



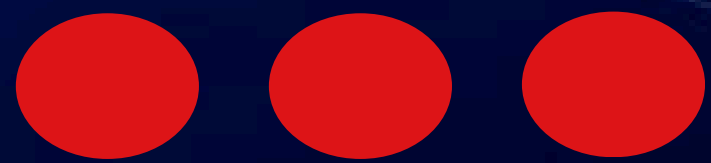
Bendigo Bank

2025-2028

RIDDELL DISTRICT FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028

“Providing football and netball players, coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers a place to grow, develop, compete and connect within a large sporting community.”





# CONTENT

- Introduction
- Strategic Pillars, Vision, Mission
- Values
- Key Goals
- Planning Process
- The Plan
- Geographic Coverage
- Current Position
- Future Position
- SWOT analysis
- Strategic Pillar - Participation
  - Junior Pathways
- Strategic Pillar - Facilities Development
- Strategic Pillar - League and Club Development
- Strategic Pillar - Community Engagement
- Summary







# INTRODUCTION

The Riddell District Football Netball League is one of the oldest community football leagues in Australia with ties all the way back to 1872.

The League is currently made up of 26 clubs across Junior Boys, Junior Girls, Senior Men's and Senior Women's Football as well as Junior Netball and Senior Netball competitions.

The clubs elect an RDFNL Board of Directors to assist with:

- Setting the strategic direction of the league and its implementation, within the constitutional framework.
- Acting in the best interests of the league and its stakeholders at all times.
- Good governance and compliance.

In turn the Directors, through the Chairperson, delegate responsibility for day-to-day operations to the Chief Executive Officer.

- Overseeing the operations of the league.
- Ensuring member clubs and stakeholders are kept informed on all relevant matters.

The RDFNL Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer have developed a new strategic plan comprising 2025 through to 2028.

Member clubs and stakeholders are encouraged to review the plan and contribute to its further development.



**Strategic Plan 2025-2028**



# STRATEGIC PILLARS AND PRIORITIES

- Participation – Retention and growth
  - Facilities Development
- League and Club Development
  - Community Engagement

## RDFNL VISION

“To be the best community sports organisation in Victoria”.

## RDFNL MISSION

“Providing football and netball players, coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers a place to grow, develop, compete and connect within a large sporting community.”



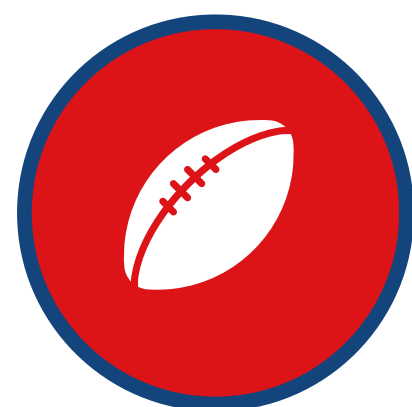
**Strategic Plan 2025-2028**



# RDFNL VALUES

Expectations to lead to success

The RDFNL Values are the foundation for what the league cares about most. It provides a common purpose that all employees and members are encouraged to understand, work towards and live by each day undertaking tasks within the league.



## **INTEGRITY**

Integrity in all of the RDFNL competitions and administration.



## **INCLUSIVITY**

So that everyone feels safe participating, attending, coaching or umpiring at RDFNL football and netball matches.



## **TRANSPARENCY**

We are honest with our clubs and transparent with our decision making. Our clubs get a say on major issues.



## **INNOVATION**

We are at the forefront of innovation in the community football and netball space.



# KEY GOALS

- Growing involvement and participation in all aspects of football and netball.
- Seeing whole community participation and enjoyment in football and netball in a safe and welcoming environment.
- Creating the opportunity for individuals to excel – be it as a player, coach, or official.
- Positioning the RDFNL brand to be recognised and respected among the wider sporting community.
- Engage with relevant stakeholders to help shape the future of the League.

Pride in the league values including Transparency, Integrity, Inclusivity and Innovation.





# PLANNING PROCESS

The Board of the Riddell District Football Netball League along with staff input and feedback have developed this Strategic Plan. This plan is to be a working document that will be updated as demand necessitates.

The plan represents a wide range of outcomes and strategies that will be ongoing over the course of the next four years. There will be flexibility and scope to re-evaluate strategies and outcomes if the direction of the League requires it given it has recently experienced growth in its Senior ranks.

As the Riddell District Football Netball League strives for excellence and continual improvement, the plan will be refined to reflect learning's and experiences along the journey, this is essential to ensure the League continues to lead the way as one of the premier sporting organisations in the local area.

The Strategic Plan of the Riddell District Football Netball League is aligned with the priorities of the AFL Victoria Strategic Plan, to facilitate goal setting and optimum development and participation growth opportunities.

In that regard, the RDFNL is committed to achieving outcomes in line with AFL Victoria and Netball Victoria's Vision Statements.



**Strategic Plan 2025-2028**





# THE PLAN

To provide direction for the development and administration of football and netball at senior and junior levels throughout the Riddell District Football Netball League and any potential growth areas.

The RDFNL has developed a Strategic Plan for the period 2025 - 2028.

A strong Strategic Plan will underpin the accountability it has to its member clubs and the direction it will take to achieve these goals:

- To the stakeholders of the RDFNL, whether playing, coaching, umpiring, volunteering or supporting – to ensure that their participation is an enjoyable and a rewarding experience.
- For sustaining, growing, developing and promoting football at all levels and the provision of the countless prospects that it has on offer – both on and off the field.
- To ensuring that all clubs and the facilities it uses, are utilized to their full potential.



# WHERE IS THE RDFNL NOW?

- 11 Senior Men's Football Netball Clubs
  - Two clubs currently without Under 19.5 football teams
  - Four clubs currently without D grade netball teams
- Two Divisions of Girls/Women's Football
  - An Eight team Youth Girls Competition
  - A seven team Senior Women's Competition
- 119 Junior football teams across six age groups and 14 Divisions
  - 30 x U9 (Wednesday & Sunday Competitions)
    - 23 x U11 (A, B & C)
    - 23 x U13 (A, B & C)
    - 19 x U15 (A, B & C)
    - 8 x YG
    - 16 x U17 (A & B)
- 98 Junior netball teams across five age groups and 12 Divisions
  - 9 x 9&U
  - 17 x 11&U (D1 & D2)
  - 25 x 13&U (D1, D2 & D3)
  - 25 x 15&U (D1, D2 & D3)
  - 22 x 17&U (D1, D2 & D3)







# WHERE IS THE RDFNL NOW? (CONTINUED)

- Four full time employees.
- Riddell Umpires Association is a separate entity who administer football umpiring across the league. The Association has experienced a decline in Umpires since 2015, down from 164 officiating Umpires in 2015 to 119 officiating Umpires in 2024.
- RDFNL supply RDFNL Panel Umpires across A B grade and 19 and Under netball competitions.



# WHERE DO THE RDFNL WANT TO BE?

- 12 Senior Men & Women's Football Netball Clubs

- 12 Clubs with Under 19.5's, Reserves, Senior Women's and Senior Men's teams.

- 13 Clubs with five Divisions of Netball, A, B, C, D & 19U netball teams.

- Four Divisions of Girls/Women's Football

- Minimum of eight teams of Girls only teams in an Under 10 Competition.

- Minimum of six teams of Girls only teams in an Under 13 Competition.

- Minimum of six teams of Girls only teams in an Under 16 Competition.

- All 12 Senior Men's teams having a Senior Women's team plus Melton & Mt Alexander Falcons, 14 teams in RDFNL Senior Women's.

- 231 Junior football teams across eight age groups across 19 Divisions

- 60 x U9 teams (Wednesday & Sunday Competitions) all 18 Clubs who field U9 teams to have minimum three teams each with some having four.

- 8 x U10 Girls only teams.

- 40 x U11 mixed teams (A, B, C & D) all 15 Clubs to have minimum two U11 teams with some having three.

- 36 x U13 mixed teams (A, B, C & D) all 15 Clubs to have minimum two U13 teams with some having three.

- 6 x U13 Girls only teams.

- 30 x U15 Boys teams (A, B & C) all 15 Clubs to have minimum one team with some having two or three.

- 6 x U16 Girls only teams.

- 25 x U17 Boys teams (A, B & C) all 15 Clubs to have minimum one team each with some having two.







# WHERE DO THE RDFNL WANT TO BE? (CONTINUED)

- 179 Junior netball teams across seven age groups across 17 Divisions
- 35 x 9&U mixed teams (A, B & C) with each Club having two teams and some having three.
- 35 x 11&U mixed teams (A, B & C) with each Club having two teams and some having three.
- 35 x 13&U mixed teams (A, B & C) with each Club having two teams and some having three
- 10 x 13&U Boys teams.
- 30 x 15&U Girls teams (A, B & C) with each Club having two teams.
- 8 x 16&U Boys teams.
- 26 x 17&U Girls teams (A, B & C) with each Club having one team and most having two teams.
- Require additional staff with a minimum 40% split of women and gender diverse people.
- Financially sound and sustainable
- Umpiring operations. The Association to have 225 officiating Umpires.
- RDFNL supply RDFNL Panel Umpires across all five Senior Divisions of Netball as well as 17&U Competitions.





## STRENGTHS:

- Well recognised brand
- Competitive depth of Senior Football and Netball competitions
- Geographical footprint = can attract clubs and players from several league
- Growing participation numbers
- Innovative organisation to enhance participant and community experience
- Sound financial position
- Strong sponsorship support
- Premier league status
- Destination league for external clubs
- Strong social media presence

## WEAKNESSES:

- Not present on all social media platforms to maximise reach. Majority of participants are Juniors who use social media the most of any age group.
  - The Junior fixture is not always suitable for Junior clubs with teams across multiple grades
- Depth of umpiring numbers to cater for a growing League participation base.
  - Current junior girls football age groups.
  - Not all facilities are inclusive of all genders contributing to unsafe match day environments



## SWOT ANALYSIS

### OPPORTUNITIES:

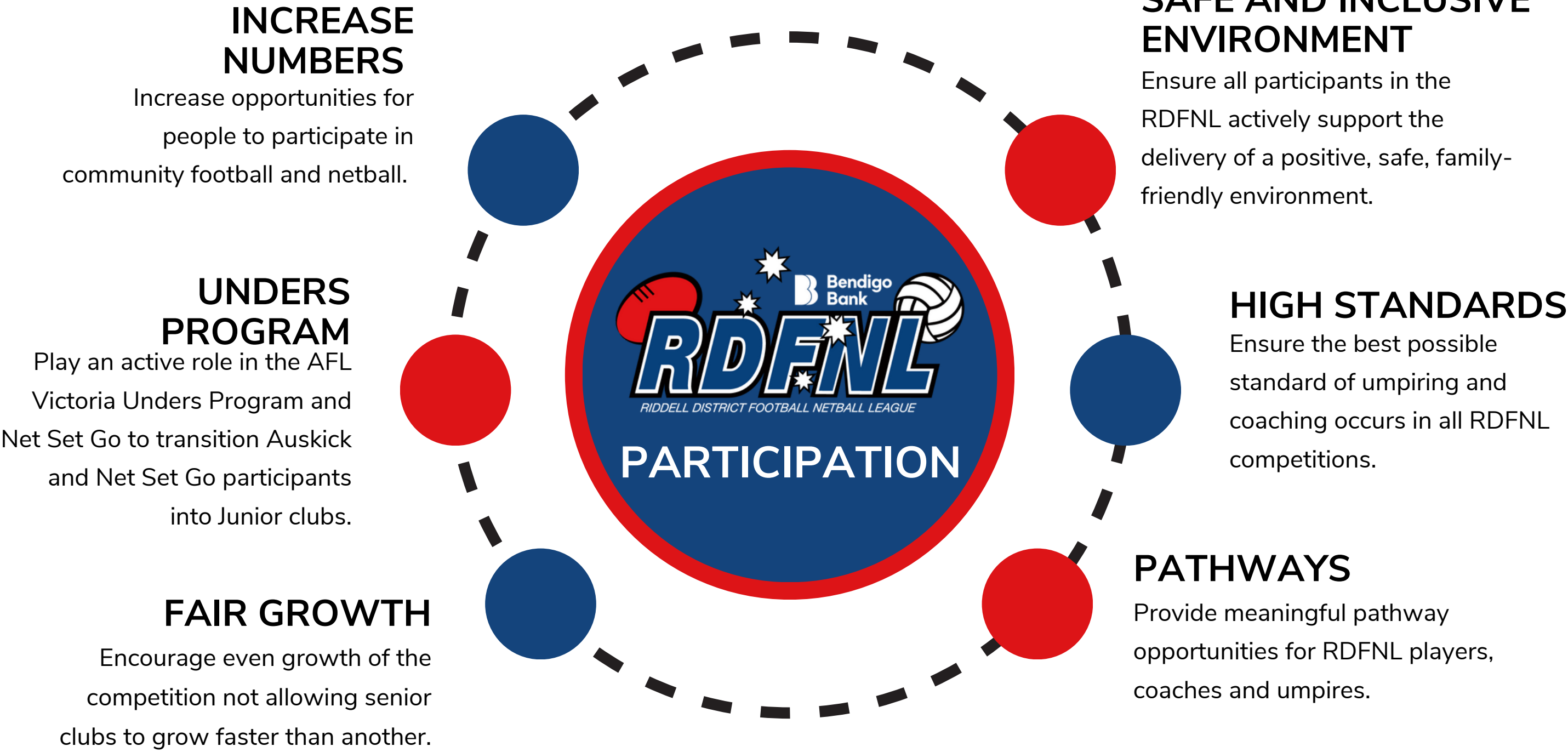
- Room for further growth in the Senior and Junior competitions in both Football and Netball
- Consolidating age groups in the Junior and Youth Girls competitions to retain players
- Finalise signatory process for Women and Girls Charter as well as Gender Equity & Inclusion Action Plan and Suicide Postvention Plan.
- Engage Junior clubs outside of the RDFNL to play in competitions they don't participate in
- Increase the commercial footprint of the RDFNL
- Advocate for improved facilities for member clubs
- Administer Riddell Umpires operations and game allocations

### THREATS:

- Surrounded by several neighbouring major leagues
  - Potential club unrest
- Not capitalising on the population increase within growth areas of the league
- Other Junior sports participation levels (i.e.: basketball, soccer)
  - Cost of living pressures on parents of Junior participants.
  - Out growing facilities within the region.



# STRATEGIC PILLAR







# KEY POINTS

## PARTICIPATION GROWTH

Statistics on the RDFNL's Growth since COVID-19

- Approximately 5040 participants in 2019 to approximately 5660 in 2024. This will continue to grow in 2025.
- Creation of Women's and Junior/Youth Girls competitions.
- Expanded Netball competitions with the introduction of 9 and Under and D Grade.
- Provided \$XXX for clubs through SCIF and Telstra Footy Country Grant programs to assist in increasing player numbers.
- Increased commercial footprint by \$73,000 through collaborative relationships with partners.
- Fielded an Under 13 Girls and Senior Women's Interleague teams for the first time in 2024.
- Increased accredited Football Coaches from XXX to 292 in 2024.





# FOOTBALL |



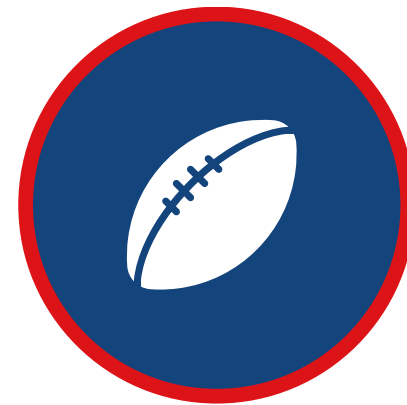
## Participation Development Pathway

The RDFNL is proud of its pathway for those players, coaches and umpires wishing to take their football to the next level with aspirations of playing, coaching or officiating at the highest level.



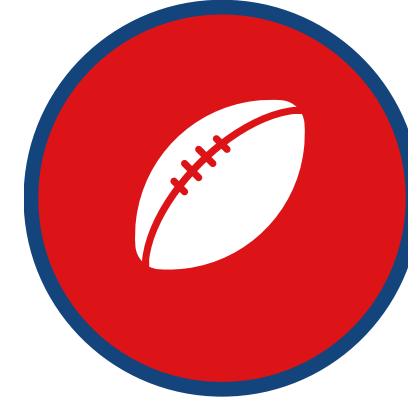
### AUSKICK

Auskick and Superkick are the AFL's official junior game development program for 5-10 year olds and their families. Auskick is a national program which provides an environment where children of all abilities can achieve and reap the rewards of skill development, enhanced self esteem, social cooperation and grassroots sports participation.



### JUNIOR COMPETITION

Junior Boys and Girls competitions for all age groups are offered by the Riddell District Football Netball League. All levels of skill are catered for through the grading process applied to the fixtures of the Junior competitions. The League runs Junior competitions from Under 9's through to Under 17's and Youth Girls.



### REP PROGRAMS

Players are selected through the League Junior Football and Netball competitions to compete in an Under 13 Round Robin, and the AFL Victoria Metro Junior Development Series. This is the pinnacle of Junior representation and can present opportunities with the Calder Cannons, Western Jets, Bendigo Pioneers and AFL club pathway and NGA programs.



### COATES LEAGUE

State based elite Boys and Girls competitions that allow for a greater level of opposition. The Calder Cannons, Western Jets and Bendigo Pioneers are all programs that provide development progression opportunities for RDFNL Junior players. Games played across the whole state and this is the highest competition available to Junior players of the League.



# NETBALL



## Participation Development Pathway

The RDFNL is proud of its pathway for those players, coaches and umpires wishing to take their netball to the next level with aspirations of playing, coaching or officiating at the highest level.



### NET SET GO

Net Set Go is Netball Victoria's official junior game development program for 5-10 year olds and their families. Net Set Go is a national program which provides an environment where children of all abilities can achieve and reap the rewards of skill development, enhanced self esteem, social cooperation and grassroots sports participation.



### JUNIOR COMPETITION

Junior Boys and Girls competitions for all age groups are offered by the Riddell District Football Netball League. All levels of skill are catered for through the grading process applied to the fixtures of the Junior competitions. The League runs Junior competitions from 9 and Under to 17 & Under with 12 divisions in 2024.



### REP PROGRAMS

Players are selected through the League Junior Football and Netball competitions to compete in the Netball Victoria Association Championship event. This is the pinnacle of Junior representation and can present opportunities to be talent identified and invited to the state pathway academies.



### STATE PATHWAY

State based elite netball training and competition that allow for a greater level of opposition. This program provides development progression opportunities for RDFNL Junior players to make the transition to National teams. Games played across the whole state and this is the highest competition available to Junior players of the League.



# STRATEGIC PILLAR

**REGIONAL**  
Develop a regional facilities strategy to identify opportunities for new and improved facilities for our sports and clubs.

**GAPS**  
Identify facility gaps in club venues and work to develop solutions..

**ADVOCACY**  
Continue to advocate for facility development to AFL Victoria and all levels of government.



**CLUB ASSISTANCE**  
Assist clubs in developing facility improvement projects and identifying Grant funding opportunities.

**FACILITY PLANS**  
Collaborate with LGA's across the League to provide input into their Facilities strategies.

**SUPPORT**  
Provide letters of support for our member clubs to apply for facility upgrades and funding.



# STRATEGIC PILLAR

**CLUBS**  
Ensure we have a vibrant league of well administered and sustainable clubs.

**VOLUNTEERS**  
Provide club volunteers with support and professional development opportunities.

**BENCH MARKING**  
Monitor RDFNL club performance and benchmark results to ensure the sustainability of the RDFNL and its clubs.



**ADMINISTRATION**  
Develop, maintain, and enforce a set of policies, by laws and standards with the league operations manual in conjunction with the National Community Handbook.

**RECOGNITION AWARDS**  
Celebrate all volunteers and recognise outstanding achievements.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**  
Ensure there is a Club of the Year award for Seniors and Junior Clubs to encourage good practices on and off field.

# STRATEGIC PILLAR

## BRAND AWARENESS

Focus on the promotion of our game and league through innovative communication tools.

## DEVELOPMENT

Develop a growth strategy including the identification of opportunities for new clubs/teams.

## VOLUNTEERS

Provide volunteers and coaches with support and educational opportunities.

## SUPPORT UMPIRES

Continue to support the Riddell Umpires Association and our Netball Panel to provide a safe and respectful environment for all umpires.



## CLUB ASSISTANCE

Provide assistance to all existing clubs, enabling them to be successful, with specific support provided to 'at risk' clubs.

## RELATIONS

Strengthen our relationships with clubs and other key stakeholders through consistent engagement and consultation.

## FAIR COMPETITIONS

Ensure competitions are as fair and balanced as possible and never compromised.

## BEHAVIOURS

Enforce match day behaviours that reflect community expectations and values, especially towards umpires and volunteers.



# RDFNL MISSION

“Providing football and netball players, coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers a place to grow, develop, compete and connect within a large sporting community.”

# SUMMARY

The RDFNL, its staff, clubs, and participants want to continue to improve in all aspect to create the most family friendly, safe, welcoming and inclusive environment to be involved in football and netball.

Please help us to grow and improve with constructive feedback and ideas.

