



Advantage All

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WRITE YOUR OWN GENDER EQUALITY

STRATEGY

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Advantage All

Tennis is an Equal Advantage Sport™



THE ITF TOOLKIT

This guidance document, entitled **'Write Your Own Gender Equality Strategy'**, is one of a series of ITF guides to help you address gender equality including:

1. Write your own Gender Equality Strategy
2. Balance the Board
3. Brand & Communications

These guides, as well as the full *Advantage All* strategy, are available online here;

<https://www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/governance/advantage-all/>

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Despite women and girls representing half of the world's population, gender inequality persists globally, creating barriers to social and economic progress. Women face an 'opportunity gap' that leaves them underrepresented in key leadership and decision-making roles.

Gender equality is a key topic on the agenda of most major global institutions and governments. One of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG5) is to **'achieve gender equality and empower women and girls'**.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has taken major steps to define long-term strategies to address current imbalances and encourages all sporting bodies to pledge their support to the cause.

“ Sport is one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls.”

Thomas Bach,
IOC President

i Grant Thornton's Women in Business Report 2019

ii <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

iii Global Gender Gap Report 2020



▶ Only **29%** of managerial positions worldwide are held by womenⁱ

▶ Female representation in national parliaments stands at just **23.7%**ⁱⁱ

▶ It will take **99.5** years to achieve gender parityⁱⁱⁱ

IN TENNIS

At the ITF, we have risen to this challenge and fully embrace the goals of the IOC with a firm commitment to act. Our aim is to govern a sport where everyone is given the same advantage both on and off the court.

SNAPSHOT

- ▶ 47% of all tennis participants globally are women^{iv}
- ▶ Tennis players account for 12 of the 15 highest-paid female athletes^v
- ▶ 40% of participants on the ITF World Tennis tour are women
- ▶ Globally only 1 in 5 coaches are female^{vi}
- ▶ Only 22% of certified officials are women
- ▶ There is less than 20% combined female representation at ITF and Regional board levels

In August 2018, the ITF formally announced its ongoing commitment to increasing the number of women on and off the court with the launch of its Gender Equality Strategy called *Advantage All*.

OUR VISION

Tennis is an Equal Advantage sport.

OUR UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

To become an inspirational role model for all Olympic and Paralympic sports

OUR STRATEGY

The ITF's *Advantage All* Gender Equality Strategy is designed to:

- ▶ Create more opportunities for women to become leaders in sport
- ▶ Encourage more women and girls to play tennis
- ▶ Champion female role models to inspire the next generation on and off the court
- ▶ Increase investment and award equal prize money
- ▶ Ensure our sport is addressing and eliminating bias and discrimination at every level

“

Thanks to women like Billie Jean King and others like her, tennis is positioned better than most sports to be a powerful platform for empowering women and girls. However, as the research shows, tennis still has a way to go before we can claim our game as an Equal Advantage Sport.”

Katrina Adams

Chair Gender Equality in Tennis Committee and Vice President ITF Board



iv ITF Global Tennis Report 2019

v <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kurtbadenhausen/2019/08/06/the-highest-paid-female-athletes-2019-serena-and-osaka-dominate/#1cd4ea882fcc>

vi Women In Tennis, ITF Publication



ADVANTAGE ALL IS DELIVERED
VIA FIVE KEY THEMES

1. EMPOWERMENT
2. BALANCE
3. CULTURE
4. VALUE
5. VOICE

OUR STRATEGY

WOMEN EMPOWERED TO TAKE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

We want to see more women coaching, officiating and leading the administration of our sport, as well as women having a greater influence on the future of tennis off the court, through increased visibility and representation in leadership and governance roles.

BALANCED OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE AND ENJOY TENNIS

From the programmes and competitions that we offer, to funding, training, earning potential, prominence and exposure. It's important that we provide balanced support for both genders.

CREATE AN EQUAL ADVANTAGE ENVIRONMENT

It's critical that we build a culture that includes and inspires all, actively eliminating bias and discrimination at all levels of our sport. From work practices, the environment in which we operate and the way we communicate, our aim is to cultivate an Equal Advantage culture.

RAISE THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL OF THE WOMEN'S GAME

Women's sport is seen as progressive, inspiring and the audiences are growing. Our goal is to ensure our women's products are maximised and given equal opportunity to perform from a fan, sponsorship and broadcast delivery perspective.

GROW AWARENESS AND MANAGE MEDIA IMAGE OF WOMEN'S TENNIS

We must work hard to continue to position the women's game, build powerful, positive language and focus on the sport and performance. Let's help the media speak in a consistent way about women's tennis as "One Voice".



“

We not only have an opportunity, but also a responsibility to drive positive change in our sport and in society. It's important to be more inclusive and act as role models to inspire more women and girls to play tennis and empower more women to take up leadership roles.”

Billie Jean King
Fed Cup Global Ambassador

THE START OF THE ITF JOURNEY

Since the ITF launched its *Advantage All* programme in 2018 we have achieved the following:

1. EMPOWERMENT

The ITF has delivered a range of Officiating and Coaching programmes and initiatives to promote women's involvement. The ITF has funded female coaches to receive high level leadership training as part of the Olympic Solidarity Programme. National Associations are also identifying female officiating ambassadors (one per nation) to help drive women's involvement.

2. BALANCE

The ITF is actively encouraging more women to seek Commission and Committee roles and has seen a rise in female representation over the past five years from

21.3% in 2014 to 33.7% in 2019. Women now account for 42% of the ITF's own senior leadership team.

3. VALUE

Equal Prize Money. The Fed Cup by BNP Paribas now offers the largest annual prize fund in women's team sports – equivalent to that awarded per team to men playing in the Davis Cup, representing a landmark moment for the women's game. The bold new 'World Cup of Tennis' format has made the Fed Cup the largest annual team competition in women's sports, giving it equal status to the men's Davis Cup.

4. CULTURE

The ITF is conducting a Governance and Constitution Review to eradicate any gender barriers that exist, while eliminating discrimination of any kind within our

operational, cultural and governance framework. Separately, in 2019, tireless pioneer for inclusion and equality, **Billie Jean King was announced Global Ambassador for Fed Cup**. She has pledged her support as a role model and ambassador to raise awareness and drive initiatives that further our *Advantage All* agenda and mobilise the wider ITF membership and the sport of tennis as a whole.

5. VOICE

The ITF will provide brand, media and communications guidelines that will be shared with our member regions and nations as well as with our rights holder broadcast media. Our goal is to ensure all ITF broadcast partners and commentators speak with 'one voice' to create a consistent and positive narrative about women in tennis and women's tennis.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We are calling on you to generate momentum and fuel this change. Concerted and deliberate actions to redress the imbalances, however small to begin with, can transform the way that women are represented, perceived and involved in our sport.

As part of our ongoing commitment to increasing the number of women on and off the court, the ITF has provided these practical guides to engage and energise Regional and National Associations. It is only through the efforts of member nations and regions building a strong base of gender equality, can we as an International Tennis Federation, achieve the gender equality that tennis desires and needs.

We appreciate that this will take time; this could mean a change in culture and might cause discomfort. However, no matter the starting point or the pace of past progress, the success of the *Advantage All* programme can only be achieved by working collectively to develop and implement the right local gender equality strategy that works for each of you. **Achieving gender equality in sport requires the commitment of everyone, with clear timelines for action, designated responsibilities and follow up monitoring and evaluation. For us, it is not an option, it is our collective obligation.**

ADVANTAGE ALL STRATEGY FOR REGIONAL AND MEMBER NATIONS

First, your board must make a commitment to significantly improve your gender equality. We strongly encourage all nations and regions to develop an *Advantage All* strategy and action plan which addresses this topic within your organisations. We know that many of you already have plans and initiatives in place to tackle some of these challenges but now is the time to review them to make improvements. For some nations, we know this is under consideration, and for others, it may be the very start of the journey.

This guide provides best practice and ideas for wherever you are on the journey. We understand there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The process, based on the route that the ITF has already undertaken, provides practical and helpful advice on an approach, framework and next steps. We recognise, however, that each region and nation will have different priorities.

We encourage you to refer to the *Advantage All* strategy as a guide to help focus your thinking and align your activities with the global tennis community. To help you get started, we have developed a [Self Assessment Tool](#) to assess your current levels of commitment to gender equality across each of the five *Advantage All* themes. This Tool will help you identify key areas to work on and provide a good foundation upon which to develop your own strategy.

DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGY

Whether you are doing this for the first time or improving what is already in place, developing a strategy need not be complex. The key is to follow a process and ensure that all relevant data is gathered and considered.

A simple plan with some key objectives and actions can be just as effective as a full strategy document. It is very important to ensure high level 'buy in' to the overall principles of gender equality. We have provided some [Gender Equality facts](#) and key messaging information, with key statistics to help you present and gain high level commitment to the cause.

The ITF uses a simple methodology and structure which could be useful and relevant to member nations and regions. It is based on 4 basic principles to identify:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to get to?
3. How are we going to get there?
4. How will we measure and evaluate success?

Ideally, your Gender Equality Strategy should be embedded into and aligned with your overall strategic plan; it should not sit on its own as an 'add-on'. Research shows this will have little success.



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RESOURCING

This might be done in a number of different ways. Appoint a person to head the initiative either in a full-time role or as one of their responsibilities. Alternatively, assemble a small *Advantage All* development working group or committee. What is important, is

to address 'Women in Tennis' on and off the court as well as promoting 'Women's Tennis'. However you decide to allocate the responsibility, the following steps can help ensure buy-in:

RECOMMENDED STEPS

- ▶ Ensure gender equality sits across your entire organisation – all departments have a responsibility to integrate *Advantage All* into their plans
- ▶ Groups need to include both male and female members
- ▶ Try to include a cross-section of people from different departments and with differing responsibilities and skill sets
- ▶ To be successful, there must be a directive from the top to ensure buy-in
- ▶ Avoid this being about writing a strategy for 'women's tennis' – this is about 'women in tennis' both on and off the court
- ▶ Allocate appropriate resources, as you would any other planned activity

A woman with long, curly blonde hair is seen from the side, looking at a laptop. The background is a tennis court at night, with green lighting and a person in the distance. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the laptop screen and the court's ambient lighting.

THE 4-STEP APPROACH TO DEVELOPING YOUR STRATEGY

ANALYSE

Collate and analyse all necessary data to gain insights and review the current situation

DESIGN

Set the vision and the long and short term objectives for each of the 5 themes. Set measurable targets

IMPLEMENT

Develop the action plans and initiatives for the 5 key themes that will help reach the objectives. Prioritise!

REVIEW

Review the progress made on an ongoing basis and make adjustments as required



STEP 1 – ANALYSE AND DRAW INSIGHTS

The first step is to have a clear understanding of ‘where are we now?’ through collation and analysis of gender-related data alongside further discussions to gain insight into the challenges faced by women as they strive to develop their careers, both on and off the court. The final action plan should be driven by this data, which will identify where the main imbalances lie.

Depending on your organisation, the data may be collected from a number of different

sources and from both internal and external stakeholders. It might be both qualitative and quantitative. Some data may exist already and may be found simply by looking in archives or existing documents; some may require surveys to be sent out to gather opinions/metrics etc from specific groups.

A Data Collection guide showing the main indicators and means of data collection is shown at [Annex A](#).

RECOMMENDED STEPS

- ▶ Define the data/metrics needed to build a picture of the current landscape and provide insights on gender equality in your region/nation
- ▶ Draw from both quantitative data (clear statistics) and qualitative data (opinions and information gained from discussions). Often the qualitative data will give you useful insights that help explain what the quantitative data has identified
- ▶ Obtain qualitative data from holding interviews, focus groups, interactive sessions and conducting surveys
- ▶ Summarise the data and look at trends – make sure you delve into the data and look at it from all perspectives
- ▶ Make sure you know the gender of the respondents when you are collecting and interpreting the data – they may have very different views and answers
- ▶ Use the findings and priorities identified from your completed Gender Equality Self Assessment Tool





STEP 2: DESIGN

Step 1 Informs the 'where are we now' and provides an overview of the current situation.

Step 2 determines the overall direction of your strategy and defines the vision and objectives for what you want to achieve.

Together, the vision and specific objectives determine 'where you want to get to' and influence the strategies and actions that are developed.

This information does not need to be contained in a complex document. A simple and focused statement on strategic direction is easier for leaders to communicate and for everyone to understand and contribute to.

VISION

The Vision should be a short statement which:

- ▶ Is what you hope to achieve in the long-term
- ▶ Is understandable and engaging
- ▶ Looks to the future and inspires
- ▶ Motivates the team to make a difference and act

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Long-term objectives are the target for the future, 5-10 years from now
- ▶ Short-term objectives to be met over the next 1 – 2 years

RECOMMENDED STEPS

- ▶ Don't overcomplicate – make it simple to write and to communicate
- ▶ Make all objectives SMART
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Relevant
 - Timed
- ▶ Keep the vision positive and forward-thinking and don't dwell on past negatives
- ▶ Don't make the vision overly earnest or overtly promoting women – it is about balancing any gender inequalities and creating an Equal Advantage sport





STEP 3: IMPLEMENTATION

**This step is all about 'how to get there?'
What initiatives and actions can you put
in place against each of the 5 themes?**

They should link to your objectives and
provide information on:

- ▶ What will be done?
- ▶ Who is responsible?
- ▶ How it will be done?
- ▶ What resources are needed?
- ▶ How will it be measured?

A simple template to record objectives and
initiatives is shown at [Annex B](#).

RECOMMENDED STEPS

- ▶ Try to prioritise and highlight key actions and initiatives – you may not be able to tackle them all at the same time and it is better to do some well than be stretched too thin
- ▶ Make sure you have the resources – both human and financial to deliver your plan
- ▶ Are there partner organisations, both in sport or industry, that might be able to assist and support your initiatives?
- ▶ Are there resources, learnings and/or materials from other sports you can leverage?
- ▶ Don't be intimidated to ask others for help and guidance



STEP 4: REVIEW

The regular monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of activities will keep the strategy fresh and focused on key initiatives.

It is important to have a clear understanding of how you will measure and evaluate success.

RECOMMENDED STEPS

- ▶ Be honest about whether your objectives were achieved
- ▶ Don't be afraid to revisit the strategic direction and refine what is being done – the key is to be agile and adapt as needed
- ▶ Don't be frustrated if the pace of change is slow – this is something that will not happen overnight, but may take years of activation before real change and progress can be demonstrated
- ▶ Remember that any progress is a massive step forward to achieving a level playing field for the sport
- ▶ Celebrate your successes – communicate to the wider community, media and other stakeholders your progress and achievements
- ▶ Share your stories with us at the ITF so we can showcase your initiatives, and others can also learn from your experiences



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Tennis is an Equal Advantage Sport™



SUMMARY

The ITF is fully committed to promoting gender equality in order to make tennis an Equal Advantage sport. We need your full commitment and support in order to build a strong foundation country by country, region by region to make this happen.

By working together, we can start to address the challenges and empower women to make a real difference globally in our sport.

To provide a powerful platform always bear in mind the following:

- ▶ Make a commitment at your leadership level
- ▶ Be inclusive – it's about creating and maintaining an Equal Advantage Sport
- ▶ Set clear and measurable objectives
- ▶ Provide a pathway guided by our five action areas: Empower; Balance; Voice; Culture; and Value
- ▶ Implement effective tactics to bring about long-lasting change
- ▶ Raise awareness and track the issue – particularly in relation to leadership, coaching & officiating

We welcome feedback on this guide so it can be refined for future editions, with more guidance, tools and case studies to help regions and nations succeed in their quest for gender equality.

ANNEX A – DATA COLLECTION GUIDE



1. QUANTITATIVE DATA

Suggestions for quantitative data to collect, to be tailored to your region or nation

Leadership	Comment /How to collect
Number / % of women currently on nation/region board	RA/NA board records
Number / % of women currently on nations/regions committees and panels	RA/NA records
Number / % of female candidates standing for board or committee positions over last 5 years	RA/NA election records
Number / % of female candidates nominated for positions	RA/NA election records
Number / % of female staff in the nation/region – split between levels from administrator, manager, senior manager, director etc	RA/NA personnel records
Participation	
Number / % of female players at all levels (competition and recreational)	RA/NA records
Number / % of tournaments and opportunities for women to participate in versus males	Official tournament records and entry numbers (M/F)
Officials	
Number / % of female officials that are nationally/regionally certified	Officiating records
Number / % of females officiating (out of total officials) for defined levels of events	Officiating records

1. QUANTITATIVE DATA CONTINUED

Coaches	
Number / % of female coaches in the nation/region	Coaching records
Number / % of female coaches of top 100 professional players in nation/region – for male and female players	Coaching records
Media Coverage	
TV and media coverage of Women's/Men's tournaments in nation/region	Identify key media platforms and analyse coverage
Online fans	
Online fans – split male/female	Social media data
Funding and Grants	
Funding at development level (for female v male players)	Funding and grant records
Prize money	
Prize money awarded to women v men at all levels	Tournament records
Female journalists/commentators	
Percentage of female tennis journalists and commentators involved in the sport in the nation/region	Identify key media platforms and analysis of coverage

Please avoid double counting if one women performs multiple roles or sits on more than one committee.

2. QUALITATIVE DATA

In your experience, what are the main barriers in your region for women/ girls taking up or staying in tennis? Please select your top three reasons.

- ▶ There are no barriers
- ▶ It's not as socially accepted for women to play
- ▶ Family commitments
- ▶ Work or study commitments
- ▶ Unsafe environment
- ▶ Lack of or unsafe transportation (too hard to get to)
- ▶ Economic reasons
- ▶ The tennis environment is not suited to women
- ▶ Lack of suitable facilities for women (ie women's changing rooms, toilets and other facilities etc.)
- ▶ Fear of injury
- ▶ Fear of ridicule/perception of not being good enough to play (compared with men/boys)
- ▶ Lack of visibility/or few females playing
- ▶ Less opportunities for women to compete in tournaments/ competitions
- ▶ Other, if any.....

In general, the number of women who take up tennis coaching, officiating and senior positions within the administration of tennis is lower than men's representation in most regions?

Please select your top three reasons for this

- ▶ Lack of female role models
- ▶ Lack of training/career development
- ▶ Lack of interest or motivation from women
- ▶ Other commitments (family/work)
- ▶ Perception that there is little opportunity for women in these areas
- ▶ Lack of funding
- ▶ Social code of behaviour (it's not for women)
- ▶ Few women apply/suitable/ qualified to do these roles
- ▶ Fear of ridicule/perception of not being good enough
- ▶ Predominately male environment is intimidating
- ▶ Other, if any.....

In your opinion/experience, what is it about tennis and the tennis environment in your region that appeals to women the most? Please select your top three reasons?

- ▶ The physical/powerful nature of the game
- ▶ The tactics and speed of the game
- ▶ The equipment/clothing/courts
- ▶ The social connections and club room environment
- ▶ The ability for the whole family to play
- ▶ It's a good run around, keeps me fit, able to play at all ages
- ▶ It's an easy game to play and understand
- ▶ Women can do well in the sport at the professional level
- ▶ Female tennis players are great role models for my daughters
- ▶ It's a safe environment with nice people
- ▶ Other, if any.....

The visibility the media gives the women's game and the way women play/are involved in tennis are portrayed in the media can be highly influential. In your region do you believe?

Women's coverage in the media is less, equal or more than men

- ▶ Less
- ▶ Equal
- ▶ More

The information sought can be tailored to explore specific issues facing each region or nation. Here are some suggestions for the collection of qualitative data.

These questions will help to fully understand the current situation in a region or nation. They can be explored by face to face or telephone consultations, focus groups or questionnaires. They should primarily be directed at women to respond.

ANNEX B – TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING VISION, OBJECTIVES AND INITIATIVES

VISION

[A short statement to describe what you hope to achieve in the long term – future based and meant to inspire]

.....

.....

.....

OBJECTIVES

[Statements that can be measured with clear targets for the long term 5 – 10 years from now as well as short term objectives for the next 1-2 years]

.....

.....

.....

INITIATIVES

[Table to record priority initiatives, resources required and dates to be completed by]

Initiative	Action steps/tasks	By who	By when	Resources required
Initiative 1 Title and description	▶ ▶ ▶ ▶			
Initiative 2 Title and description	▶ ▶ ▶ ▶			
Initiative 3 Title and description	▶ ▶ ▶ ▶			

WE CAN HELP. LET'S STAY IN TOUCH

We welcome feedback about this guide, along with your wider experiences of delivering gender equality. There is a lot of beneficial learning that can be shared, so please be forthcoming with your views.

Email us at
AdvantageAll@itftennis.com

