



AFC
Academic Centre
of Excellence

AFC Empowering Women in Football Programme

AFC General Secretary's Message

Dear football family,

It is with great honour and pride that I introduce the latest groundbreaking education initiative from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) - the AFC Empowering Women in Football Programme (AEWFP).

This pioneering programme is offered by the AFC Academic Centre of Excellence (ACE) and is part of its comprehensive and ever-expanding range of purposeful and transformative initiatives committed to empowering Asian football leaders and administrators.

The AEWFP is a fully online programme that shines a spotlight on the transformative impact of women in football. It celebrates the pivotal roles they have played in shaping football's history and their ongoing contributions to its evolution, highlighting the lasting legacy of women footballers and administrators who continue to inspire and elevate the game.



Its objectives include empowering participants to navigate and overcome industry barriers and promote gender equity through ethical, strategic and collaborative practices. The AEWFP's strong focus on advocacy and empowerment also aims to further elevate the influence of women in football's global development.

The programme offers seven bespoke modules, each carefully crafted to address a key aspect of women's leadership in football. From exploring the strategic influence of women in football business environments to overcoming barriers and driving diplomacy, advocacy, and brand transformation, the AEWFP provides a comprehensive and empowering learning experience.

The AEWFP curriculum is geared to help all leaders in our Member Associations (MAs), Regional Associations (RAs) and stakeholders develop the necessary skills and competencies to not only strengthen their respective organisations, but to also support the AFC in taking Asian football to greater heights.

The AEWFP will play a central role in enabling the AFC to realise its ambitions of becoming a model Confederation, committed to nurturing the future leaders among its MAs, RAs and the larger Asian football ecosystem, and we hope it provides participants with the knowledge to continue making impactful decisions aligned with the industry's best practices for the betterment of the game.

I encourage everyone to take full advantage of the AEWFP. This programme will not only be an uplifting journey but also provide immersive case studies and real-world scenarios to benefit everyone greatly. It will equip participants to drive positive change and lead Asian football into a future that upholds the cherished values of diversity, inclusivity and excellence.

Datuk Seri Windsor John
AFC General Secretary

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Programme Overview

The AFC Empowering Women in Football Programme (AEWFP) is a pioneering initiative that explores the diverse roles of women in football both on and off the pitch, from history and business strategy to advocacy, brand transformation and executive leadership.

The programme guides participants through theoretical perspectives, hands-on activities, real case studies and examples that will help graduates make decisions that can increase inclusivity, diversity and integrity, as well as boost the influence of women in football and its global development in an increasingly competitive and evolving landscape.

The AEWFP is focused on leaders in the AFC's MAs, RAs and all other football stakeholders.

The six-month long online programme comprises seven modules and goes beyond the already well-made business case for diversity. These include leveraging diversity for organisational innovation and renewal, brand and organisational sustainability, and building contemporary approaches to stakeholder engagement and strategic business partnerships.

The main objective of the programme is to ensure that graduates are fully equipped with the fundamental knowledge and skills that help them understand the global football ecosystem, how to promote increased gender equity and inclusion in their own environments, and how to identify and overcome industry barriers through ethical, strategic and diplomatic practices.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the programme, graduates will be able to:

1. Outline the key historical milestones and change agents in the football landscape;
2. Apply practical and theoretical understanding to recognise and address organisational challenges faced by women in football business environments;
3. Demonstrate behaviours that foster inclusivity and integrity in a range of football environments;
4. Feel better prepared to handle value conflicts and ethical dilemmas that occur during their professional life;
5. Demonstrate the skills to lead organisational change, innovation and renewal in their football organisations and ecosystems; and
6. Use the skills of diplomacy and advocacy with their stakeholders and strategic business partnerships.

Modules

Module 1 - Historical Overview of Women in Football

- The Key Components of the Football Ecosystem
- The Role of Diversity, Gender and Representation in Driving Change and Growth
- Contributions of Key Women Players, Advocates and Change Agents in the Development and Growth of Women's Football
- The Components of Change in the Historical Journey of the Women's Game

Module 2 - Women's Strategic Impact in Football Business Environments

- The Role of Purpose in Organisations
- Types of Organisational or Business Purpose
- Systems Thinking
- Football as a Complex System
- Social Justice and Social Responsibility in Football
- Shifting Stakeholder Expectations
- Active Inclusion and the Connection to Community

Module 3 - Overcoming Barriers in Football Business Environments

- Types of Barriers
- Gender Stereotypes and Gender Bias in Football
- Barriers and Intersectionality
- Intersectionality Frameworks
- Solutions for Overcoming Barriers in Football Business Environments
- The Importance of Networks for Women in Football
- Building a Learning of Developmental Network

Module 4 - Empowering Women in Executive Leadership Roles in Football

- Leadership Skills Tailored to Football
- Fostering Networking and Mentorship Opportunities
- Strategies for Long-term Career Growth
- Case Studies of Successful Women Executives in Football and Professional Sports
- Unique Cultural Challenges Faced by Women Leaders
- Uplifting Women in Executive Roles
- Strategies for Promoting Women's Leadership in Football

Module 5 - Leading Organisational Innovation for Women in Football

- Innovation and Change Concepts
- Common Roadblocks Experienced by Organisations
- Personal Innovation Project
- Organisational Design and Architecture
- Organisational Hardware - structures, processes and systems
- Organisational Software - capabilities and culture
- Organisational Role Theory
- How Leaders Can Support and Align Teams When Implementing Change or Innovation

Module 6 - Ethics, Integrity and Governance in Football Business Environments

- What it Means to be Ethical
- Key Ethical Theories
- Organisation and Workplace Ethics
- Building an Ethical Culture in your Organisations and Workplaces
- Global Ethics and Working Across Different Cultural Norms
- Ethical Decision-Making
- Identifying Ethical Dilemmas
- Frameworks for Ethical Decision-Making
- Ethical Leadership Competencies

Module 7 - Women Leading Diplomacy, Advocacy and Brand Transformation in Football

- Diplomacy as a Method
- Key Principles of Diplomacy
- Using Diplomacy to Build Relationships in Football
- Types of Advocacies
- Support Strategies When Engaging in Advocacy
- Advocacy and Women's Football
- Brand and Organisational Sustainability
- Brand Identity and Connection to Stakeholders
- Brand Storytelling

Format

Programme Duration: Six (6) Months

Online Live Sessions: Five (5) Online Live Sessions per Module

Online Live Session Duration: Two (2) Hours

Language of Instruction: English

Eligibility and Application

1. Each Member Association (MA) and Regional Association (RA) is entitled to nominate two (2) staff members to participate in the programme. This programme is open to all applicants, regardless of gender. We encourage both women and men to apply and participate in this inclusive initiative.
2. Independent applicants who have graduated from the following programmes are encouraged to apply:
 - AFC Football Management Certificate (FMC)
 - AFC Football Management Diploma (FMD)
 - AFC Certificate in Football Leadership (ACFL)
3. Applicants must be fluent in English (written and spoken).
4. Applicants must possess fundamental knowledge of football operations.
5. Applicants must be highly motivated and able to dedicate a minimum of 12 self-study hours a week for the duration of the programme.

Selection Process

Interested candidates are required to complete the application form. The final selection of candidates is determined by the AFC as per the diagram below:



Application

- Submission of the completed application form to the AFC within the stipulated deadline.



Selection

- Applications will be evaluated thoroughly by the AFC Administration.
- Online interviews will then be conducted by the AFC Administration.



Notification

- Applicants will be notified of the results of their applications through their respective Member Associations, Regional Associations and stakeholders.



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