



MODULES

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We make a binding commitment to develop gender-inclusive sports programs.

What does innovation have to do with trans, intersex, and non-binary (TIN) participation in sports?

1. To create inclusive programs, you need to know about the lived experiences of TIN people.

*“It would be so cool to finally go swimming again,” says Michael to his friend Sophie. They are planning an activity for the next time they get together. Michael is transmasculine, uses the pronoun “he,” and hasn’t been swimming since he was a kid. Since puberty, he has felt uncomfortable about his upper body. On top of that, he is overweight and has frequently had to endure harassment about his body. These two factors have caused him to avoid swimming pools for the past 20 years, even though he really enjoyed swimming in the past. “Do you know about the trans*inter* swimming program?” asks Sophie. “My partner Selma goes there all the time. She normally doesn’t feel comfortable at swimming pools either. But since trans, intersex, and non-binary people helped develop the project, they took a lot of things into consideration, like the way they organize the changing rooms.”*



Leveraging innovation to create accessible sports programs that encourage participation by TIN people

Needs assessment: As your organization begins to think about TIN participation, you will be faced with two initial questions: a) How can you adjust your current programs to better suit the needs of TIN people? b) If you cannot change certain programs to allow TIN people to participate, what kinds of programs can you develop to cater specifically to TIN participants?

Designing programs: If you have decided to create sports programs specifically for TIN people (e.g., a TIN swimming program), the next question is how you will proceed to structure and design that program. The following questions may help you take the first steps: a) How can we make these programs as easily accessible as possible? b) What needs of TIN people do we want to focus on specifically (e.g., feeling comfortable in the changing room)?

Involving TIN people: If possible, consult TIN people to help answer these questions. For example, you could perform an anonymous survey of TIN people to find out more about their needs or actively recruit TIN people to take part in innovation working groups. There is most likely a TIN group in your area or in the nearest large city that you can contact for assistance. It can also be helpful to consult studies on the topic, work together with other organizations, or use TIN-inclusive programs from other organizations as models for your own work. We have compiled a list of links for you at the end of this educational module.

2. Creating inclusive programs requires structures for innovative development

“So...what do we do now?” When the chairperson of the board asks this question, Tino, the deputy chair, can only shrug his shoulders. The other cis men on the board seem at a loss. At the last general assembly, everyone was in agreement about implementing the Charter for Gender Diversity in Sports at their club. For their first step, they decided they wanted to create a sports program exclusively for TIN participants. Now, they have reached that point on the agenda and the meeting has come to a standstill. “Maybe we could just table that point for now and come back to it at the next board meeting – somebody might have a great idea by then,” suggests Robert, the treasurer. Everyone nods in relief, and they move on to the next point on the agenda.

Simply deciding to implement the Charter will not automatically make your organization more inclusive. In practice, it is often the case that although there is a broad willingness to make changes, change processes can become bogged down when it comes time to take specific actions. These next steps require both a pragmatic spirit as well as creativity and time, which is seldom sufficient at tightly scheduled board meetings. If worse comes to worst, the work needed to make these concrete changes will continue to be postponed over and over again, as clearly illustrated in the example.

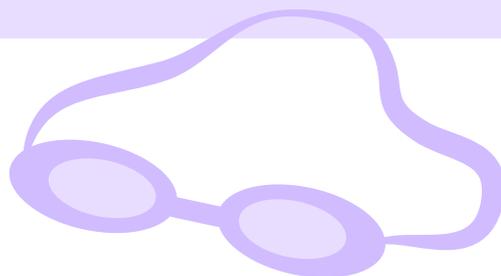


Creating structures to foster innovation

Assign responsibility for innovation: To make sure that you do not lose momentum when creating new programs, we recommend nominating one or more officers to take responsibility for innovation processes. One option would be to found an innovation working group. This working group would be assigned the task of generating, developing, designing, and initiating the implementation of ideas for gender-inclusive sports programs.

Attitude toward innovation at your organization: Associations, organizations, and large groups all tend to be slow and stubborn regarding change. Maybe you have experienced moments at your organization in which suggestions or ideas for changes have been met with skepticism or disapproval. On the one hand, it is important that your organization generally has a positive attitude toward change (e.g., a willingness to allocate resources for change processes, codification of innovation in association statutes, etc.). On the other hand, critics and skeptics must also be included in any changes, and ideally, they should have the opportunity to take an active role in change processes. This demonstrates your organization's willingness to listen to all opinions, which can ultimately encourage critics to open up to new changes.

Think about the end of the project at the beginning: At the start of the project, think about the end goal of your innovation. What could be a benchmark or indicator that a particular measure has been successfully implemented? Stay focused on your goals and benchmarks even during difficult parts of the process, so you can successfully complete your projects in the end. Inclusion and anti-discrimination are work – but worth the effort.





Questions for consideration

- What TIN-inclusive sport programs are you familiar with? What do you like about the programs; what would you do differently?
- What options do you have for introducing new program ideas to your organization?
- What is your organization's attitude toward change?
- What steps are needed to implement new ideas? What hurdles do new ideas have to overcome?
- What do you know about the lived experience of TIN people? How can you use this information to define parameters for sports programs?
- How could you involve the expertise of TIN people without taking advantage of them?
- What is your organization already doing well when it comes to TIN-inclusivity? What things can you be proud of?
- What areas could benefit from more TIN-inclusivity?

Additional reading:

Links to TIN-inclusive sports programs:

- OUT*side Programm Seitenwechsel Berlin <https://seitenwechsel-berlin.de/aktuelles/outside-programm>
- Trans*-Inter*-Schwimmen Seitenwechsel Berlin <https://seitenwechsel-berlin.de/sportangebote/transinterschwimmen> (German only)
- Pfeffersport:
 - Fitness für Queers und Friends <https://pfeffersport.de/sport/mariannenarena/fitnesskurse> (German only)
 - TIGERTABS - Thaiboxen für Trans, Inter und Queers <https://pfeffersport.de/sport/mariannenarena/fitnesskurse> (German only)
- Trans-Inter-Schwimmen SC Janus Köln <https://sc-janus.de/2020/06/24/trans-inter-schwimmen>



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A project of



Sponsored by the
Senate Department
for Interior and
Sports
(Teilhabeprogramm)

