

Australia's Sport  
Participation Strategy



# The Ripple Effect

## How Inclusive Volunteer Practices Transform Community Clubs

**PLAYWELL**  
Everyone has a place in sport



# Agenda

**PLAYWELL**

- 01. | Understanding today's volunteer landscape
- 02. | Why This Matters: The Reality of Representation
- 03. | The SVEF: Make It Feel Like I Belong
- 04. | Discussion: belonging in action
- 05. | Practical tools: how to start inclusive volunteer practices
- 06. | Call to action: your one inclusive step

**“Create clubs where every volunteer belongs.”**





***"A lot of recruitment happens through 'mates' - they all become the same demographic and thought process. It creates a lot of biases."***

# PLAYWELL

Everyone has a place in sport



# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

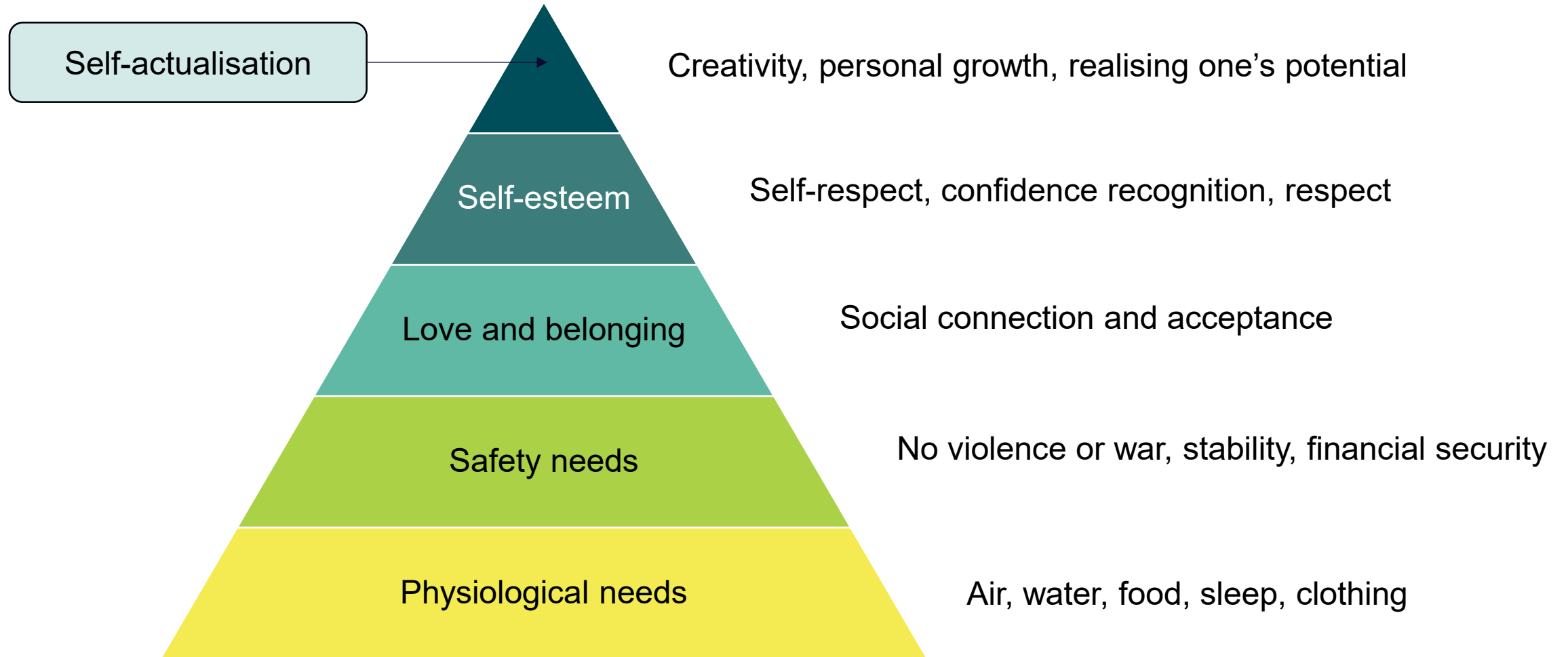
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Diagram of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (five-level model). Based on his original 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" and later clarifications.



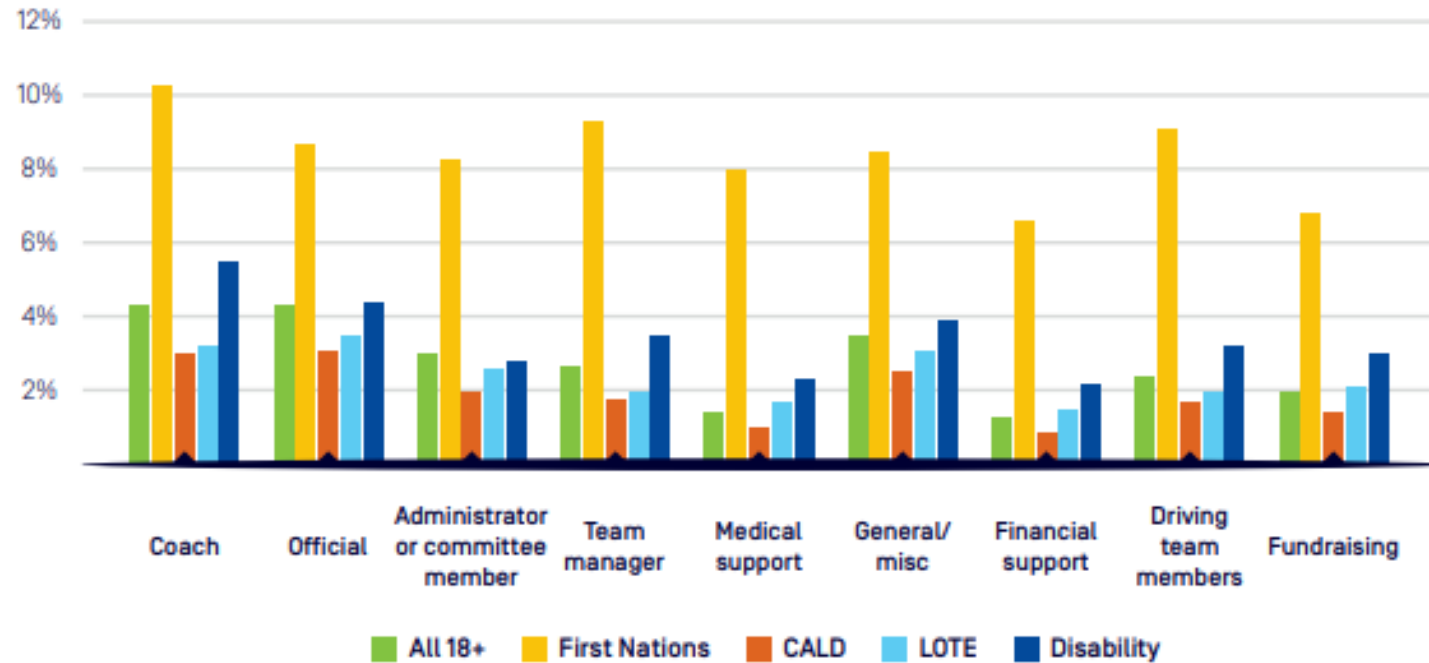


## The Reality of Representation



# The Reality of Representation

## INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS NON-PLAYING ROLES BY DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS IN AUSTRALIA

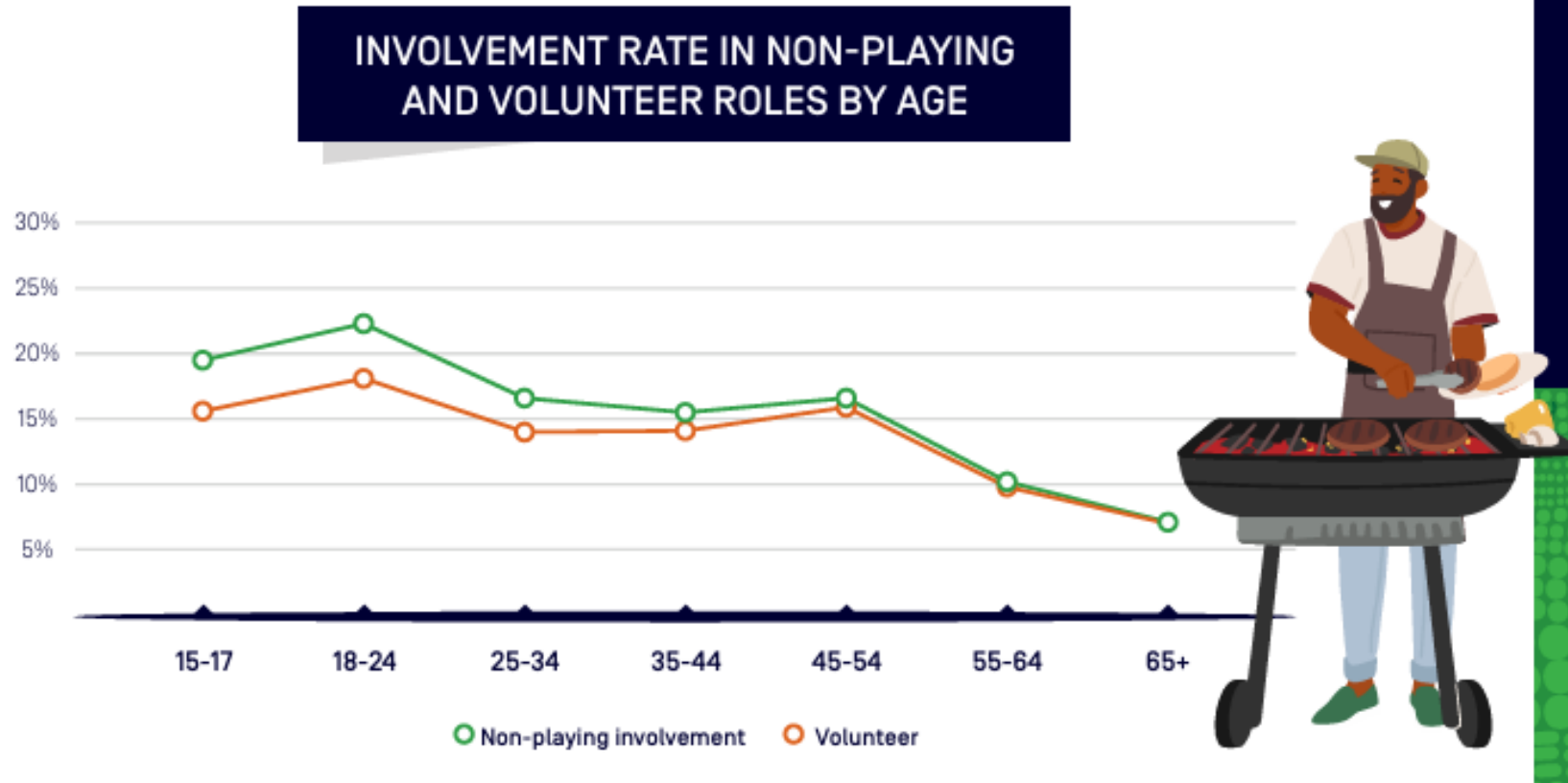


AusPlay, October 2025, Lifelong involvement in Sport

# The Reality of Representation

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## Non-playing involvement in sport through the life stages



AusPlay, October 2025, Lifelong involvement in Sport



# The Reality of Representation

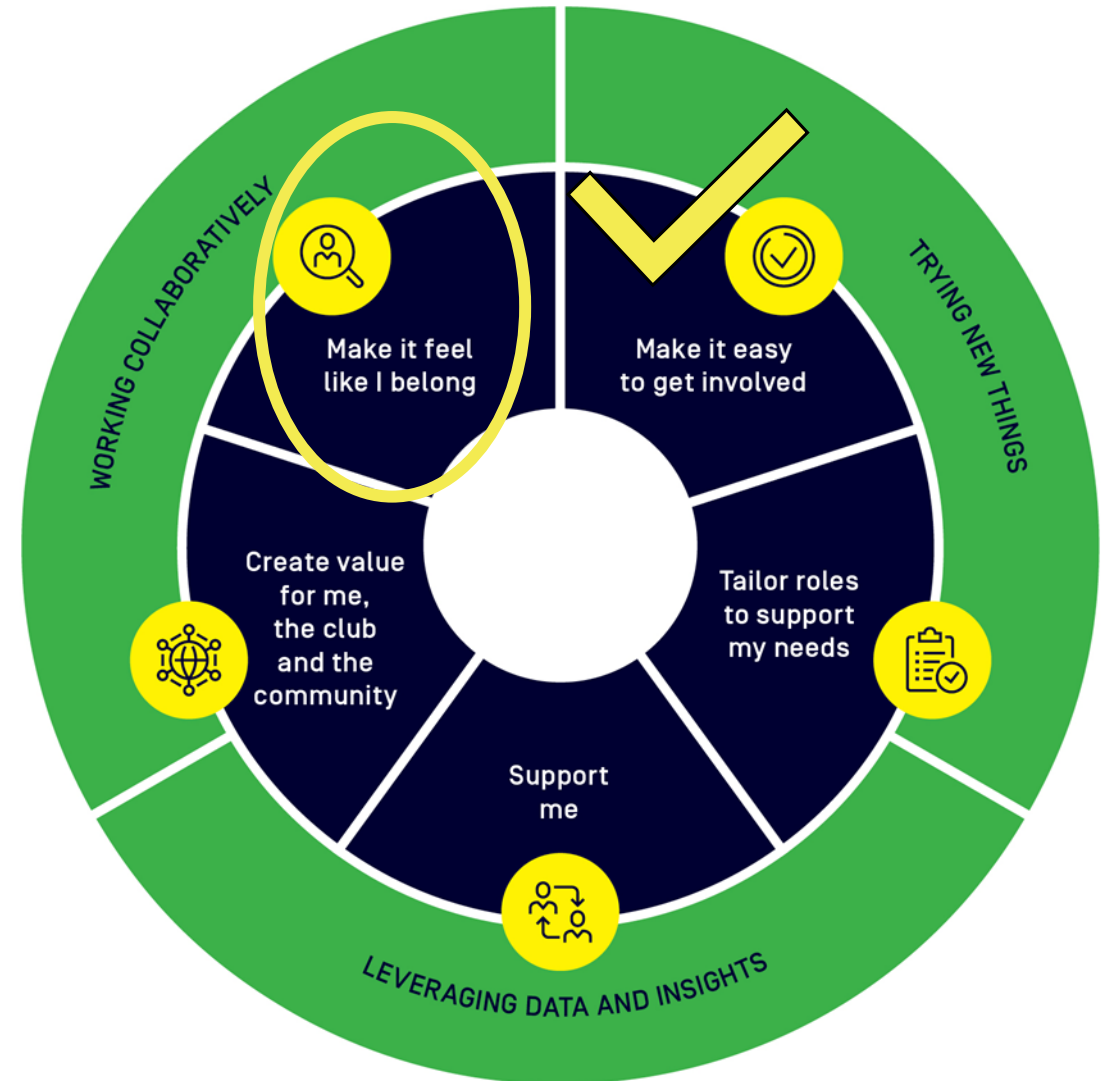
How often you see people like yourself volunteering in sport roles (% all the time or sometimes)						
 Sport Role	Male (n=1,258)	Female (n=1,360)	Under 35+ years (n=802)	35+ years (n=1,816)	Speak language other than English (n=290)	English only (n=2,246)
Administrators	34	27	38	27	27	31
Club committee members	35	29	38	30	29	33
Coaches	34	23	40	24	27	29
Officials	33	22	34	25	23	28
Sport media	25	17	36	15	21	21
Volunteers	43	36	43	38	37	40

# The Sport Volunteer Experience

## A Framework for Change

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- A framework against which you can review and think about the volunteer experience at your club.
- Five elements that should underpin all sport volunteer experiences.
- Three key 'ways of working' to drive change in the way we engage and support volunteers.



# Sport Volunteer Experience Framework

Make It Feel Like I Belong

**PLAYWELL**





## Discussion

- What does belonging look like in a volunteer context at your club?
- Have you ever experienced someone going above and beyond to make you feel that you belonged? What was the impact on you?

## Practical Tools

### How to Start Inclusive Volunteer Practices

#### Tool 1: Redesign Roles

- Smaller tasks
- Short, one-off roles
- Clear role description
- Learn as you go

**Why it matters:** Lowers time and confidence barriers.



#### Tool 2: Build a Relatable Volunteer Brand

- Real volunteer photos
- Short pathway stories
- Inclusive language
- Wider promotion

**Why it matters:** Helps people see themselves involved.



## Practical Tools

### How to Start Inclusive Volunteer Practices

#### Tool 3: Pathways for youth

- Offer roles teens want
- Recognition & references
- Buddies or mentor support
- Co-design opportunities

**Why it matters:** Brings energy and re-engages peers



#### Tool 4: New Volunteer Pools

- Partner beyond sport
- “Try it once” entry points
- Match roles to motivations
- Warm, simple onboarding

**Why it matters:** Unlocks people who don't see themselves in sport.





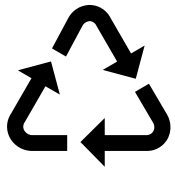
## Practical Tools

### How to Start Inclusive Volunteer Practices

#### Tool 5: Sustainable Volunteer Culture

- Share responsibilities
- Regular check-ins and appreciation
- Lead inclusively
- Celebrate all contributions

**Why it matters:** Prevents burnout and strengthens culture.



#### Resources:

[Sport Volunteer Resource Hub | ASC](#)







**Start small.**

**Act now.**

**Stay  
consistent.**





Questions?

