



FOOTBALL UNITED

KICK IT OUT STRATEGY 2030

WE ARE ON A MISSION TO UNITE FOOTBALL

We're on a mission to unite football and end discrimination.

Driven forward by our love of sport, we're here to fight discrimination. We're here to make sure football is a game for everyone – and that means putting equality and inclusion up front from grassroots to the elite game in men's and women's football. We were set up to fight racism in football in 1993. Then, in 1997, we expanded to tackle all forms of discrimination. Since the beginning, we've made huge progress on and off the pitch, leading the charge for positive change. We've done it by raising awareness, confronting issues and helping our sport be better.

Today, we run education programmes for academy players, parents, fans and match officials. We campaign and influence policy to make sure football is always welcoming – to everyone. We support people from underrepresented and minority communities to make a career in football and thrive. And we call out discrimination wherever it happens – from your local park to the Premier League to your social feed.

We all know Kick It Out shouldn't have to exist. Our biggest hope is that one day football no longer needs us. But right now we're here to put an end to every form of discrimination.

We won't stop until it stops.



FOREWORD



KICK IT OUT CHAIR SANJAY BHANDARI

As we watch our nightly news bulletins or doom scroll over breakfast through our social media feeds, any of us could be forgiven for feeling that we live in hopeless days of destruction, hate and division. It would be easy to slip into feelings of apathy, despair or fatalism.

In this context, football can feel trivial. But in Britain, football is a cultural phenomenon. Nothing engages our emotions like football. It reflects societal problems and, with its heightened emotion, sometimes amplifies them.

But Pope John Paul II was right when he observed that “out of all the unimportant things, football is the most important”. Because that emotional engagement also gives football its unique power to bring people together in shared moments that can become community movements.

The heart of our new strategy is about capturing that energy and working together across the game to build those community movements to create enduring change.

We see a game that welcomes everyone. We want to see a football culture that includes everyone at every level. A game where everyone is represented on the pitch. A game where everyone can lead off the pitch. And a game where everyone stands up to discrimination.

As the African proverb goes: If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. So we aim to unite football to end discrimination.

We hope that you will join the movement: Football United.



KICK IT OUT CHIEF EXECUTIVE SAMUEL OKAFOR

Football has the power to change lives when it unites. We have seen its ability to bring communities together, create opportunity, and inspire hope. That same power can also dismantle discrimination—if we stand side by side and act together.

At Kick It Out, our mission is clear: to unite football to end discrimination. And when we are united, the outcomes can be long-lasting.

United, we can make stadiums welcoming places for every supporter. United, we can open doors so that players and match officials from every background are represented on the pitch. United, we can break down barriers into coaching and boardrooms so that clubs are more reflective of their communities. And united, we can challenge abuse - in stadiums, online and across the game - with courage, consistency and transparency.

These are not distant aspirations. They are achievable goals over the next five years where governing bodies, clubs, players, fans, and like-minded organisations work in partnership. Unity and accountability can, and should, turn ambition into impact.

At Kick It Out, we will continue to play our part by strengthening collaboration across football, educating the next generation, using data and technology that leads to policy change, and putting the voices of those most affected at the heart of our work.

We have come a long way in the last 32 years, and would like to thank our partners who continue to support our work. But we recognise that so much more must be done to make football the welcoming and inspiring game we all want it to be.

That is our purpose. That is our commitment. That is Football United.



FOOTBALL UNITED

KICK IT OUT STRATEGY 2030

VISION:



A game that welcomes everyone

MISSION:



Unite football to end discrimination

OUR GOALS:



EVERYONE IS INCLUDED



ON THE PITCH: EVERYONE REPRESENTED



OFF THE PITCH: EVERYONE CAN LEAD



EVERYONE STANDS UP TO DISCRIMINATION

OUR ROLE:



EDUCATE AND DEVELOP



UNITE PARTNERS



INFLUENCE CHANGE



TACKLE DISCRIMINATION

OUR COMMITMENTS:



CHAMPION INCLUSION



INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE



SCALE IMPACT



FOCUS ON BENEFICIARIES



USE TECH, DATA AND INSIGHTS



OUR GOALS:

Everyone is included

Create a football community built on inclusion, from grassroots to elite levels. Together, we'll tear down barriers and foster a culture where every supporter, player or person working in the game feels welcome, safe and can be their authentic selves.

Why this is important

Racism accounts for half of discrimination reports received by Kick It Out. More than 50% of women have experienced sexism in football settings, a figure that rises among ethnic minority and LGBTQ+ communities. Transphobic abuse is on the rise, and there are very few openly gay male footballers at elite level. Disabled fans still face significant barriers.

Off the pitch: everyone can lead

Influence governing bodies to improve pathways for talent from all backgrounds to reach boardroom, leadership, senior coaching and coaching positions. Together, we'll harness the power of potential that's often overlooked.

Why this is important

In the EFL, 34% of players are Black, rising to 43% in the Premier League, but those figures are not reflected in leadership or senior coaching positions. According to recent data, many men's club workforces don't reflect their local communities from a gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ+ or disability perspective.

On the pitch: Everyone represented

Drive representation where the action happens, so everyone can easily see faces like theirs on the pitch. Together, we'll help give talent from all backgrounds the chance to play, officiate, and be seen.

Why this is important

Structural barriers still limit opportunities and representation for certain communities, such as South Asian players, who make up a small percentage of the men's professional game, and Black, Asian, and mixed heritage players in the women's game. Among grassroots match officials, 10% are from ethnic minorities, while at professional level, it's 7%.

Everyone stands up to discrimination

Ensure football meets abuse head-on with courage and consistency. We will collect and share data, report incidents, hold power to account, and take decisive action.

Why this is important

Abuse remains a huge problem online and at stadiums. Rising online hate speech, especially towards women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and players from ethnic minority backgrounds, reflects divisions in society. Kick It Out research shows that 85% of women have not reported sexist abuse, showing trust in reporting systems can be low.



OUR ROLE:

Educate and develop

We train the next generation. From those already in football or those taking their first steps, everyone deserves access to tools and support that changes behaviour and develops potential.

Our aims:

- Change attitudes by ramping up our unique fan education programme, challenging discriminatory behaviour and promoting inclusion.
- Invest in our online learning portal – The Academy – so people across the game can access industry-leading education and training.
- Scale up our training for academy players, extending it into the women's game, so more of the next generation can be ambassadors for anti-discrimination.
- Design and develop programmes to support underrepresented talent in sports-related roles.

Influence change

We hold power to account. Using data, insight, and evidence, we will work with governing bodies, regulators, and policymakers to take real action in line with our goals.

Our aims:

- Use data and insights to influence government, governing bodies and authorities on stronger policies that promote inclusion in football, including online safety.
- Improve coordination between campaigns, ensuring they are data-led and have clear outcomes.
- Produce actionable research and thought leadership on how our goals can be achieved.
- Amplify success across football in relation to our goals.

Unite partners

We don't do it alone. We build a network of collaborations with clubs, community groups, like-minded organisations and campaigners to align efforts and drive impact.

Our aims:

- Create deeper partnerships with like-minded organisations, groups and campaigners to achieve more wins on inclusion.
- Develop and collaborate on joint programmes and campaigns with our partners in the game.
- Listen and respond to the voices of the underrepresented communities through our partnerships.
- Build stronger relationships with clubs to help further our inclusion goals.

Tackle discrimination

We call it out and back it up. From our leading reporting tools to targeted campaigns, we work to challenge abuse and show the benefits of accountability.

Our aims:

- Provide a benchmark service for people to report all forms of discrimination, including in the women's game.
- Work with the relevant organisations to ensure there are appropriate and consistent responses to offences and offenders.
- Develop new reporting partnerships and invest in understanding which communities are less likely to report.
- Work with partners to build trust in the reporting process by improving transparency and communicating the impact of reporting.



OUR COMMITMENTS

We know how we want to change the game. To achieve this, we must look at how we do things ourselves. We want to remove barriers, strengthen our day-to-day, and create the right environment for ongoing success.

Champion inclusion

Attract and develop a workforce that reflects the diversity we expect to see in the game. We want to foster a culture of trust, inclusion, and accountability, ensuring that our team and partners feel connected to our mission.

Invest in our people

Ensure all colleagues have the skills and capabilities they need to succeed in today's world. Together, we can build a learning culture that helps our people grow and be impactful.

Scale impact

Build a balanced and diversified funding portfolio. By developing innovative ways to generate revenue, we can increase financial sustainability and create new opportunities to scale our impact.

Focus on beneficiaries

Create a movement of beneficiaries to drive progress on our goals. We'll put those affected by discrimination at the heart of our advocacy, consistently uplifting their voices with authenticity, and accelerating their participation in decision-making.

Use tech, data and insights

We'll use data and AI to deepen football's understanding of discrimination and identify effective solutions. We'll prioritise data-driven audience engagement in our campaigns and commit to sharing insights with our partners. We'll also invest in digital technology to strengthen our work across education, uniting, influencing, and reporting.



OUR PARTNERS



PROFESSIONAL
GAME MATCH
OFFICIALS

