

PORTRAYAL GUIDELINES



Always moving forward to gender equal, diverse and inclusive representation in paddlesport



INTRODUCTION



Sport plays a powerful role in shaping cultural norms and perceptions about gender. How athletes are shown, talked about, and highlighted influences audiences' understanding.

To challenge historical stereotypes and biases, the Portrayal Guidelines promote representation that values sporting achievement, professionalism, diversity and respect, regardless of gender.

These guidelines emphasise that portrayal includes not only what is shown, such as multimedia content, but also the language, narrative framing, editorial choices, visibility and airtime given to people within paddle sport.

The purpose of these guidelines is to support gender-equal, fair, and inclusive representation of all athletes and participants in sport across communications.

These guidelines establish a checklist for the media and wider paddle sport community, including Continental and National Federations in their coverage of the sport.

Officials are also encouraged to apply the same criteria when taking pictures.

EQUALITY IN VISIBILITY

- Promote fair and inclusive representation of women and men across content, imagery, commentary and editorial decision-making.
- Equal importance should be given to events, interviews, features and news about athletes of both genders.



NEUTRAL AND RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE

- Use gender-neutral or correct gender-specific terms appropriately (e.g., "athlete" rather than outdated or diminutive phrases).
- Communication should avoid language that reinforces gender stereotypes or diminishes athletic skill.
- Avoid emphasising personal characteristics unrelated to performance (such as appearance, clothing or family roles), particularly when such details are not consistently highlighted for all genders.



BALANCED IMAGERY AND STORYTELLING

- Photographs and video content should reflect athletic ability, determination, competitive spirit and achievements rather than focusing on physical appearance, aesthetics or traditional gender roles.
- Select images and narrative angles that portray athletes in empowered positions – competing, training, striving, and succeeding –instead of reinforcing passive or secondary roles.
- Whether in an institutional setting such as a Board meeting or at a competition venue, every effort should be made to ensure gender parity in photographs and video content.
- When using artificial intelligence (AI) to generate or enhance imagery, prompts, inputs and selection processes should be designed to promote gender balance.



VOICE DIVERSITY

- Include a mix of voices in interviews, panels, and expert commentary.
- Efforts should be made to ensure gender balance among commentators, analysts and spokespeople to broaden perspectives and have narratives evenly represented by both genders.



CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES AND BIAS

- Be aware of unconscious bias in content. For example, framing women's achievements in relation to men or emphasising gender first instead of sporting context.
- Avoid using clichéd or gendered language that trivialises an athlete's performance. Instead, highlight skill, results, and competitive excellence.



ACTIONS

- Use checklists, created by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), to check your content, imagery, words and voices to ensure equal treatment.



Check your content

Equal editorial attention, where possible



Ask yourself:

- ☐ Are there considerably more stories and profiles of one gender over another?
- ☐ How are you framing your questions and storytelling? Consider if they are gender-driven or sport-driven.
- ☐ Are you packaging your content and presenting women's and men's sport with the same enthusiasm and quality?

Check your imagery

Be balanced and steer away from gender stereotypes



Ask yourself:

- ☐ Is there a gender balance across the images being used?
- ☐ Are the athletes/officials represented in an active and empowered position, and equally visible and prominent?
- ☐ Is the focus of the images on performance and sport instead of aesthetics?

Check your words

Use neutral language that can be used for all individuals and groups of individuals



Ask yourself:

- ☐ Are you using masculine forms (he/him) in generic references, i.e. when referring to an unspecified group of people? Or Being gender-neutral (they/them)?
- ☐ Are you using descriptive words and expressions that can apply to anyone?
- ☐ Are you comparing gender, or implying the superiority of one gender over another?

Check your 'voices'

Diversify your storytellers and propose gender-balanced and diverse panels, spokespeople, trainers, role models, etc.



Ask yourself:

- ☐ What voices are being heard and in what capacity (e.g. as an authority or expert)?
- ☐ Are your storytellers from different genders and backgrounds?

These guidelines are aligned with the
IOC's Portrayal Guidelines: Gender-equal, fair and inclusive representation in sport.