

|  |
| --- |
| In Conversation – Change Our Game Champions  Peter Filopoulos, CEO Football Victoria |
| Video transcript |

**[Change Our Game Logo]**

**[In Conversation – Change Our Game Champion. Peter Filopoulos, CEO Football Victoria**

**Peter Filopoulos:**

My name is Peter Filopoulos. I'm the Chief Executive Officer of Football Victoria, and I'm a Change Our Game Champion.  
  
**Interviewer:**  
  
Peter, welcome to our Change Our Game Champion. Women's football, and football generally, massive organization, 350,000 participants, 340 clubs. What sort of percentage of those are women?  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Well, at the moment, 19% across players, referees, and coaches. We've set an ambition, David, for 50% gender equity by 2027.  
  
**Interviewer:**

Wow. 2027. That'll come along quickly. That's a massive improvement. That will have huge implications on everything, and pressures, as well.  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Absolutely. That's what we're talking to government about. That's what we're talking to Football Victoria boardroom about, and FFA boardroom, is that it's not just about the participation in women and girls. It's about how do we develop leaders in coaching, in referees, in administrators. Our biggest growth is coming from women and girls.   
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

On the back of the Matildas, they're playing in the World Cup in Paris this year. We're expecting them to do well. Our young Matildas are coming up at a rate of knots. Our development pathways that are producing some great, talented women and girls. It's exciting times.  
  
**Interviewer:**  
  
That must put a lot of pressure on facilities.  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Sure.  
  
**Interviewer:**

Because clubs, historically, that are male dominated, and the club committees are male dominated in many instances. How do you change that situation?  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

So again, we're having some very solid discussions with governments at all levels, federal, state, and local government, about how we increase capacity on existing fields through artificial field upgrades, floodlights, and gender equity change rooms and club rooms. That is at front of mind for us in terms of how we build capacity in our existing infrastructure and create new infrastructure, because we're already suffering from saturation point with what we're doing already.   
  
And with much of the growth coming from women and girls, we need to build capacity in our pitches. We're going to do that through artificial fields. We need gender equity change rooms, because we know very well that women need different types of arrangements for their dressing rooms. We need to lift capability in club rooms and also in terms of administration of clubs. You know? We need more women coaches. We need more women referees. It's 19% across the board at the moment, roughly.  
  
We've got a very bold ambition that we've set with FFA, 50/50 gender equity by 2027. We want to get the World Cup here in 2023. We want the Matildas to continue to succeed, because they are really driving the participation growth.   
  
Samantha Kerr, for instance, is a household name now. You know? And that's terrific. She's terrific to watch. The quality of the W league is exceptional. It's a really good quality game to watch now. And, you know, it's 14 years in the making. We didn't become number six in the world by chance. I think football should be given some credit for getting the Matildas and women's football to where it is today.  
  
**Interviewer:**

No doubt about that. Do you still find that there are roadblocks at the local level and even at the state board level where, "Why are we doing this?"  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Yeah, yeah. Why I'm really excited about being involved in Changing Our Game is if I think it's a culture shift, and Bridie O'Donnell at the state government, sport and recreation does a terrific job in that. It's a culture shift. It's a mental shift. It's a constant, you've got to work at it. It's not an easy task. We need to develop women at all levels, including administration and boardrooms, because they can play a key role with our future development.  
  
**Interviewer:**

How important is the government investment?  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Oh, look, it's critical at all levels, federal, state, and local government to contribute to that culture shift. Last year we were fortunate with the local government here in Victoria, and we unlocked about $25 million in the World Game Facilities Fund, which was a dedicated fund for football. We managed to unlock that because, primarily, on the back of the needs that we had for women and girls in terms of gender equity facilities, and increasing capacity at our existing facilities, and creating new facilities. We've managed to leverage that investment to $128 million by leveraging it with local councils and other partners. We wouldn't have been able to do that unless we had demonstrated that we needed to build capacity in our existing facilities to meet the growing demands for women and girls.  
  
**Interviewer:**

You've only just started. You've only just become involved in the program. When we check in at the end of the year, what sort of progress do you think you'll have made? What are you hoping to have made?  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

Well, I hope that I make a contribution in that I've contributed to that culture shift, and I've led by example, within my own environment, and I've inspired people outside my own environment to contribute to what we need to do, and met our aspirations as a fraternity, as an industry, led by Bridie O'Donnell and her team.  
  
**Peter Filopoulos:**

My name is Peter Filopoulos. I'm the Chief Executive Officer of Football Victoria, and I'm a Change Our Game Champion.

**[Change our Game logo]**

**[State Government of Victoria logo]**

[Authorised by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne. Spoken by D. Culbert and P. Filopoulos]

To receive this publication in an accessible format [email Change Our Game](mailto:changeourgame@sport.vic.gov.au) <changeourgame@sport.vic.gov.au>

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, April 2019