



PLAY

LEAD YOUR WAY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

2026



Background

Lead Your Way is a program dedicated to cultivating a strong, supportive network of women in leadership roles across Community Football Clubs. Designed to inspire and connect emerging women or gender diverse people in leadership, it offers a unique platform for growth, collaboration, and empowerment.

The 2026 intake will remain exclusive to new participants. Clubs are encouraged to nominate or 'tap on the shoulder' women who are either newly appointed to leadership positions or show strong potential to step into such roles in the near future.

Through targeted development, confidence building, and practical leadership training, the program equips participants with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in committee roles and drive meaningful change within their clubs.

The Program

PURPOSE
Lead Your Way is an annual program that gives women and gender-diverse people volunteering in community football leadership positions the opportunity to level up their skills and network.
AUDIENCE
50 women or gender diverse participants selected per State or Territory, with the exception of Tasmania and Northern Territory, where 25-30 participants are accepted. We encourage Lead Your Way Alumni to join online webinars to continue to be involved and enhance their skills.
WHAT'S INVOLVED
To participate in the program, applicants must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify as a woman or gender diverse• Be over the age of 18 & reside within the State/ Territory of application• Hold a current leadership position as a committee volunteer within a community football club or umpire association, or be a future committee volunteer as part of succession planning• 5 positions are to be held for women of Multicultural and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Backgrounds (at least 2 from each cohort) To ensure a consistent and high quality experience nationwide, we encourage all States and Territories to adopt a shared program structure, while allowing flexibility to tailor elements to meet local needs and community context.
The program features a dynamic blend of online and in-person events, led by expert facilitators and football industry leaders, designed to inspire, educate, and empower participants.
Each State and Territory offering should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinars for accessible learning and insights to build practical leadership skills (min 2)• Networking events to foster connection and collaboration (min 2)• Program celebration to recognise growth and achievements (wrap up)

- National webinar to bring all participants around the country together (min 1)

Application Process

The National Team will organise one application form that will be shared with each S/T to distribute. This is to ensure the questions and application process is the same for everyone across the country.

- Applications will open 1 December 2025, providing sufficient time for people to apply during the Christmas break and early in the New year.
- Applications will close Jan 30 2026
- Selection process will require endorsement from local league/club the applicant is affiliated to and should list the role the candidate is in or will be in the future
- Applicants to be told of their selection by mid-February
- Programs to commence in March, concludes in October

Delivery: Calendar/ schedule

Below is an overview of suggested dates and themes to structure the program which include proposed topics identified to support participants at a committee level.

S/T W&G Leads are encouraged to make alterations to topics to suit local needs and what will best support participants in the room to excel within their roles.

Delivery	Theme	Dates	Participants	Responsible
1 In-person	Launch event	March	2026 cohort	S/T
2 Online	Introduction + Volunteer Support and Development	April	LYW alumni +2026	S/T
3 In-person	Conference	June	2026 cohort	S/T
4 National online	Women's coaching month + Navigating the football environment	July	LYW alumni +2026	NATIONAL
5 Online	Strategy & Tailored Communications	August	LYW alumni +2026	S/T
6 In-person	Celebration	October	2026 cohort	S/T

**Dates and content may be subject to change*

Other topics that could be substituted for the webinars:

1. Revenue and fundraising
2. Partnerships and grants workshop
3. Club Governance and Management
4. Member protection and Integrity
5. Health and Safety
6. Volunteer and Community Engagement
7. W&G Recruitment and Retention

Delivery: Online Webinars

- 60–90-minute webinars
- Hosted by S/T W&G Experience Leads
- Topics focused on developing their toolkit to effectively lead committee
- Agenda, pre-workshop survey and RSVP to be sent 1-2 weeks prior with all webinar dates sent at the start of the program
- Post-session feedback

Delivery: Conference

Example conference structure: Workshops can be altered to suit and accommodate facilitators.

Conference theme: We encourage the theme of the day to be all about the participants and developing themselves as leaders. While the intention is to also upskill for their role, development of the participants confidence and how they show up as themselves to be authentic leaders is a key focus.

TIME	AGENDA
8.30AM	Arrival, sign in and networking
9.00AM	Light breakfast served, coffee and tea
9.30AM	Welcome
10.00AM	Tour: Behind the scenes
10:45AM	Developing your self-worth and being an authentic leader
11:45AM	Partnerships and grants workshop
12.30PM	Lunch and networking
1.30PM	Developing your confidence in leadership workshop
2.30PM	Keynote address
3.30PM	Afternoon tea break
3.45PM	Round table discussions
4.45PM	Conference closing
5.00PM	Conference concludes

Delivery: In-person events

Launch event	Conference	Celebration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-hour event • External venue • Guest speaker/ Q&A panel • Networking among group • Invitation/RSVP sent • Post-session feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day event • Held at S/T office or external venue that feels exclusive and exciting • Expert facilitators • Catering provided • Invitation/RSVP sent • Post-conference feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2–3-hour event • Could be linked to an AFLW or Community Game • Guest speaker/ panel • Invitation/ RSVP • Post-program feedback

Responsibility

TASK	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
Nomination form	National
Selection of participants	S/T
Promotion, eDM's	National GDE / supported locally
Themes for each workshop and conference	S/T
State workshop invitations & RSVP's (templates provided)	S/T
National webinar invitation & RSVP, pre-program survey, post-program feedback	National

Resource toolkit

Will be provided in October and will include templates you can adjust and distribute:

- Letter acknowledging acceptance into program
- Invitation to launch event
- Information regarding launch
- Online and in-person dates
- Online session invites and presenter info/ agenda
- Conference invitation
- Conference information
- Conference agenda
- Celebration invitation
- Celebration information

Funding

Each State and Territory's funding amount will be outlined in your W&G funding guidelines.

In scope: Program delivery expenses (facilitation & venue for 3 in person and 2 online workshops)

Out of scope: Purchase of additional items/merchandise (hoodies, bags, books, pens etc)



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