



## INTERNATIONAL SHOOTING SPORT FEDERATION

### **Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality Guidelines**

These Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality Guidelines are adopted to embrace diversity and difference and shall provide opportunities to athletes, coaches and officials in the shooting sport that are safe, inclusive, accessible and equitable. Additionally, it shall increase awareness and promote gender equality in the shooting sport.

The ISSF wants the shooting sport to be equally accessible to all members of society, whatever their age, disability, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or social/economic status. The ISSF is committed to develop a focus on inclusion instead of exclusion.

#### **Aim**

The aims of the Inclusion Policy are:

- To guide and support the integration of inclusive practice into core club/group programmes and activities.
- To contribute towards growing and sustaining numbers of people from under-represented groups participating within Athletics and Running.
- To promote inclusion within Athletics and Running wherever possible and in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act.
- To adopt inclusive practice within competition and events.
- To provide support and guidance to participants, leaders/coaches, officials, competition/event organisers and other volunteers to promote the development of inclusive practice and to enhance participation.
- To promote the development of knowledge and understanding of disability, equity and inclusion amongst participants, leaders/coaches, officials, volunteers and competition/event organisers by the provision of appropriate guidance and training.
- To promote close working partnerships with relevant groups and organisations to support the development of inclusive practice within Athletics and Running.

#### **Commitment**

We will

- Not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Actively identify and reduce barriers to participation for under-represented groups.
- Consult with expert partners and other organisations to facilitate inclusive practices and remove barriers to participation.

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- Ensure under-represented groups are given the opportunity to participate in all aspect of Athletics and Running.
- Provide opportunities for all in coaching, officiating and leadership positions.
- Support member clubs and RunTogether groups to develop inclusive practice.

### **Important Terms**

**Sex:** assigned at birth and refers to the biological characteristics that define a person as female, male or intersex (World Health Organization).

**Gender:** refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society assigns to women and men (UN Women).

**Unconscious bias:** an association or attitude about a person or social group formed beyond our control and awareness (Catalyst 2019).

**Gender stereotypes:** preconceived ideas on women's and men's traditionally assigned roles, attributes, and characteristics. For example, the role of women being confined to the domestic and family sphere (OHCHR 2014). Negative stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes ultimately perpetuate gender inequality and hold back change (UN Women 2020).

**Gender neutral language:** when the language being used is not gender specific (EIGE 2018), meaning with no specific reference to a particular sex or social gender but rather considering people in general. Using gender-neutral or gender inclusive language avoids words and expressions which could be interpreted as biased, discriminatory, or sexist, instead placing women and men at the same level, and helping reduce gender stereotypes (UN Women 2017).

**Gender balance in communication:** the process of integrating a gender perspective or lens into all aspects of an organization's strategies and initiatives, and into its culture, systems, operations, and communications. Applying a gender lens means factoring how your decisions impact genders differently.

**Gender bias:** prejudiced actions or thoughts that affect a person or a group of people based on their perceived gender. Gender biased language either implicitly/unconsciously or explicitly/consciously favors one gender over another, leading to unequal and/or unfair treatment. It is a form of gender discrimination (EIGE 2018).

### **Balanced portrayal practices**

Research shows that there are fundamental differences in the treatment between genders in sport. This is clear in the underrepresentation of women in sport, in particular with the global coverage of women's sports, the implication that men's sport is the norm, and the emphasis of gender focus first for women, e.g. first female coach.



Clearly, it is not possible to anticipate gender representation in news and current events. All content needs to be based on editorial merit. However, we can strengthen our storytelling around female athletes, coaches, and referees to enhance visibility and consistency of coverage, introduce new voices and build a following. We also need to be sensitive to gender in the way in which the content is packaged and presented in relation to tone, style, language, framing, and imagery. Additionally, we can ensure a more even spread of content is given to both genders, both editorially and on social media channels.

The following should be adhered to by ISSF: clear and balanced editorial direction and tone of content; consistency is key across both genders across editorial and social media content; bold and compelling story to build followers.

### **Imagery**

Shooting sport is portrayed through still and moving images. These should reflect the diversity of the athletes, fans, referees, coaches, staff, volunteers, and conscious efforts should be made to ensure that there is a balance in the quality and quantity of portrayal of genders on TV, web, or social media platforms.

Keep these guidelines in mind:

- Active, authentic, and respectful visual imagery (which portrays athletes in their environment).
- Avoid passive, sexy imagery of athletes which reinforces stereotypes.
- Athleticism and sporting prowess should be the focus of the imagery.
- Do not focus unnecessarily on looks, in comparison to the men's coverage, clothing or intimate body parts (e.g. crotch shots, cleavage, backsides), especially if it does not relate to an athlete's performance.
- Capture diversity among all athletes in terms of gender and other dimensions such as ethnicity or age.
- Ensure there are not significantly more images of one gender or ethnicity in relation to the other.

### **Language and Terminology**

Special attention should be paid to the use of language (expressions and communication) and terminology (vocabulary) in commentary, headlines, or articles in print or digital.

- Use bias-free language and avoid gender stereotypes, expressions or words that compare women to men and/or imply the superiority of one gender over the other.
- It is legitimate to refer to an individual's gender (e.g. she/he, him/her) when referring to a specific person. However, it is advised to use neutral descriptions when referring to a mixed group.



## General Principles

When referring to people always use 'female/male', 'women/men' and not 'girls/boys', unless referring to minors. The use of "ladies" is inappropriate when "men" is being used. The term should be women. The same applies for using the term "girls" when "men" is being used. Ladies is appropriate when used with the term Gentlemen, as in a speech: "Ladies and Gentlemen"; or when it is an official title, e.g. "Sir John and Lady Smith".

Pronouns: when referring to a mixed-gender group, the neutral plural should be used, they/them/their. Nouns and proper names, where possible, use gender-neutral terms, for example: Instead of sportsman, use sportsperson or instead of cameraman / cameramen, use camera operator / camera crew.

Adjectives: Avoid making evaluative comments on an individual's appearance. When describing an athlete's performance, use adjectives that apply to both women and men. For instance:

- Use words such as: beautiful, powerful, strong, graceful, athletic, determined, dominant.
- Not gendered or sexist descriptions e.g. sexy, girly, manly, like a man, etc.

Interview and commentary: Interviews with athletes or coaches or commentating must ensure that there is no gender-driven questions and statements. For example: when interviewing a female athlete, avoid asking about her husband/partner/children, unless she volunteers the information herself. Interviewers seldom ask male athletes whether their wives/partners/children are proud of them. Commentary teams must represent a mix of genders and backgrounds, for both men's and women's events.

Coverage and airtime. ISSF believes that women's and men's events are of equal importance, and this should be reflected in their treatment. It is therefore important to show and celebrate sporting journeys and achievements – irrespective of gender, race or sexual orientation – with the same passion, respect and consistency throughout the year, and beyond. In broadcast activities – coverage of events, interviews, athlete profiles, commentary, etc. – ensure as much as possible that equal airtime and coverage are devoted to women's and men's events. When preparing articles and publications, both print and digital, as far as possible women and men should be given equal exposure to ensure that the reporting is balanced between the different genders. Avoid excessive focus on only one gender. The quality of production for women's and men's sports coverage and the presentation of athletes should be equal. Neither gender should be favored.



## Checklist

### *Content and editorial:*

Equal editorial attention, where possible:

- Are there considerably more stories and profiles of one gender over another?
- How are you framing your questions and storytelling? Consider if they are gender-driven or sport-driven.
- Are you packaging your content and presenting women's and men's sport with the same enthusiasm and quality?

### *Imagery:*

Balanced and steering away from gender stereotypes:

- Is there a gender balance across the images being used?
- Are women represented in an active and empowered position, and equally visible and prominent?
- Is the focus of the images on performance and shooting sport instead of aesthetics?

### *Wording:*

Using neutral language that can be used for all individuals and groups of individuals:

- Are you using masculine forms (he/him) in generic references, i.e. when referring to an unspecified group of people? Or being gender-neutral (they/them)?
- Are you using descriptive words and expressions that can apply to anyone?
- Are you comparing genders, or implying the superiority of one gender over another?

### *Voices:*

Diversify storytellers and propose gender-balanced and diverse panels, spokespeople, trainers, role models, etc.

- What voices are being heard and in what capacity (e.g. as an authority or expert)?
- Are women and minority voices speaking for themselves?
- Are your storytellers from different genders and backgrounds?

## Conclusion

Diverse and empowering portrayals of athletes, coaches, officials, and all those who make up the ISSF family have a positive impact on participation rates in shooting sport, coaching and leadership. By ensuring ISSF is speaking in one voice, and in a voice that is gender neutral, we have the opportunity to grow and tap into new audiences and generate more interest and engagement, in particular among the younger generations and athletes.