the education delivered by the Pride Cup organisation, with only a few able to identify the core message as being about LGBTI+ inclusion. In addition, most participants who participated in the Pride Cups, were not able to identify them as being held primarily to end discrimination experienced by LGBTI+ people, with 75% of participants believing Pride Cups are held to 'celebrate ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity' and 74% believing they are held to 'encourage people of different races and abilities to play sport.'

Table 2: Demographic statistics about participants

	Comparison			Treatment			Sample
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	
<b>18-24</b>	50	73	123	52	50	102	228
	44.2%	53.3%	49.2%	47.7%	33.8%	39.7%	44.2%
<b>25-34</b>	27	27	54	29	46	75	129
	23.9%	19.7%	21.6%	26.6%	31.1%	29.2%	15%
<b>35-44</b>	16	8	24	13	11	24	48
	14.2%	5.8%	9.6%	11.9%	7.4%	9.3%	9.3%
<b>45+</b>	10	2	12	6	10	16	28
	8.8%	1.5%	4.8%	5.5%	6.8%	6.2%	5.4%
<b>Not given</b>	10	27	37	9	31	40	83
	8.8%	19.7%	14.8%	8.3%	20.9%	15.6%	16.1%
	Comparison			Treatment			Sample
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	
<u>Sport</u>							
<b>AFL</b>	28	89	117	23	82	105	222
	24.8%	65.0%	46.8%	22.1%	55.4%	41.7%	43%
<b>Netball</b>	34	0	34	29	1	30	64
	30.1%	0.0%	13.6%	27.9%	0.7%	11.9%	12.4%
<b>Cricket</b>	3	11	14	6	13	19	33
	2.7%	8.0%	5.6%	5.8%	8.8%	7.5%	6.4%
<b>Roller derby</b>	8	2	10	6	1	7	17
	7.1%	1.5%	4.0%	5.8%	0.7%	2.8%	3.3%
<b>Hockey</b>	40	35	75	40	51	91	175
	35.4%	25.5%	30.0%	38.5%	34.5%	36.1%	33.9%
<u>Sexuality</u>							
<b>Straight</b>	94	130	224	87	136	223	454
	83.2%	94.9%	89.6%	79.8%	91.9%	86.8%	88%
<b>Gay/Les</b>	10	2	12	9	3	12	26
	8.8%	1.5%	4.8%	8.3%	2.0%	4.7%	5%
<b>Bisexual</b>	3	1	4	7	1	8	12
	2.7%	0.7%	1.6%	6.4%	0.7%	3.1%	2.3%
<b>Questioning</b>	2	0	2	1	0	1	3
	1.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%
<b>Not given</b>	4	4	8	5	8	13	21
	3.5%	2.9%	3.2%	4.6%	5.4%	5.1%	4.1%
<u>Education</u>							
<b>High school</b>	23	52	75	16	53	69	146
	20.4%	38.0%	30.0%	14.7%	35.8%	26.8%	28.3%
<b>Vocational</b>	37	32	69	37	29	66	139
	32.7%	23.4%	27.6%	33.9%	19.6%	25.7%	26.9%
<b>Uni/College</b>	45	38	83	45	53	98	183
	39.8%	27.7%	33.2%	41.3%	35.8%	38.1%	35.5%
<b>Not given</b>	8	15	23	11	13	24	48
	7.1%	10.9%	9.2%	10.1%	8.8%	9.3%	9.3%
<u>Occupation</u>							
<b>Professional</b>	62	45	107	56	56	112	221
	54.9%	32.8%	42.8%	51.4%	37.8%	43.6%	42.8%
<b>Labour or trade</b>	25	72	97	25	64	89	192
	22.1%	52.6%	38.8%	22.9%	43.2%	34.6%	37.2%
<b>Student</b>	20	17	37	20	19	39	77
	17.7%	12.4%	14.8%	18.3%	12.8%	15.2%	14.9%
<b>Other or not given</b>	6	3	9	8	9	17	26
	5.3%	2.2%	3.6%	7.3%	6.1%	6.6%	5.0%
<u>Club Role</u>							
<b>Player</b>	96	129	225	93	136	229	462
	85.0%	94.2%	90.0%	85.3%	91.9%	89.1%	89.5%
<b>Other</b>	17	8	25	16	12	28	55
	15.0%	5.8%	10.0%	14.7%	8.1%	10.9%	10.5%

### Personality traits

We found no significant differences in athletic and religious identity between the two groups, however, there was a small significant difference in conservative ideology. The mean scores are shown in Table 3. Participants in the treatment (Pride Cup) clubs were slightly less conservative than those in the comparison (.50 (95% CI, 0.13 to 0.87),  $t(488) = 2.697$ ,  $p = .007$ ). This may in part, contribute to any observed differences between comparison and Pride Cup clubs and should be considered as a confounding variable.

*Table 3: Mean scores of participant personality traits*

Trait (1=low, 6=high)	Comparison	Treatment
Athletic identity	4.58	4.47
Conservative	3.00	2.49*
Religious	1.94	1.73

\* $p < .01$

### Club culture

The survey asked whether participants' perceived diversity and inclusion are core values at their club. A strong majority ( $n = 175$ ; 67.6%) at treatment clubs 'completely' agreed with this statement, compared to less than half of participants ( $n = 111$ ; 43.5%) at comparison clubs. A Mann-Whitney U test was run and found statistically significant difference in the median scores at the treatment clubs (4.0) vs. comparison (3.0),  $U = 40,286$ ,  $z = 5.58$ ,  $p < .001$ . Without pre-test data, it is difficult to interpret this finding. This may have been as a consequence of partaking in Pride Cup activities, adding support for it, or it could have been a pre-existing difference in clubs values, further confounding results.

### Language use

As displayed in Table 4, there were statistically significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs on all measures related to language use. These differences were due to responses from male participants. Overall, there were low levels of homophobic language use among female participants, and they also viewed this language as unacceptable in both comparison and Pride-Cup clubs. Significant differences are marked with an Asterix.

Males at the treatment clubs were half as likely as those at the comparison clubs to report using homophobic language themselves, as well as witnessing teammates use this language at least once in the two weeks prior to completing their surveys. The difference between treatment and comparison was even greater for witnessing coaches using this language. Participants at comparison clubs reported their coaches used homophobic language at three times the rate of treatment clubs. We also found participants at the treatment clubs were nearly half as likely to report they had, themselves, been the recipient of homophobic language at their sport club in the last year. Participants at the treatment clubs were also significantly less likely to report they had heard transphobic language being used by teammates in the past year.

There were also significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs in the attitudes of male participants toward the acceptability of making jokes about gay people and using homophobic slurs. At the comparison clubs, nearly one in five male participants thought it was acceptable to use this language, compared to one in twenty participants at the treatment clubs. The use of slurs during a game appeared to be viewed as less of a problem than making jokes about gay people, with nearly one in five male participants at comparison clubs, and one in ten at treatment, thinking it was harmless to call an opponent 'fag' during a game.

The survey included questions about language use in relation to women and race to determine if there are also differences in these areas between the treatment and comparison clubs. There were large, significant differences in sexist language use, with male participants at comparison clubs significantly more likely to report they had heard others use this language in the last year. Male participants at comparison clubs were also significantly more likely to believe it's acceptable to make jokes about women. A higher proportion of males at the comparison clubs than treatment also believed it was harmless to use racist slurs, but this difference was not statistically significant. Given the Pride Cup did not target sexist or racist language use, these findings make it hard to determine if differences in homo/transphobic language is due to the Pride Cup or a pre-existing difference between groups.

*Table 4: Frequency of homophobic, sexist, and transphobic language and attitudes toward the use of homophobic language*

	Comparison		Treatment		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
<i>Used homophobic language with teammates in the past two weeks</i>	8	49	3	18	80
	7.1%	35.8%	2.8%	12.2%***	15.3%
<i>Witnessed homophobic language used by teammates in the past two weeks</i>	12	73	7	38	135
	10.8%	56.6%	6.4%	25.9%***	26.4%
<i>Witnessed homophobic language used by coaches in the past two weeks</i>	2	30	3	11	49
	1.8%	23.3%	2.8%	7.5%***	9.6%
<i>Been the target of homophobic language in the past year at the club</i>	4	57	7	39	107
	3.6%	46.3%	6.5%	26.5%	21.3%
<i>Heard transphobic language in the past year being used by others at the club</i>	12	48	9	28	100
	10.9%	39.0%	8.4%	19.0%**	19.9%
<i>Heard sexist language in the past year being used by others at the club</i>	54	76	42	69	246
	48.6%	61.8%	38.9%	46.9%*	48.8%
<i>Believe it is acceptable to make jokes about gay people, if not gay people are in the room at the time</i>	2	22	1	6	34
	1.8%	17.6%	0.9%	4.1%***	6.7%
<i>Believe it is harmless to use homophobic slurs if no gay people are in the room at the time</i>	2	24	1	15	44
	1.8%	19.4%	0.9%	10.2%*	8.7%
<b>Sexist/Racist Language Comparisons</b>					
<i>Believe it is acceptable to make jokes about women if no women are in the room</i>	2	25	2	8***	
	1.8%	20.2%	1.8%	5.4%	
<i>Believe it is harmless to use racists slurs like 'nigger' if no African people are in the room</i>	2	15	1	8	
	1.8%	12%	0.9%	5.4%	

Notes. \* indicates statistically significant differences by gender between comparison/treatment \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01 \*\*\* p < .001.

### Injunctive Norms

Females were more likely than males to believe their teammates would react negatively to the use of homophobic language. As displayed in Table 4, the median scores suggest that female participants believed nearly everyone at their club would be critical of such language use. At comparison clubs, on average, male participants thought 60% of their teammates would be critical of this behaviour, whereas at the treatment clubs, participants believed 70-80% of their teammates would be critical. This difference was not statistically significant.

Table 5: Median scores for injunctive norms

	Comparison		Treatment	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Made a joke about gay people	8.5	6.0	9.0	7.0
Used a homophobic slur in a game	9	6.0	10	8.0

### Empathy

There was a significant difference between the comparison and treatment in levels of empathy shown toward the experiences of LGBTI+ people in sport for all participants. A Mann-Whitney U test found median scores at the treatment clubs (4.0), were significantly higher than those of the comparison (3.67),  $U = 36,895.5$ ,  $z = 4.62$ ,  $p < .001$ . This is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows three times more participants at treatment clubs expressed “high” levels of empathy compared to comparison clubs.

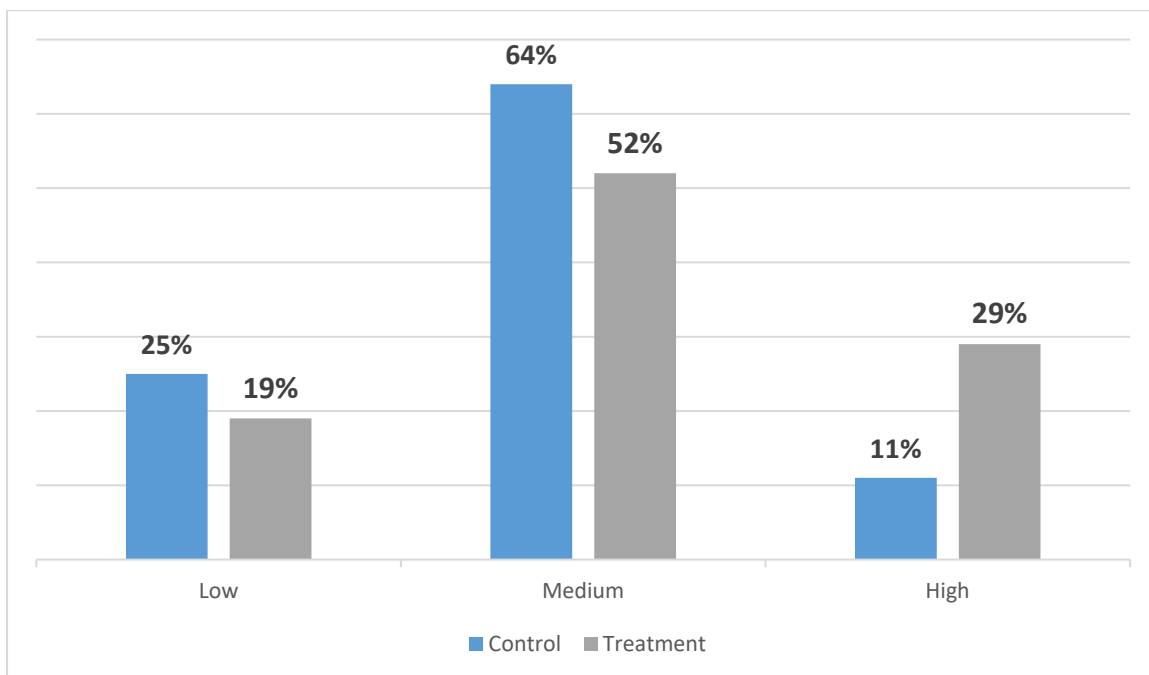


Figure 5: Participant empathy levels toward the experiences of LGBT people in sport

### Attitudes toward LGBT people

Overall, the survey data suggested that homophobic attitudes existed but at low levels across all clubs in the study. Less than 10% of participants scored above the mid-point on any of the measures we used to measure homophobic attitudes. A score above the mid-point of the scale would indicate medium-strong agreement with questions such as ‘male/female homosexuals are



disgusting’, which was part of the Attitudes towards Gay Men (ATG) and Lesbians (ATL) scales. For the ATG, just 5.9% of males (n = 22) and 3.3% of females (n = 6) and for the ATL, just 4.4% of males (n = 12) and 1.8% of females (n = 4) scored above the mid-point. However, it is important to note that only half of male participants (n = 146; 51.2%) indicated strong disagreement with all of the ATG scale items, which also included statements such as ‘male homosexuality is unnatural’ and ‘sex between men is wrong.’ The other half of the male participants agreed, at least to some degree, with these statements.

We found no significant differences between responses of males from the treatment and comparison clubs. Yet there were significant differences in responses from females. The comparison female participants had significantly higher mean rank scores on the ATG (115.50 vs. 103.50; U = 5,286, p = .039) and ATL (117.36 vs. 102.44; U = 5,117.5, p = .005) than females at the treatment clubs.

### Attitudes toward Transgender participants

In contrast to the homophobia measures, there was more consistency in attitudes around Transgender people resulting in similar distributions. Nearly half (n = 123; 45.7%) of males and a quarter (n = 53; 24.1%) of females believed Trans women have an unfair advantage when they play on a female sport team. The differences between comparison and treatment are shown in Figure 2. Given no outliers and normality of the data, we compared mean scores. For males we used an Independent Sample t-test due to homogeneity in variances, and for females we used a Welch t-test, due to heterogeneity of variances. The mean score for responses from males was .76 (95% CI, 0.31 to 1.20) higher in the comparison clubs than in the treatment ( $t(267) = 3.317, p < .001$ ) whereas the mean score for females in the comparison clubs was .60 (95% CI, 0.17 to 1.03) higher  $t(218) = 2.755, p = .006$ .

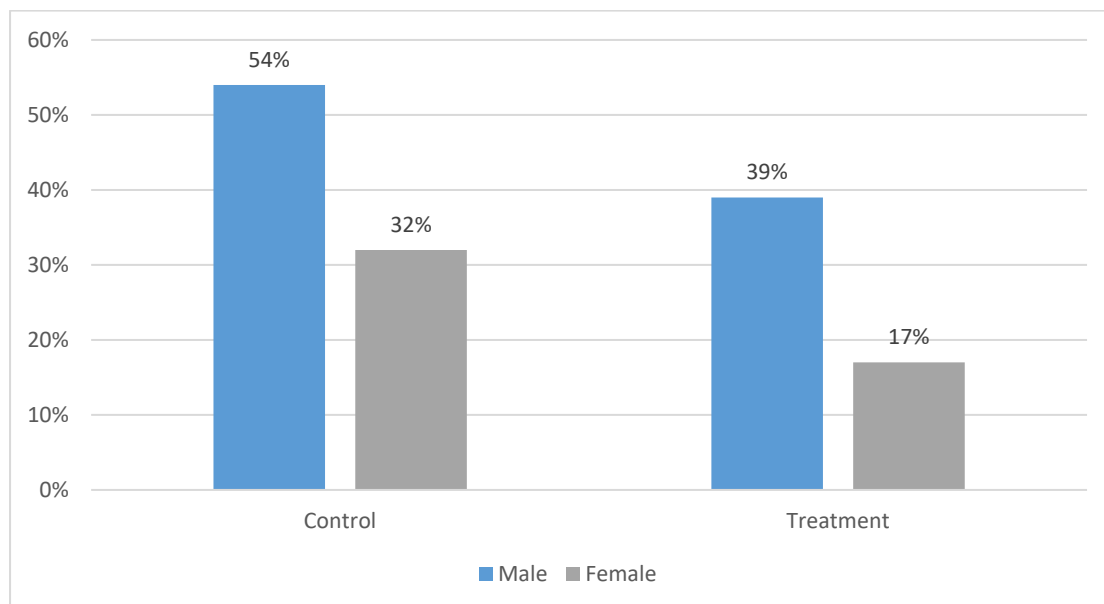


Figure 6: Proportion of participants who believe Trans women have an unfair advantage when playing on a female sport team

### Efficacy to Intervene or React Negatively

Male participants from the treatment clubs were significantly more likely to express confidence they would react negatively to homophobic language and behaviour by others, than those in the comparison clubs as shown in Figure 3. Median scores at the treatment clubs (8/10), were significantly higher than at comparison clubs (6.38/10),  $U = 11,780.5$ ,  $p < .001$ . This means they have higher levels of confidence to challenge discriminatory behaviour. No significant difference was found in responses to this question from female participants.

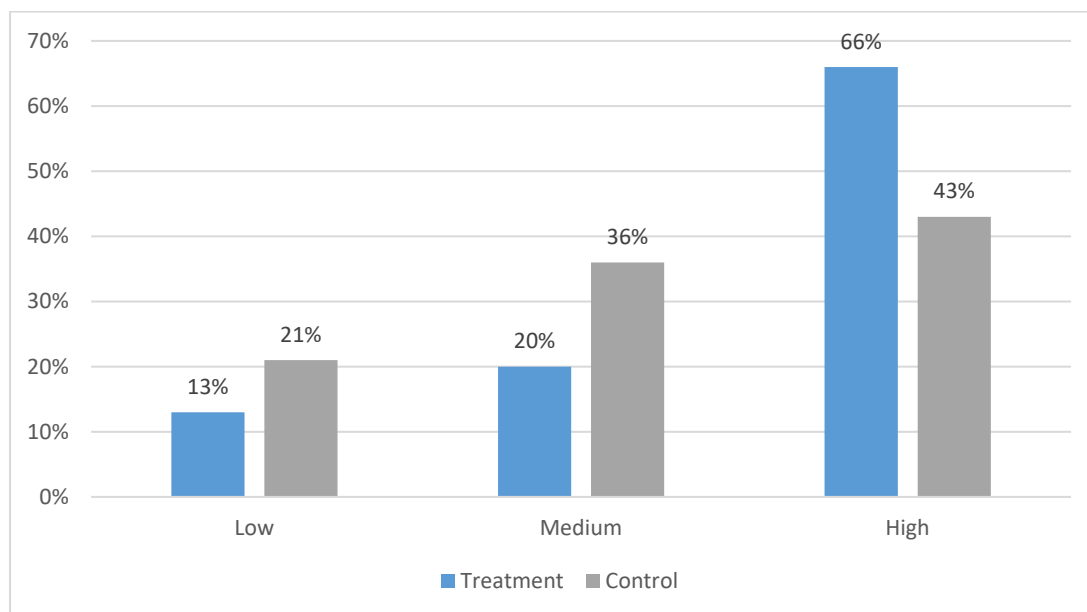


Figure 7: Efficacy levels of male participants to intervene or react negatively to homophobic language or behaviour at their club

## SUMMARY

Overall the survey found statistically significant differences between comparison and treatment clubs for males on all measures related to the frequency of homophobic, sexist, and transphobic language as well as attitudes toward the use of homophobic language. Participants from Pride Cup clubs were significantly less likely to use or witness the use of discriminatory language than participants from comparison clubs. This suggests the Pride Cup may potentially reduce discriminatory and exclusionary behaviours related to language use.

Whilst the Pride Cup may have moderated exclusionary language it didn't remove it, suggesting more work is needed. For example, 26.5% of males belonging to clubs that participated in the Pride Cup reported witnessing homophobic language used by teammates in the past two weeks. A figure significantly lower than comparison clubs but still potentially harmful. A similar number of males from Pride Cup clubs reported being the target of homophobic language in the past year at the club.

Attitudes towards LGBTI+ people were measured using homophobia scales. Amongst generally low levels of homophobic attitudes, there were no significant differences between males in treatment and comparison clubs. Females however were statistically more likely to show homophobic attitudes if they were in comparison clubs. Findings in this study may simply be

reporting a pre-existing difference between the two groups or the Pride Cup may have a way of moderating animosity. Both males and females felt transgender people had an unfair advantage in female sports but this attitude may have been softened by the Pride Cup with significant differences between groups existing.

The final intent of the survey was to determine the potential of Pride Cup to enhance the likelihood people at the club would 'challenge' discriminatory and exclusionary behaviours experienced by the LGBTI+ community. Results suggest that the Pride Cup may have an impact on male participants feeling more confident that they would react negatively to homophobic language and behaviour by others.

Overall, the survey suggests that the Pride Cup has the potential to impact positively towards creating more supportive environments for the LGBTI+ communities. Low rates of attendance at education programs suggest there is perhaps greater scope for the Pride Cup to meet its stated objectives.

#### METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS OF SURVEY DATA

Given the challenges inherent with 'real world' research such as this, there are several limitations of the study design used with implications for interpreting results. Whilst the design is fundamentally weak at determining causal relationships (why one group is different than another) due to the lack of randomization, potentially inequivalent groups (different experiences of the Pride Cup, differences in demographic factors) and the lack of pre-post data collection and comparison (Krishnan, 2018), it can give indications of effectiveness. Results of this study suggest the Pride Cup may be effective in achieving some of its core objectives, but we cannot say so definitively. Therefore, more rigorous research is warranted before additional significant or ongoing investments in the Pride Cup programs are made (for example in a wider roll-out of Pride Cup). Selection bias due to volunteerism is an issue with a number of clubs identified through random selection not volunteering to participate. The design cannot account for any pre-existing differences between groups due to the lack of randomization and pre-testing. Due to the different characteristics of the groups associated with the Pride Cup intervention, they can have different intervening experiences. This is exemplified by the numbers reporting if and how they received the education component.

We did not find any differences between treatment and comparison clubs' visibility of LGBTI+ people or demographic factors, we did find fundamental differences in elements such as core values at the club. Clubs that have held Pride Cups may have pre-existing fundamentally different values than the clubs that have not, **or** the Pride Cup may have had an impact on people's perception of core values. This makes it difficult for us to determine if the significant differences we found in this study between treatment and comparison clubs on a range of measures is as a consequence of clubs holding Pride Cups, **or** whether it is due to the clubs having fundamentally different cultures and values overall, which would shape the norms that regulate behaviour and lead some of them in the first place to undertake hosting a Pride Cup. The culture of a club, would likely influence the kind of people who are attracted to play/support and who are welcome at a particular club.

Additionally, participants at the comparison clubs were more likely to use sexist language, and believe that racist and sexist language is acceptable. The differences in the use of sexist language and attitudes could, theoretically, be attributed to the Pride Cups and education (although this was not an explicit focus) as sexist and homophobic language and attitudes have been shown to be related in previous research. However, this likely would not explain why twice as many participants at the comparison clubs, believed it is harmless to use racists' slurs. Again,

caution is needed in attributing differences between comparison and treatment clubs as being caused by the hosting of the Pride Cup.

## DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation suggests that the Pride Cup has been important in supporting clubs to engage with LGBTI+ inclusion and is the only initiative that community sports clubs engage with that has this focus. The Pride Cup model has provided clubs with a relatively straightforward framework and set of resources that they can utilise to begin conversations about LGBTI+ inclusion within the club environment, what this can look like and through the Pride Cup event have a visible demonstration of support. As outlined in the introduction, the evaluation has focused on two interlinking dimensions, firstly the value of resources and support provided through the Pride Cup including education sessions and the handbook and secondly, what impact engaging in a Pride Cup has had on community sports clubs. The following discussion is structured to reflect these two areas.

### Value of Resources – Education

Where club members have engaged in education it was generally considered to be valuable. Sessions were described as structured and well-delivered. The interview data in particular pointed to the importance of education in highlighting the importance of LGBTI+ inclusion for club members and discussing some of the impacts of negative and homophobic behaviour in sporting contexts and the impacts this has on individuals who identify as LGBTI+. The interview data also points to a need for ongoing/repeat education to continue to reinforce the key messages, with clubs who had run more than one Pride Cup suggesting it was important to continue to host education sessions each year as a reminder and to capture new members, committee members. The importance of ongoing education sessions reflects good practice within educational design (Moon, 2004). Education sessions were perceived to be well delivered with club members appreciating the safe space provided by facilitators to discuss issues and ask questions. Again this reflects good practice, particularly in the context of diversity and inclusion training where establishing a productive space for difficult conversations is important (Pendry et al., 2007)

The key issue identified by the evaluation is the variable uptake amongst club members. All methods of data collection suggest that the education program has not been able to achieve a whole of club reach with a significant proportion of organisers and interviewees (who it would be expected would be the most engaged/knowledgeable about the Pride Cup initiative amongst club members) not participating in education sessions and/or not aware that education was available. Given the value attributed to the education sessions by those that have attended, encouraging greater levels of engagement is important. The data did not point to specific issues of why members did not engage in education, a lack of awareness was suggested in the organisers' survey and some interviewees suggested poor timetabling which clashed with training times. In terms of encouraging members to participate, the interviews highlighted the importance of committee and leadership driving the education program and the need for club presidents to be present and actively promoting the sessions. The model utilised by two clubs of also encouraging opposition teams to attend training is a valuable way of extending the reach of the program beyond those clubs that actively commit to running a cup event.

### Value of resources: Handbook

The majority of Pride Cup organisers had used the handbook and found it was useful in providing a step by step guide of how to undertake their Pride Cup. Several interviewees found the

templates provided in the handbook useful. With regard to changes and development of the handbook several mentioned more links to resources, case studies highlighting the process clubs had undertaken and how, for example, they had established partnerships with LGBTI+ organisations, or secured sponsorship for the event. The evaluation team acknowledge that a new version of the handbook was launched in December 2019 which responds to these suggestions.

A number of volunteers suggested other Pride Cup organisers were a valuable source of support and advice and helped them to enact a number of the processes outlined in the handbook. Whilst clubs currently are reaching out organically to more experienced organisers it might be valuable to facilitate this through connecting new clubs with 'mentor' club volunteers who have run Pride Cups previously.

There were numerous positive comments during interviews regarding the support provided by the Pride Cup staff team. Volunteers found staff were responsive and supportive with queries and questions.

### Impact of engagement in the Pride Cup on Community Clubs

The evaluation suggests that the Pride Cup has been important in raising awareness and knowledge within community clubs of LGBTI+ inclusion and through the delivery of Pride Cup events has enabled clubs to provide positive messaging around LGBTI+ inclusion. Interviewees felt that the Cup enabled them to indicate to members that their club is a safe space for LGBTI+ members and that they take this area of diversity seriously. Clubs generally felt that hosting a Pride Cup had increased their profile within the local community and again provided positive messaging to the local community about their inclusive values. The data suggests that Pride Cups were generally better attended than regular fixtures suggesting they are successful in engaging extended members of the community. As one club highlighted, the cup was potentially the first time gay men had felt comfortable attending their local sporting club. The evaluation suggests that the Pride Cup is therefore a valuable resource for engaging sports clubs in LGBTI+ inclusion and supporting a visible demonstration of this support.

Although the limitations of the data are discussed, the club member quantitative data points to important differences in attitudes and behaviours at Pride Cup and non-Pride Cup clubs. Although we cannot attribute the impact directly to engagement in the Pride Cup, it is positive to see lower use of homophobic slurs within Pride Cup clubs. The data, reinforcing existing studies (Rosenburg et al., 2017), also provides a valuable illustration of the relationship between men, masculinity and homophobic language use. As reducing the use of homophobic language is a key intention of the Pride Cup and the education program in particular, the data highlights the need to particularly target male club members. The higher levels of empathy for LGBTI+ individuals noted in Pride Cup club participants is also a positive finding. This again is a key focus of Pride Cup education, but given the relatively low levels of engagement by club members we cannot suggest that the higher levels of empathy are a result of the participation in training. Whilst attributing causation for the survey findings is not possible with the current study design, the evaluation team would suggest that the overarching findings are encouraging and alongside the findings from the qualitative data do point to the positive influence of the Pride Cup on clubs' engagement with LGBTI+ inclusion.

The data, whilst positive, does indicate there is still work to be undertaken with clubs particularly surrounding negative language use. Whilst Pride Cup clubs reported considerably lower levels of homophobic language use, there was still a proportion who had heard/used this language, suggesting this does need to be an ongoing focus for the Pride Cup and further LGBTI+ interventions. The survey is also valuable in highlighting that whilst homophobic language is

present within clubs, there are low levels of homophobic attitudes. Other studies have reported similar findings, suggesting that rather than the use of homophobic language indicating high levels of homophobia, it is likely related to social norms and conventions within the sporting context that result in the use of this language and the perception that it is 'banter' (Magrath, 2019), particularly by young men. This is important to consider when developing education seeking to address homophobic language. A further concern from the member survey is the relatively high levels of sexist language present within community sport, again whilst this was lower at Pride Cup clubs, there was still a large number of respondents who had encountered sexist language, reflecting broader issues regarding the ongoing masculine and misogynistic culture that exists in community sport (Spaaij et al., 2019)

One of the key aims of the Pride Cup is to increase the visibility of individuals who identify as LGBTI+ within community sports clubs. As yet, it does not appear that engagement in the Pride Cup has led to increase in LGBTI+ membership although it should be noted that for many of the case study clubs it is likely too soon to determine this. As the survey data points to, whilst there are a minority of lesbian club members, gay men are almost non-existent across community sports clubs and where present, it would appear they are not openly out to their teammates. Whilst the Pride Cup is important in raising awareness amongst members and outlining a need for LGBTI+ inclusion, this has not necessarily translated into increases in LGBTI+ membership yet or an environment where LGBTI+ individuals necessarily feel comfortable being publically open about their gender/sexuality. Whilst this reluctance is undoubtedly historical, it does point to a continued need for clubs to create, promote and take action that demonstrates to LGBTI+ members that it is a safe space. Hosting a Pride Cup on its own is likely not enough to erase the deep rooted historical exclusion and animosity experienced by individuals who identify as LGBTI+ (Symons et al., 2017).

Connected to this, the Pride Cup has been important in encouraging clubs to engaging with LGBTI+ inclusion but there were limited examples where this has translated into broader changes in practices, policies and ultimately into changes in club culture. A number of the interviewees recognised that this was an important next step in moving their engagement with LGBTI+ inclusion beyond a one off event and into the everyday fabric of club life. There were examples at two clubs where they had re-written policies and developed codes of conduct that explicitly discussed LGBTI+ discrimination and additionally where clubs had changed language on membership forms or ensured that their advertising for social events was more inclusive of diverse genders and sexualities. This is an area though where clubs require greater support, guidance and encouragement to engage with. This deeper engagement is also important in ensuring that Pride Cups, as one off events, do not become synonymous with 'doing' LGBTI+ inclusion. The interviews highlighted that clubs engage with a range of inclusion initiatives including prevention of violence against women and Indigenous rounds and there can be a tendency to consider that engagement with these programs and one off education/matches is sufficient to make the club is inclusive. Existing research however suggests club members need to engage more extensively and continuously with inclusive practices and approaches than is possible through one off activities to effect culture change within clubs (Spaaij et al., 2018).

The data encouragingly points to clubs, through the Pride Cup, developing connections with LGBTI+ organisations within the community and it is potentially through the fostering of these partnerships that deeper work may be undertaken within clubs. Partner organisations may be well placed to provide greater levels of support and guidance. Only one of the case study clubs had worked significantly with LGBTI+ members in the development and shaping of their Pride Cup and in doing so hosted a series of extremely well attended events and have also begun to reflect on and adjust their broader policies and practices. Whilst developing partnerships is advocated as part of the handbook and resources, it may be valuable for clubs to have examples

of how this can occur, who to approach, and what partnerships can look in practice for both clubs and partner agencies to help facilitate this process.

Clubs generally did not report high levels of resistance to their engagement in the Pride Cup, particularly through the interviews. However, there was an indication that some clubs members had to be 'convinced' to become involved. Leadership within clubs was important in engaging other club members and is reinforced a key driver of change in other research (Jeanes et al., 2019a). The interviews continually identified the presence of a champion who had driven the club's engagement with the Pride Cup and were crucial in gaining committee and ultimately member support. Providing targeted support and guidance to assist the champion with gaining support from other club members would be valuable in the future and may be something that could be done through a club to club support approach discussed earlier. Clubs generally are committed to continuing with the Pride Cup initiative and wish to continue to hold Pride rounds and engage with education. All interviewees indicated that due to the cyclical turnover at volunteers in community clubs that this would always be dependent on the priorities of the incoming committee, but most hoped that the Pride Cup would become an embedded part of the club calendar so participation would not be debated by new committees. Clubs that had hosted more than one Pride Cup indicated that the organisation and management of the event became much easier after the first year, once they had a template to follow and individuals had knowledge of the process and knew what to expect. As indicated, clubs during interviews recognised that their engagement with LGBTI+ inclusion needed to extend beyond the Pride Cup and a one off event but only one had specific plans for how they would achieve this.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pride Cup can make an important contribution to supporting LGBTI+ inclusion within community sport. The evaluation suggests that clubs involved experience a range of benefits and positive impacts from their participation and the Pride Cup offers an accessible and structured way for them to engage and consider LGBTI+ inclusion. The following recommendations have been developed from the research findings:

- The Pride Cup initiative is the main intervention seeking to promote LGBTI+ inclusion within community sport. It is important to continue to support this initiative to continue to connect with more sports clubs. The Pride Cup provides a tangible and accessible way for clubs to consider LGBTI+ inclusion, an area volunteers often consider is sensitive and are wary of engaging with. The Pride Cup provides a framework for engagement that can assist clubs in overcoming their concerns and lack of knowledge regarding how to engage in LGBTI+ inclusion.
- The education component of the Pride Cup is important but the data suggests attention should be given to examining ways of promoting greater engagement. This may be with regard to working with clubs on scheduling of sessions, indicating the importance of attendance and ensuring all committee members and coaches attend education to ensure consistency amongst those in leadership positions within clubs.
- There is a need for ongoing education amongst existing clubs to continue to reinforce the key knowledge and learning. The content may be similar if club members have experienced turnover but there is also potential to develop education that continues to build knowledge and provides clubs with resources to help with changing their practices.

- The club members' survey suggests that homophobic attitudes within clubs are relatively low but there is a need to change the social norms that exist within sport that position the use of homophobic language as normal, acceptable and part of masculine 'banter'. Education needs to continue to highlight these damaging norms and provide volunteers with strategies for challenging them within community sport contexts.
- Clubs who have been involved in Pride Cups have considerable levels of organisational knowledge that may be useful to share with new clubs or those contemplating becoming involved. It would be valuable to consider ways to connect existing and new clubs to allow conversations between Pride Cup organisers to occur.
- The handbook is a useful resource but greater direction and case studies on how to operationalise the information provided would be valuable. It may also be valuable to contain within the handbook some 'quick reference' or infographic guides, to provide a basic overview for volunteers who will not necessarily engage with a larger and more detailed resource.
- The involvement of the LGBTI+ community in the planning and organisation of the Pride Cup is crucial in designing events that are reflective of the needs of LGBTI+ individuals and are genuinely inclusive. Engagement with LGBTI+ members, community groups and organisations should continue to be advocated for through the handbook and education and in discussions with organisers, stressing that this is a fundamental aspect of organising a Pride Cup.
- Clubs have generally been very successful at hosting Pride Cup events but require further support and encouragement to translate this engagement into a deeper commitment to facilitate change within the club environment. Club's need encouragement, guidance and examples of how they can begin to change policies and practices to be more inclusive of LGBTI+ members as an embedded part of their everyday activities. Clubs sharing resources and ideas may be a useful way to prompt this process.
- To achieve a broader cultural shift, clubs are likely to require ongoing support but it is recognised that the Pride Cup team have limited resources and therefore struggle to provide ongoing and extensive support to clubs. There is however, a lack of specific expertise within the sector more broadly, particularly local government and State Sporting Associations to undertake this work. Reflecting the findings of the market analysis, providing support to upskill professionals working in the sector who can provide more sustained assistance to sports clubs is an important in supporting sustained culture change at club level.
- In order to evaluate the effectiveness of intensive interventions like the Pride Cup and to justify ongoing support or resource development, evaluation designs should be carefully considered. If evaluation is well resourced and embedded prior to a wider roll-out phase (often following pilot testing), it is not too difficult to pre-test and randomly assign clubs to treatments and controls (noting controls can get the program at a later date). This layer of evaluation will allow for more concrete conclusions to be drawn about the impact and effectiveness of important initiatives like the Pride Cup.
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## APPENDIX 1

### SURVEY SCALE DESCRIPTION

**Homophobic Language use by participants** (themselves) was measured using the Homophobic Content Agent Target (HCAT) measurement approach, which was developed for use in school settings to measure frequency of homophobic language (Poteat, DiGiovanni, and Scheer 2013; Poteat and Espelage 2005). This approach does not ascribe homophobic intent to language, in light of evidence that athletes may only be using words such as fag, dyke, or poof as 'banter' or harmless humour (MacDonald 2018). The question asks "Some people use words like fag, poof, dyke, homo. This can be for many reasons (e.g. joke, insult)" (Potential reasons are measured later). "In the past 2 weeks how often have you used words like these either verbally or in text (e.g., online)" with other players at their sport club and with coaches/officials. Response options were: never (0), 1-2 times (1), 3-4 times (2), 5-6 times (3), or 7+ times (4).

**Homophobic language use by others at clubs** was measured using the Homophobic Content Agent Target (HCAT) measurement approach, described above, except we asked participants how often they perceived others at their club, and coaches/officials, used this language in the past 2 weeks.

**Transphobic language** was measured differently due to the need to keep survey-length to a minimum and evidence that transphobic language is used much less in sport settings than homophobic (Symons et al. 2014). Instead of asking about language used in the past two weeks, we asked if participants had "heard negative language about transgender people (e.g. tranny, she-male)" in the past year at their sport club. Responses were either yes or no.

**Victimisation by language** was measured by asking participants if they, themselves, "have been called words like fag, poof, dyke, homo? (even if not gay)" in the past year at their sport club.

**Sexist language** was also measured to obtain data that could be compared to homophobic and transphobic language use. If we find no differences in sexist language but a lower rate of homo/transphobic language in Pride Cup clubs vs comparison clubs, then we can be more confident Pride Cup impacted language. We ask participants if they had "heard negative language about women" in the past year at their sport club. Responses were either yes or no.

### Attitudes toward language

**Homophobic language:** Individual attitudes toward the acceptability of using homophobic language were measured by asking participants their agreement with two statements: 'it's okay to make jokes about gay people, if there are no gay people in the room at the time' and 'it's harmless to use homophobic slurs if no gay people are in the room at the time.' A six-point scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). Higher scores reflected more approving attitudes towards using homophobic language.

**Sexists/Racist language:** Similar to the question about whether participants had heard sexist language, for the same reasons of generating comparison data, we also asked about individual attitudes toward the acceptability of using sexist and racist language. This was done by asking participants their agreement with two statements: 'it's okay to make jokes about women people, if there are no women in the room at the time' and 'it's harmless to use words like 'nigger' if no people of African descent or aboriginal people are in the room at the time.' A six-point scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). Higher scores reflected more approving attitudes towards using homophobic language.

## Norms

**Injunctive norms** (what others think is approved/disapproved behaviour) were measured using two methods.

Prescriptive injunctive norms (approved behaviour) were measured by asking participants to indicate what percentage of their teammates would agree “it is okay to make jokes about gay people, if no gay people can hear the jokes” (0=0% - 10=100%).

Proscriptive injunctive norms (disapproved behaviour) were measured by asking “what percentage of your teammates do you think would be critical of you (think or act negatively) if you” and then two scenarios were provided ‘made a joke about gay people’ and ‘called an opponent a ‘fag’ in a game.’ This method of measuring proscriptive injunctive norms was specifically designed for team sport settings sport (Patterson, Carron, and Loughhead 2005). The two proscriptive items were combined and averaged to form a composite scale.

## Empathy

**Empathy towards LGBT people in sport** was measured through asking agreement with three items: ‘gay men often feel excluded from team sport,’ ‘lesbians often feel excluded from team sport’ and ‘transgender people often feel excluded from team sport.’ A six-point scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). Scores from the three items were combined and averaged to form a composite scale. Higher scores indicate high levels of empathy toward the experiences of LGBT in sport.

## Attitudes to LGBT people

**Homophobic attitudes were measured in two ways.** The first method used was five semantic-differential scale items designed to measure subtle forms of homophobia. This scale has been used in previous studies examining factors associated with adolescent homophobic bullying (Poteat and Anderson 2012; Poteat, DiGiovanni, and Scheer 2013). Each item is preceded by the stem: “When you think of gay men, as a group, what words describe your feelings?”. Participants indicated their responses on a series of six-point Likert scales which used the following labels: respect-disapprove, negative-positive (reverse-coded), friendly-hostile, trusting-suspicious, dislike-admire (reverse-coded). Responses were averaged to form a reliable scale ( $\alpha = .85$ ), with higher scores indicating more homophobic attitudes.

The second method used to measure homophobia was the three-item Attitudes toward Gay Men (ATG) and three-item Attitudes toward Lesbians scale (Herek 1984; Herek and McLemore 2013b) designed to measure more overt homophobia. Items included: ‘sex between two men/women is just plain wrong’; ‘male/female homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men (reverse-coded)’; and, ‘I think male/female homosexuals are disgusting.’ A six-point Likert scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree) to measure agreement with the statements. Scores were averages to form a composite scale, with higher scores indicating more homophobic attitudes.

**We measured attitudes toward trans people** through a single item: “a transgender female (male to female) has an unfair advantage when playing on a female sport team.” A six-point Likert scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree) to measure agreement with the statement.

### Efficacy

**Efficacy to react negatively to homophobic language** was measured through a three-item scale preceded by the stem: “how confident are you that you could do the following things below.” The items were: “react negatively (e.g. dirty look) if a teammate used negative language about gay people such as fag, poof,” “show a teammate that you don’t think jokes about gay people are funny (e.g., dirty look, not laughing),” “tell a teammate that negative language about gay people is not okay with you.” Response options were 0 = No confidence, 10 = Very confident.