

# **SFA initiative to make football more representative and inclusive**

**The Scottish FA has called on football to unite to make the game more representative and inclusive than ever before as it launched its new equality framework.**

Football Unites invites stakeholders at every level of the game to come together and deliver meaningful change which will ensure Scottish football is more reflective and representative of the country's demographic.



EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND – OCTOBER 06: (L to R) Malcolm Kpedekpo (SFA Independent non-executive board Director) Pauline MacDonald Scotland (U17 Head Coach) and David McArdle (SFA Diversity and Inclusion Manager) during an SFA Equality Strategy Launch at the Oriam, on October 06, 2020, in Edinburgh, Scotland. (Photo by Bill Murray / SNS Group) Photo Courtesy of SFA

The strategy was launched at Oriam, Edinburgh, by Malcolm Kpedekpo, the Scottish FA's independent non-executive board director and former Aberdeen striker, Pauline MacDonald, the Scotland Women's Under-17 coach who is currently completing her UEFA Pro Licence, and David McArdle, the Scottish FA's Diversity and Inclusion Manager.

Football Unites aims to remove barriers to access and participate in football and a platform to educate the wider football community on the challenges and requirements for diverse groups to access the game, and allow their voices be

heard.



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The framework is based around four key strategic pillars:

LEAD by example in implementing diversity and inclusion practice

INSPIRE individuals and members to view the power of football within diversity and inclusion

EDUCATE the Scottish game on in improving the footballing diversity and inclusion environment

GROW the diverse representation within Scottish football

Malcolm Kpedekpo said: “The Football Unites framework is a well-researched, tangible and ambitious document produced by a group of experts in this subject and we ask everyone involved in our game to support it.

“I suffered racism as a player and want to help bring about change to the game: there is no place for discrimination of any kind within football or indeed wider society.

“We are making progress in Scottish football but we have a long way to go and this framework will help us bring about more change to ensure our game is more representative from the boardroom to the dressing room and everywhere in between.”

After achieving the prestigious Advanced Level for the Equality Standard for Sport in 2019 and becoming the only Football Association and one of only a few governing bodies in Scotland to achieve this award, the Scottish FA has re-affirmed its commitment to delivering sustainable change and greater diversity throughout the sport.

The Equality Standard for Sport was launched by the UK Sports Councils to address inequality within the sports sector and the Scottish FA achieved Foundation Level back in 2009, Preliminary Level in 2012 and the Intermediate Level in 2014.

David McArdle added: “The Scottish FA is committed to driving diversity and inclusivity at all levels of the game and this framework will be the catalyst to the next phase of our journey.

“Our aim is to ensure Scottish football is representative and reflective at all levels of the game, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

“This is a vital area of our national game and Football Unites will provide everyone within Scottish football with the tools required to create a safe and inclusive environment.”

Pauline MacDonald said: “We’ve made huge strides in recent years but we still have a lot of work to do to educate people within the game about this important subject.

“The development of the girls’ and women’s game in Scotland has provided growth opportunities for players and coaches to access football and hopefully this framework will provide us with the platform to bring about meaningful change to our

national sport and continue to improve awareness and increase participation numbers.”