



STRATEGIC PLAN

2027-2030

In 2030, ANU Women's Football Club is:

COMPETITIVE

Our teams are well coached, our players are developing and ANUWFC is respected as a strong football club at every level at which we compete.

INCLUSIVE

Cis women, trans women and non-binary people know they can participate safely and authentically at ANUWFC.

SUPPORTIVE

Players are supported physically, socially and emotionally, with strong welfare and safeguarding systems.

SUSTAINABLE

We aren't measuring success by how many players we can squeeze onto another team. Our membership matches our facilities, volunteers, finances and coaching capacity.

WELL-LED

Our governance is strong, knowledge survives committee turnover and volunteers are supported rather than exhausted.

INFLUENTIAL

ANUWFC uses its five decades of experience in women's football to advocate for a stronger and more inclusive game in Canberra.

CONNECTED

We work collaboratively with ANU Sport, Capital Football, Football Australia, sponsors, community organisations, alumni and other clubs.

ANU Women's Football Club Strategic Plan 2027-2030

Endorsed September 2026

Stronger together: Competitive. Inclusive. Sustainable.

Our vision

To be recognised as a leading women's football club in the ACT, providing an inclusive environment where players can compete, develop, belong and thrive.

Our mission

To provide women (cis and trans) and non-binary people with a safe, supportive and inclusive football environment that enables every member to develop their skills, participate at an appropriate level and achieve their football goals.

This builds on ANUWFC's existing mission and reflects the club's history as Australia's oldest women's football club, established in 1978 and led by and for women throughout its history.

Our values

- **Inclusivity:** everyone who is eligible to participate at ANUWFC should feel welcomed, respected, safe and able to be themselves.
- **Sportspersonship:** we compete hard, fairly and respectfully and represent ANUWFC positively on and off the field.
- **Community:** we invest in relationships, connection and opportunities that strengthen women and gender-diverse people within football.
- **Support:** we invest in the development, wellbeing and aspirations of our players, coaches and volunteers.

Our strategic ambition for 2030

By 2030, ANUWFC will be a sustainable, highly competitive and recognised leader in inclusive community football, providing outstanding football experiences without increasing the overall size of the club.

Rather than measuring success primarily through membership growth, ANUWFC will focus on:

- retaining players, coaches and volunteers
- improving competitive performance across divisions
- providing genuine development opportunities
- increasing coaching capability

- maintaining a safe and inclusive culture
- strengthening pathways into leadership, coaching and other football opportunities
- improving governance and financial sustainability
- contributing meaningfully to the future of women's and gender-diverse football in the ACT.

Strategic priority 1: Football excellence

Develop better players, better coaches and more competitive teams.

ANUWFC already provides football across Capital League Divisions 1-6, ranging from highly competitive football through to more social and beginner participation. Over 2027-2030, our priority will be improving the quality of football offered at every level rather than increasing the number of teams or players.

By 2030 we will:

- 1. Establish a consistent club-wide football philosophy.**
Develop an ANUWFC Football Framework setting out expectations for player development, coaching, playing style, selection, team culture and progression between divisions.
- 2. Strengthen our competitive performance.**
Aim for ANUWFC teams collectively to achieve stronger league results year-on-year, with a particular focus on establishing Divisions 1 and 2 as consistently competitive top-level Capital League teams.
- 3. Build a player development pathway within the club.**
Create clearer opportunities for players to move between divisions based on development and performance, supported by transparent selection processes and regular coach feedback.
- 4. Invest in coaching quality.**
Provide every coach with induction, development resources and access to appropriate Football Australia coach education, with financial support for qualifications where resources allow.
- 5. Develop future coaches from within ANUWFC.**
Encourage interested players and former players into coaching through mentoring, assistant coaching opportunities and subsidised accreditation.

Measures of success by 2030

- 100% of coached teams have an appointed coach before the commencement of each season.
- 100% of coaches complete annual club induction.
- A minimum of two players/former players enter coaching or assistant coaching roles each year.
- Player movement between divisions is supported through an established development and selection framework.
- Competitive performance across Divisions 1-2 demonstrates measurable improvement between the 2027 baseline and 2030.
- Player feedback indicates at least 85% feel they have opportunities to develop their football.

Strategic priority 2: Safe, inclusive and welcoming football

Protect ANUWFC's core identity and values.

ANUWFC exists to provide football for cis women, trans women and non-binary people, and its mission specifically centres safety, support, friendliness and inclusion.

By 2030 we will:

- 1. Embed safeguarding into everyday club operations.**
Develop and implement a Safeguarding and Reporting Guide, and make safeguarding part of annual coach, committee and volunteer induction.
- 2. Maintain explicit inclusion of cis women, trans women and non-binary people.**
Ensure policies, registration information, communications, uniforms, facilities advocacy and club culture consistently reflect the people ANUWFC exists to serve.
- 3. Strengthen player voice.**
Conduct an annual anonymous Player Experience Survey covering safety, belonging, coaching, competitiveness, communication and club culture.
- 4. Maintain accessible welfare pathways.**
Continue a clearly identified Player Welfare function and confidential escalation / reporting process independent of individual team coaches.
- 5. Build inclusion capability.**
Provide regular education for coaches, committee and other volunteers on inclusive practice, respectful behaviour, discrimination, harassment and safeguarding.

Measures of success by 2030

- 100% of coaches and committee members receive safeguarding and inclusion information annually.
- Safeguarding and Reporting Guide reviewed annually.
- Player Experience Survey conducted every season with findings reported to the Committee.
- At least 90% of surveyed members agree that *I feel safe at ANUWFC*.
- At least 90% agree that *I feel welcome and included at ANUWFC*.
- 100% of reported welfare matters are acknowledged and managed through established club procedures.
- Policies and communications undergo an annual inclusion review.

Strategic priority 3: Our people and leaders

Create opportunities for women and gender-diverse people to lead in football.

By 2030 we will:

- 1. Embed the Professional Pathways Mentoring Program.**
Run the program annually, connecting ANUWFC members with experienced women and gender-diverse people across sport, business and professional sectors.
- 2. Develop future club and community leaders.**
Create accessible pathways for members to move into committee, coaching, team management, refereeing and other football leadership roles.

3. Reduce dependence on individual volunteers.

Document key committee processes, establish handover resources and distribute responsibilities to prevent volunteer burnout and loss of institutional knowledge.

4. Invest in volunteer capability.

Provide induction, clear role descriptions and opportunities for volunteers to develop useful professional and leadership skills through their involvement with ANUWFC.

Measures of success by 2030

- Professional Pathways Mentoring delivered annually.
- Minimum of 10 mentoring relationships facilitated each year, subject to demand.
- Every committee portfolio has documented procedures and annual handover materials.
- All critical committee positions have at least one person familiar with the role beyond the incumbent.
- Annual volunteer survey demonstrates improving and maintaining satisfaction and manageable workload.
- At least five members each year undertake a new leadership, coaching, officiating or club-development opportunity.

Strategic priority 4: A sustainable and well-governed club

Stay strong without becoming bigger.

ANUWFC does not seek unrestricted membership growth during this strategic period. Our priority is maintaining a sustainable club size that matches available facilities, coaching resources, volunteer capacity and the quality of experience we can provide.

By 2030 we will:

1. Maintain sustainable membership levels.

Set team numbers according to coaching, facilities and operational capacity rather than maximising registrations.

2. Strengthen financial resilience.

Maintain appropriate reserves, diversify sponsorship and fundraising income to lessen dependence on registration profits and undertake annual budgeting against strategic priorities. The club already recognises sponsorship as essential to providing fields, coaches, referees, equipment and investment in player leadership, health and representation.

3. Keep football accessible.

Continue bursary and payment-plan options so financial hardship is not unnecessarily a barrier to participation. Consider further avenues, such as reduced/free tickets to club events, equipment/uniform loans etc.

4. Strengthen governance.

Maintain a rolling policy review calendar, annual risk assessment and clear committee responsibilities.

5. Use digital systems effectively.

Continue moving administration, records, communications and knowledge management into accessible shared digital systems rather than creating unnecessary new platforms.

6. Plan for volunteer sustainability.

Design club activities according to available volunteer capacity and assess new initiatives for workload as well as benefit.

Measures of success by 2030

- Overall membership remains within a Committee-approved sustainable range.
- Balanced annual operating budget.
- Heather Reid AM Bursary and/or equivalent financial-access support offered annually.
- 100% of key governance policies reviewed according to an established schedule.
- Annual risk register reviewed by the Committee.
- All core club functions have documented procedures.

Strategic priority 5: Player health, wellbeing and retention

Help people keep playing football.

Continue providing player welfare resources, insurance guidance and access to a weekly injury clinic.

By 2030 we will:

- 1. Prioritise injury prevention.**
Provide evidence-informed warm-up, recovery and injury-prevention resources across all teams, including coaches
- 2. Strengthen injury support.**
Maintain partnerships with appropriate allied-health providers wherever financially possible and ensure members understand insurance and return-to-play processes.
- 3. Monitor retention.**
Track why players and committee leave the club and identify preventable barriers to continued participation.
- 4. Support different life stages.**
Maintain pathways for competitive, developmental and more social participation so members aren't forced to leave ANUWFC simply because their football goals or circumstances change.
- 5. Promote mental wellbeing.**
Provide clear referral information and equip coaches and welfare volunteers to identify when members may need additional support without expecting club volunteers to perform clinical roles.

Measures of success by 2030

- Annual player retention rate monitored and reported.
- Exit feedback offered to departing players annually.
- Injury-prevention resources provided to every team.
- Player Wellbeing Plan completed, reviewed and shared with the club annually.
- At least 85% of players report satisfaction with the overall ANUWFC experience.

Strategic priority 6: Leadership in women's football

Use our voice, history and experience to improve the game.

By 2030 we will:

1. **Advocate for inclusive football.**
Work constructively with Capital Football, Football Australia, ANU Sport, and other clubs on issues affecting women (cise and trans) and non-binary participants.
2. **Champion women in football.**
Continue initiatives such as Women in Football events, storytelling, mentoring and recognition of women working across playing, coaching, refereeing, administration and leadership - not just at our club, but in the broader community
3. **Strengthen strategic relationships.**
Maintain productive relationships with Capital Football, ANU Sport, Football Australia, local clubs, government and community organisations.
4. **Advocate for appropriate facilities.**
Although ANUWFC does not directly control its facilities, we will advocate for safe, accessible and gender-inclusive facilities and equitable field access.

Measures of success by 2030

- ANUWFC is represented in relevant Capital Football consultations each year.
- At least one women-in-football development, advocacy or leadership activity delivered annually.
- Formal stakeholder engagement undertaken with ANU Sport and Capital Football at least annually.
- Facility requirements and concerns documented and communicated to relevant facility owners.
- ANUWFC continues to achieve progress through Football Australia's Club Changer program.

2027-2030 implementation roadmap

2027: Build the foundations

- Adopt the Strategic Plan
- Establish baseline player/coach/volunteer measures
- Develop Football Framework
- Embed Safeguarding and Reporting Guide
- Solidify annual Player Experience Survey process
- Establish governance and policy calendar.

2028: Develop our people

- Expand coach development
- Strengthen internal player pathways
- Embed mentoring
- Embed and review volunteer succession planning
- Analyse first year of improved retention and player experience data.

2029: Lift performance

- Review competitive outcomes

- Target identified football-development gaps
- Strengthen coach pipeline
- Deepen strategic partnerships and advocacy
- Undertake formal mid/end-strategy review.

2030: Consolidate and lead

- Demonstrate sustained competitive improvement, strong retention and culture measures
- Evaluate 2027-30 strategy
- Consult members
- Develop ANUWFC Strategic Plan 2031-34.

Looking ahead

ANUWFC has been creating opportunities for women (cis and trans) and gender-diverse people to play football, build community and belong for nearly five decades. As we look towards 2030, our ambition is not to become a bigger club, but a stronger one.

We will invest in our players, coaches, volunteers and community; strive to become more competitive on the field; continue to strengthen the systems that support our club off it; and protect the safe, welcoming and inclusive environment at the heart of ANUWFC.

We know our greatest strength is our people. By working together, staying true to our values and continuing to challenge ourselves to improve, we will ensure ANUWFC remains a place where women (cis and trans) and non-binary people can play, develop, lead, compete and belong, now and into the future.

Version control

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