

# Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

March 2024 – March 2025



## Introduction

In March 2023, the Football Foundation published its detailed three-year Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy – [Together for Football](#). This DIAP is designed to complement the *Together for Football* strategy and take a closer look at the actions committed between March 2024 and March 2025.

Together for Football introduces a series of themes and activities to support us in working together to drive our EDI ambitions, ensuring that EDI is embedded in all that we do.

We're continually monitoring our progress against our Key Performance Indicators and report transparently to our teammates and our Board of Trustees. Our annual data report will be published on our website, and we'll communicate our story and progress throughout on an ongoing basis as part of our marketing and communications strategy. Our work on EDI will always continue. As society changes, we'll listen and learn, we'll adapt, challenge, and evolve.

## Our EDI commitment and ambition

The Football Foundation (Foundation) is the charity of the Premier League, The FA and Government. We deliver outstanding grassroots sports facilities, more and better places to play, transforming lives and communities where it's needed the most. This ensures everyone has a place to play regardless of gender, sexual orientation, cultural heritage, background, disability, or place. Currently the four priority audiences that we aim to reach through our funding are: women and girls, people with disabilities, lower socio-economic groups, and people with diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultural heritages.

Our ambition is to embed EDI principles at the heart of what we do to bring about meaningful change to the way we operate. In doing so, we're determined to be an inclusive and diverse organisation that understands and makes a positive impact to the communities we serve.

## Who is responsible for delivering the actions in our DIAP?

**Teammates** - For us to succeed in our mission, it's going to take the whole team to play their part. The goal of this plan is for every individual and team across the Foundation to clearly see how they personally can make a change, develop a greater understanding of EDI, and bring a more inclusive approach. We're ambitious when it comes to EDI and continued progress relies on commitment from the whole team. There are already excellent examples of individuals and teams considering EDI in ways that ensure that it's embedded in the way we work.

**Funding Partners** - We know that EDI is as important to our Funding Partners as it is to us, and we recognise we have a shared vision. Together we've developed innovative programmes and initiatives, and we continue to impact diverse communities, bringing more opportunities for more people to participate in sport and enjoy the wealth of benefits it brings. Our unique position means that we can share best practice and ideas across our partnership, developing initiatives alongside multiple partner organisations, creating the best opportunities for the best outcomes.

**Applicants and Beneficiaries** - Community engagement and co-production is key to the success and sustainability of our investments. We'll work with and support our applicants to develop a deep understanding of the needs of their local community. This involves researching, designing, and delivering plans and activities together. We build strong relationships with our beneficiaries and continue to support them long after we have provided them with funding.

**Leadership - Our Senior Management Team, Panels and Board** - Have a responsibility to lead by example, setting high standards by role modelling the values and behaviours set out in our Four Corners (our company values). Our leaders help to break down barriers and drive this agenda forward, bringing about change.

### Key employee groups

**Our Culture Champions** – These teammates play a key role in helping us develop and sustain the Foundation's culture, as well as helping us find ways to bring that culture to life. In championing our culture, here's the part they play:

- Having their fingers on the pulse to highlight and help fix any issues that may be impacting the wider team to help drive engagement levels.
- Being a trusted voice who can represent what's happening and how team members are feeling.
- Helping with two-way communication – they cascade and share updates across teams, as well as share feedback to the group or to management on current issues.
- Role-modelling our Four Corners and the culture we want to see.

**Our EDI Advisory Group** – These teammates act as critical friends within the Foundation providing a 'check and challenge' function. They are tasked with looking at new proposals, principles, and processes through an EDI lens. This is to ensure that when the Foundation makes decisions, they have been considered from different perspectives minimising the risk of adverse effects on any group or community. Our EDI Advisory Group also look for opportunities and suggest new ideas and initiatives to help make our work more inclusive. Members:

- Represent a range of backgrounds and collectively bring diversity of thought, expertise, and experience.
- Advise on specific items that arise and check and challenge projects or initiatives from an inclusion perspective.
- Help monitor progress against the actions set out within the *Together for Football* strategy.
- Participate in and lead EDI related initiatives and events.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment and genuine desire to make a difference to inclusion and diversity.

### Our diversity data and targets

The Foundation understands and believes in the benefits that diversity can bring. One aim of Together for Football is for the Foundation to become more reflective of the communities we serve. Another equally important aim is to create a culture where

everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and experiences. Because teammates will not excel and feel like they belong if our culture is not welcoming, and the Foundation will not reap the rewards of a diverse workforce if people cannot contribute authentically.

The Foundation's current target and ambition in terms of representation and workforce diversity, is to be broadly representative of the UK working population in relation to all characteristics (including ethnicity and cultural heritage, gender, and disability) within the Foundation's workforce. The data sets presented in this report detail how the Foundation is currently performing in relation to this target. *(Comparisons are made to UK Working population where figures are available, whenever possible. When UK working population figures are not available, the Foundation's target is to be representative of the latest UK census data).*

The Foundation aims to set more bespoke diversity targets in 2025, particularly in relation to recruitment data.

### **Internal recruitment review and recruitment data**

In 2023, the Foundation conducted a recruitment review, the purpose of which is to ensure the Foundation's process of appointing new teammates is as inclusive and accessible as possible, as well as to increase the diversity of candidates who apply to work for the Foundation. This resulted in an action plan identifying the areas where we need to focus our efforts.

In achieving this it's recognised that the Foundation is unlikely to grow significantly in terms of the size of the workforce, and turnover is relatively low (12.5% compared to the UK average of 16.8%). This means the Foundation has limited opportunities to affect the make-up of the Foundation's overall diversity. This is a challenge, which means that when opportunities arise in terms of openings or new roles the Foundation must ensure that it reaches the widest possible audience and talent pool.

The Foundation does not currently have a clear or complete picture in terms of the diversity data it collects from those who apply to work for us. Currently the completion rate of diversity data forms averages around 38%. To address this, the Foundation will be implementing an online Applicant Tracking System (ATS). This will increase data capture from the current 38% to 100%, because all candidates will be required to submit a diversity data collection form as part of the recruitment process, (with a 'prefer not to say' option on each question).

The aim is to set more bespoke diversity targets in 2025 once the Foundation has a year's worth of recruitment data to analyse. Additional actions resulting from the recruitment review which align with the timescale of this DIAP (March 2024- March 2025), have been included on page 7 of this DIAP.

### **Current data**

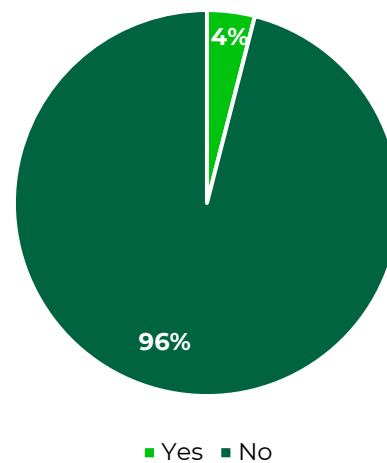
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<sup>1</sup> [Average Employee Turnover Rate in the UK - UK Money](#)

**Disability or long-term health condition -**

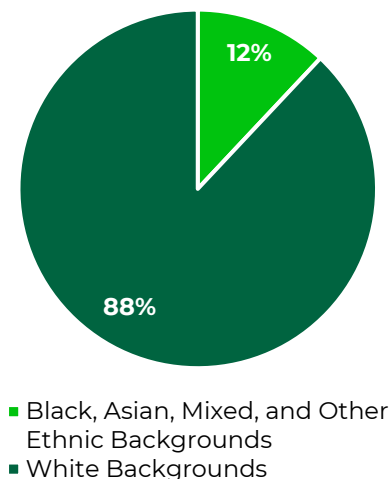
35% of the working age population in the UK report having a long-term health condition, and 20% of the working age population are classed as disabled. Only 4% of Foundation teammates report having a disability or long-term health condition, which demonstrates an underrepresentation in this area. This may result in part from how teammates self-identify and whether they consider themselves to have a disability or long-term health condition as defined by the Equality Act 2010, however, the fact remains that the data shows that representation is low in this area.

**Disability or long term health condition**



**Ethnicity and cultural heritage** - Overall, the data suggests that the Foundation is making positive strides towards greater ethnic and cultural diversity in its workforce. While there's still room for further improvement, the increasing representation of minority groups is a commendable step towards creating a more inclusive and equitable work environment.

**Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage**



The Chartered Management Institute's (CMI) Labour Force Survey data shows that diverse ethnic groups make up 13% of the UK working population and 12% of UK managers<sup>2</sup> so the Foundation is broadly in line in terms of UK representation however more work will need to be done to understand whether teammates from diverse ethnic backgrounds are progressing at the same rate through the Foundation as teammates from a white background.

*Please note – The Foundation recognises that, particularly in terms of ethnicity and cultural heritage, there is a breadth of cultural difference within the grouping. The People from Black, Asian, Mixed, Other ethnic background category includes people from Asian, Asian British, Black, Black British, Caribbean, African, Mixed or Multi-ethnic backgrounds and people who selected the 'any other ethnic group' category.*

**Gender representation** - At the Foundation, women are currently underrepresented. 35% of Foundation teammates are women compared with 65% of Foundation teammates who are male. In the UK in August 2023, 15.64 million women and 17.29 million men were in employment in April to June 2023. The female employment rate was 72.1% and the

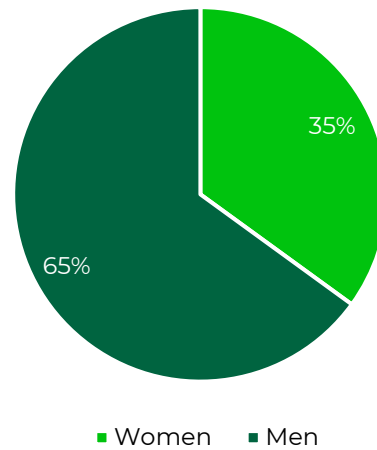
<sup>2</sup> CMI labour workforce data figure on ethnicity included within: [discussion-paper-ethnicity-in-the-workplace.pdf \(managers.org.uk\)](#) page 2.

male employment rate was 79.4%.<sup>3</sup> This means that women are underrepresented by approximately 12% at the Foundation in comparison to the UK working age population.

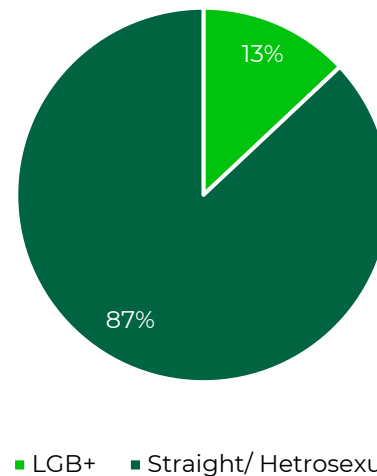
**Sexual orientation** - According to 2021 census data, 92.5% of respondents aged 16 or over answered the census question related to sexual orientation, and of this 89.4% identified as straight or heterosexual. Around 1.5 million people (3.2%) identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or another sexual orientation (LGB+). A further 0.3% identified with a different sexual orientation. The most common 'other' orientations given in the write-in box were pansexual, asexual, and queer<sup>4</sup>. Unfortunately, the ONS does not directly provide data on the percentage of economically active people in the UK who identify as LGB (lesbian, gay, or bisexual). This means that we cannot make a direct comparison with UK working age/ economically active population sizes to the Foundation data sizes.

*Please note - The Foundation is aware of the diversity of the LGB group and the differences in experiences between groups IE gay men and gay women and aims to report groups separately when individual group sizes are large enough in terms of people to report whilst protecting anonymity.*

**Gender**



**Sexual orientation**

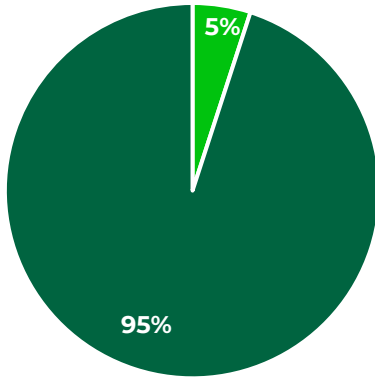


**Internal recruitment review and recruitment data**

Currently the Foundation collects and reports leadership data on the executive team for our Senior Management Team (SMT) and our Management Group, which represent the next tier of managers across the Foundation. This collective group is currently under representative of the UK census population data in all diversity categories measured. The Foundation is, however, in the process of collecting diversity data for its Board and Panel members, which means this information will be available in the 2025 DIAP.

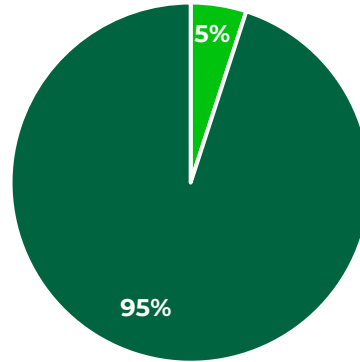
<sup>3</sup> Data included within: [Women and the UK economy - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/library/research-and-briefings/2022/07/2022-07-20-women-and-the-uk-economy/)  
<sup>4</sup> '2021 census: [What do we know about the LGBT+ population?](https://www.parliament.uk/library/research-and-briefings/2022/07/2022-07-20-women-and-the-uk-economy/)'- House of Commons Library 2023

### Disability or long-term health condition



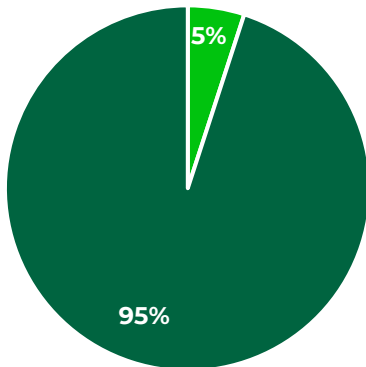
■ Yes ■ No

### Sexual orientation



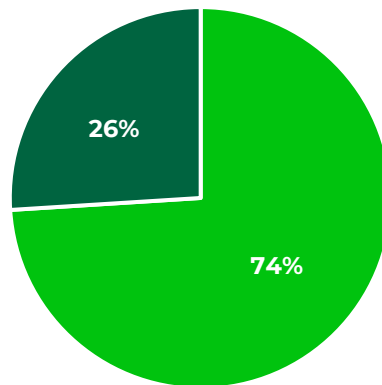
■ LGB+ ■ Straight/ Hetrosexual

### Ethnicity and cultural heritage



■ People from Black, Asian, Mixed, Other ethnic background  
■ White background

### Gender



■ Men ■ Women

*Please note - The SMT group comprises of less than ten individuals, so this group will not be reported on as a singular group or data set to ensure that no individual is identifiable.*

### Diversity commitment

The Foundation is wholly committed to improving our diversity. We firmly believe that organisations with diverse workforces are more likely to perform highly in terms of resilience, creativity, problem solving and productivity. We want to be accountable, so the Foundation will report annually on our progress with full transparency (provided that no individual is identifiable). Our understanding of diversity goes beyond the nine protected characteristics, so as part of this DIAP we will commit to collecting data related to socio-economic background and caring responsibilities by March 2025.

## Recruitment review action plan - March 2024 to March 2025

As a result of our recruitment review 22 actions have been identified. We have already completed five of these actions and the Foundation has committed to the following actions between March 2024 and March 2025 to align with this DIAP.

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Date
Collect diversity data from our Board, Panels and Committees	Understanding of the diversity of the Foundation's non-executive directors and decision makers, enabling the identification of any characteristics which may currently be underrepresented so that initiatives and action may be developed.	HR Team, EDI and Business Services Team	Mar-24
Collect diversity data related to socio-economic background	Further insight and understanding about the make-up of the Foundation, enabling the identification of any characteristics which may currently be underrepresented so that initiatives and action may be developed. The Foundation will ask the following questions related to socio-economic background within its recruitment process and for teammates: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged about 14?</i></li> <li>2. <i>Which type of school did you attend for the most time between the ages of 11 and 16?</i></li> <li>3. <i>If you finished school after 1980, were you eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years?</i></li> </ol>	EDI and HR Team	Mar-24
Update and improve the careers page of the Foundation's website, to provide potential candidates with an understanding of the Foundation's culture, values and to provide responses to frequently asked questions	Provide applicants with more information about the Foundation to help them gain a better understanding of the Foundation and the role they are applying for. By making the careers page easier to navigate and more accessible the desired outcome will be that more people apply for roles within the Foundation.	HR Team and Communications Team	May/June - 24
Implement an Applicant Tracking System (ATS)	Diversity data collection from job applicants will increase from an average of 38% to 100%, because all candidates will have to submit a diversity data collection form as part of the recruitment process. This will mean that the Foundation will have a	HR Team and Communications Team	May-24



	clear picture of the diversity of applicants that the Foundation is attracting and will be able to identify any trends through the recruitment and selection process so that further efforts can be made to reach a diverse talent pool.		
On a quarterly basis, conduct spot checks on a selection of job descriptions and job adverts, checking for inclusive language.	Job specifications should be drafted in plain English and provide an accurate reflection of essential and desirable skills to ensure applications from a wider set of individuals.	EDI and HR Team	May-24
Produce a document which explains why diversity is collected by the Foundation, covering what data will be collected and who will see it.	Increase the understanding of the benefits of providing personal diversity data and in turn increase the return rate of diversity data from teammates within the Foundation.	EDI and HR Team	May-24
Allow potential applicants to gain insight about the culture of the Foundation via a film focused on culture.	Provides applicants with an insight into the Foundation, what it's like to work for the Foundation. This action may also help to attract more applications and increase the diversity of the applicants who apply for roles.	Communications Team, HR Team and EDI	Sept-24
Mandatory inclusive recruitment and unconscious bias training for those with a role in the recruitment process.	Reduce the risk of bias within recruitment decision making and equip recruitment panel members with the tools to check and challenge bias when they perceive it.	EDI and HR Team	June -24
Identify and explore the suitability of independent benchmarking schemes and memberships such as Disability Confident, London Living Wage and Inclusive Employers	The EDI and HR Teams will access the scope and benefits of various benchmarking and membership schemes to determine the benefits and suitability for the Foundation, the Foundation will then implement the schemes which will prove to have the most benefit and suitability.	EDI and Business Services Team	July -24
Ensure a diverse interview panel (i.e. no more all male panels). Look to include external representation, when	More diversity on the panels may help candidates to feel they see themselves reflected in the Foundation and as a result feel at ease and can see themselves working at the Foundation. Increasing	HR Team	Complete

possible, to increase diversity of panels also.	diversity may also help to challenge unconscious bias.		
Collect data from an onboarding survey and check for trends and suggestions to improve our recruitment and onboarding process.	Gain further insight on the onboarding process, identify any flaws or opportunities to improve the process.	HR Team	Complete
In the first week of a new teammate starting, send them a physical copy of Together for football, alongside a welcome note and other key documentation.	Providing a physical copy of Together for football cements the idea that this is a crucial document to become familiar with. This could help to make clear what our values are and what is expected of all teammates in terms of playing their part.	HR Team	Complete
Routinely ask questions related to inclusion and our Four Corners as part of the interview process.	This will help the interview panel to assess the candidate's attitude to inclusion, and whether they share our values and will add value to our culture.	EDI and HR team	Complete
Ensure we cover reasonable costs of transport to and from interviews for candidates who are required to attend in person.	Cost of transport will not be a barrier to someone looking to attend an interview. Ideally most interviews should be conducted online, this is often the least disruptive way to conduct an interview from a candidate perspective. It can also help to relax candidates and there are benefits to disabled candidates and candidates with caring responsibilities. However, this can be a helpful policy for people who are required to attend.	HR Team	Complete

### Together For Football action plan – March 2024 to March 2025

Together for Football is the Foundation's three-year EDI strategy. This DIAP aims to highlight and focus on the actions which will be completed within the time frame of March 2024 and March 2025. Both Together for Football and this DIAP, split actions into the following pillars of work, known as the 'Foundation's 4 Ps'. Under each pillar our teammates have identified and committed to a set of actions, which we believe will have significant impact.

- **People** - We aim to ensure all of our people feel valued, included and part of a **united team**. We believe that by having a diverse workforce we'll make better decisions and

be more representative of the communities we serve. We depend on our colleagues to live our values and to deliver our mission.

- **Performance** – We strive to be **star performers**, to ensure the best outcomes for our funding partners, grant applicants and the communities we support. We ensure that our policies and processes help to deliver outcomes inclusively.
- **Pitches** – We understand the power of the pitch, investing in facilities people can be proud to play at is what we do. We're **passionate supporters** of the game and we'll use our expertise to work with and engage applicants and communities across England to increase access for everyone. We'll explore different facility types and develop targeted programmes because we know that one size doesn't fit all.
- **Profile** - By telling our stories we aim to increase understanding about the ways in which sport can **positively impact communities**. By sharing our message, we can change perceptions and welcome new participants and audiences to football and other team sports. Through this we aim to tackle inequalities and promote fair play.

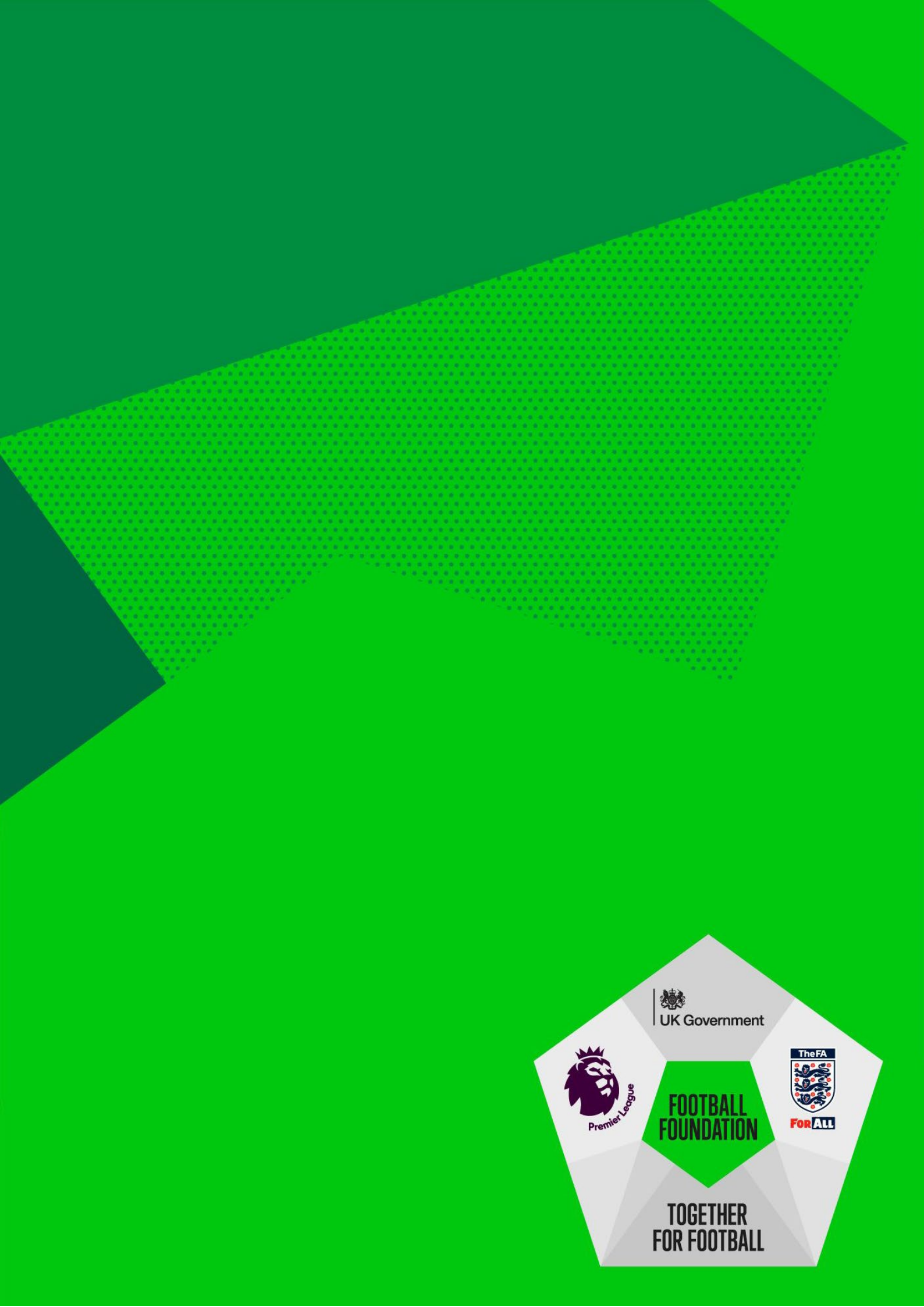
<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Date</b>
People	All teammates to complete the Foundation's bespoke Conscious Inclusion training course.	Teammates will learn about and widen their understanding of the key concepts of inclusion and diversity.	EDI, Procurement Team	Dec-24
People	Empower our Culture Champions and EDI Advisory Group so that they are empowered and equipped to advocate for EDI and act as critical friends to the Foundation.	The Foundation's Culture Champions offer an opportunity for teammates voices to be heard on a wide range of cultural matters, including policy, teammate events, surveys and initiatives. The EDI Advisory Group members lead initiatives and activities related to EDI within the organisation. This will help to enable the Foundation to spread the workload and achieve more.	EDI, Culture Champions, EDI Advisory Group	Throughout
People	Improve our recruitment practices by completing all actions related to	These actions will make our recruitment processes more accessible and inclusive and help us to identify any trends throughout the recruitment and selection process, helping	EDI, Business Services and HR Team	Throughout

	our recruitment review.	us to make strides to attract a wider pool of diverse applicants.		
People	Develop an internal mentoring programme with a focus on developing teammates and sharing knowledge and experience.	Teammates will learn new skills and be exposed to new areas of the Foundation, deepening relationships across the wider team. Access to mentoring will be inclusive and accessible to all who want to take up the opportunity.	HR Team and EDI	Programme to be launched by Apr-24 and will run throughout
People	Develop and launch a line manager charter	Line managers play a key role in ensuring teammates feel valued, included and that they can be themselves. A line manager charter will provide a quick reference guide to how to line manage inclusively.	Business Services Team, HR Team and EDI	Dec-24
People	Incorporate EDI content at Squad Meet Ups / all team meetings.	As an organisation which has a proportion of remote teammates it's important that EDI is firmly on the agenda when teammates come together. The Foundation will invite a range of guest speakers and experts to hear about good practice, hear different voices and experiences to broaden knowledge and understanding.	Communications Team and EDI	Throughout
Performance	Develop guidance resources for applicants/ consultants and beneficiaries.	Improved knowledge on EDI related topics and community engagement through guidance and support. Our community engagement toolkit will continue to be updated and improved. The Foundation will host community of practice sessions on community engagement to improve knowledge and share best practice.	Communications Team and EDI and various teams across the <i>Foundation depending on subject matter (Eg. Delivery Team, Technical Team, Grant Assessment Team)</i>	Throughout
Performance	Embed tackling inequalities measures into our performance	Credible and measurable baseline identified from which to benchmark and track tackling inequalities KPIs and	Grant Assessment Team, Grant Development Team,	Dec-24

	framework and monitoring progress, supported by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).	EDI related KPIs. This will improve our own understanding of our impact and improve the ways in which seldom heard communities / groups can be targeted and engaged.	EDI and Data and Insights Team	
Performance	Develop our procurement process by embedding EDI into the process - assessing the selection of partner organisations and suppliers with significant contract value.	This action will help us to ensure that we're working with suppliers who share our values and practices and who promote and champion EDI in the same way we do.	Procurement Team and Business Services Team	Throughout
Performance	Our post award review process makes sure that applicants and facilities are meeting their grant award objectives and bringing about measurable change. The process will be developed to ensure that EDI is at the heart of this process.	Provide an objective review of EDI outputs and outcomes by supporting our recipients as part of our post award process. This will result in greater assurance that EDI objectives and commitments are sustained throughout the life cycle of our grants.	Grant Assessment Team and EDI	Throughout
Performance	Build strong and mutually beneficial relationships with partner organisations and the banks we partner with to ensure these align with our own EDI strategy.	This action is focussed on our finance team and their networks and partner collaborations, to ensure we share principles and best practice in EDI and continue to improve our own knowledge and the way we operate.	Finance Team and EDI	Throughout

Pitches	Support grantees to understand inclusivity outcomes of facility-based investment.	Through guidance and support, applicants will both understand the Foundation's expectations and the benefits of creating inclusive and accessible spaces reflective of their community.	Grant Development Team, Grant Assessment Team, EDI and Communications Team	Throughout
Pitches	Co-design principles firmly included within local community and users' engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All grant applicants evidence engagement with a diverse range of communities and seldom heard groups in the application process.</li> <li>• Understand the current data and insight on applicant type, what this tells us and what improvements can be made.</li> <li>• Assess that efforts have been made to ensure a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for all.</li> <li>• Further develop engagement with user groups and potential applicants to further understand barriers to funding and participation.</li> </ul>	Grant Development Team, Communications Team and EDI	Throughout
Profile	Improve engagement through events and campaigns covering a wide range of EDI related topics, to raise awareness and ensure there are opportunities for teammates to engage internally as well as externally.	<p>An EDI calendar of events and opportunities for teammates to be involved will ensure teammates can expand their knowledge on EDI.</p> <p>Internally teammates have the opportunity to expand their EDI knowledge through a weekly initiative called 'Friday Finds', which is a collection of sources (articles, research documents, factsheets, book recommendations, podcasts and short films) all related to EDI subject matter.</p> <p>The Foundation brings all teammates together on a quarterly basis during Squad</p>	Communications Team, EDI and Business Services Team	Throughout

		<p>Meet-ups. During these meet-ups EDI is always on the agenda, teammates will have the opportunity to hear from guest speakers and internal inclusion practitioners. Similarly, the Foundation hosts a bi-weekly all team call, where EDI is frequently on the agenda.</p> <p>Externally the Foundation uses the EDI calendar of events to promote diversity related initiatives externally, share case studies and promote principles of community engagement and EDI.</p>		
Profile	Review the website from an EDI perspective.	Ensure the website is accessible and user-friendly as possible.	EDI and Communications Team	June-24
Profile	Create an EDI glossary of terms.	Our internal guide - <i>Words Matter</i> – was published in 2023 as a reference guide for teammates to look up various terms related to EDI, enabling them to feel confident in their use of language and terminology. As <i>Words Matter</i> is a 'living document' it will need to be updated and edited frequently to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	EDI, EDI AG and Communications Team	Throughout



A central graphic element consisting of a white pentagon with a green center. The green center contains the text "FOOTBALL FOUNDATION" in white, bold, uppercase letters. The white pentagon is divided into four sections by lines extending from the center to the vertices. The top section contains the UK Government logo (the Royal Coat of Arms) and the text "UK Government". The left section contains the Premier League logo (a lion's head) and the text "Premier League". The right section contains the The FA logo (a shield with a lion) and the text "The FA For ALL". The bottom section contains the text "TOGETHER FOR FOOTBALL" in bold, uppercase letters.