



WCF Gender Review Group

Terms of Reference

Updated 23rd January 2024

Background

The WCF policy is in place to provide entry criteria for WCF World Championships. It is only relevant to these elite events, competed for by the top Women players. Members own policies may be entirely different, being relevant to play across all standards, at clubs and tournaments, and not just those involving elite 'A' class players.

In April 2022 Members voted to approve our Gender Policy which we agreed at the time to keep under review.

<https://worldcroquet.org/wcf-business/gender-policy/>

The policy was based on the positions taken by various global Sporting organisations, but primarily a [framework on fairness, inclusion and non-discrimination identity and sex variations](#) issued by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in November 2021. This recommended that Transgender women should be able to compete in Women's events unless the sport could prove with 'robust and peer reviewed research' that a 'consistent, unfair, disproportionate competitive advantage' existed.

Recently, some sports have published new policies, many of which limit transgender participation in Women's events. It is expected that the IOC will review their guidance after the 2024 summer Olympics.

When we sent the current policy for vote in March 2022 we assured Members that we would continue to monitor the situation. Feedback we have received confirms that this is a complex issue, with each country's own cultures and laws relevant to how they feel about this subject. The MC feel that having now held two Women's World Championships with this policy in place, and one European Women's Championship, that now is an appropriate time to review it.

We hold WCF Women's Championships every four years, and ERC events approximately every 2 years. Any review will necessarily take some time, so the 2024 ERC Women's Championship will be run following the existing policy. After this, we have no Women's events until 2026. Therefore, should any changes be proposed, these need to be in place, including full consultation and vote with Members, by the end of 2025.

Objectives of the Gender Review Group (GRG)

The GRG is in place to represent all WCF Member countries. The aim of the review is to determine whether the existing WCF Gender Policy is most suitable for croquet or whether any alternative approaches should be put forward for Member consideration.

The GRG are asked to research the issues involved and to decide whether, in their opinion, there is a need to amend the WCF policy.

It will present its findings, along with any recommendations, to the Management Committee (MC), ideally before the end of 2024. This will give the MC time to consult with Members, should this be recommended.

Matters to consider

The GRG may consider all relevant issues. These are likely to include the following:

Define the purpose of the two Women's Championships: to consider the reasons for holding Women's only championships and define how this should influence WCF policy.

Fairness and inclusivity: consider these aspects from various perspectives (this is likely to include the views of transgender women and cis women). To what extent does the current policy, or any proposed alternative, support fairness and inclusivity?

Assess risks (of existing policy or any proposed alternative): the WCF Gender policy should limit risk to individuals, Members and to the WCF (as an organisation). Risks might include physical, emotional or reputational harm to individuals, Members or to the WCF. The policy should consider the risk of adverse publicity or legal action or anything which puts the sport of croquet in disrepute, to the detriment of our sport as a whole.

Differences in culture and law around the world: The WCF Gender policy should seek to strike a balance between the different cultural approaches to this issue amongst Croquet playing nations, and also differences in national laws.

Composition of the GRG

The WCF currently has 13 Full Members, 5 Associate Members and 11 Recognised Croquet Organisations. The WCF Policy regarding transgender women competing in Women's only World Championships needs to reflect what is best for croquet as a whole, not for any one single nation or Member. The MC felt that a group of 6 would be an appropriate size. We have therefore asked our six largest Member countries to support this review.

The group will comprise of:

- One nominee from each of Australia, Egypt, England, New Zealand, Spain and the USA.
- One MC nominee: to act as minute-taker, general facilitator and MC liaison.

As at: 1st January 2024 the committee comprises:

Australia: Kristie Middleton

Egypt: Amal el Laban

England: Gabrielle Higgins

New Zealand: Judith Hanratty

Spain: Begoña Elzaburu

USA: Debbie Davidoff

WCF Management Committee: Debbie Lines

At, or shortly after the first meeting, the MC recommend that the GRG elect a Chair. 22nd January 2024 - *Kristie Middleton volunteered and was elected.*

Operation

The WCF expect all those on the GRG to behave with courtesy and respect toward each other at all times.

Minutes and details of matters discussed should remain confidential and not be discussed outside the GRG or the MC, except as otherwise agreed.

The GRG and MC will publish periodic updates on the progress of the review, the wording and timing to be mutually agreed.

The GRG will operate via email, conference calls and Whatsapp. Meetings will be scheduled as needed, to be decided by the GRG.

Dropbox will be used to share and store files.

The GRG may not request additional resources or undertake surveys of Members or players, without agreeing this in advance with the MC. The MC will facilitate any reasonable requests.

The GRG should aim to complete its review and provide any findings and/or recommendations to the MC by the end of 2024.