



English Federation  
of Disability Sport



# Engaging disabled people in sport and physical activity



The national charity, the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS), has developed this resource. We have created a variety of pages that provide organisations with advice and support on how to improve their engagement with disabled people.

## Effective engagement

While the resource's title refers to 'engaging disabled people', successful engagement also needs to involve:

- Disabled people directly
- Disabled people's families and/or guardians
- Disabled people's carers and supporters
- People who work for disabled people's organisations in a paid or voluntary capacity
- Public advocates
- Academics
- Others with an active interest in disability issues

We highlight the benefits and impact of effective engagement in the following four key areas:

**1**

### Gaining local insight and intelligence: Understanding the needs of the market

- Increased desire and take up by disabled people to take part in sport and physical activity
- Better knowledge in activity promotions
- Improved connectivity with parents, carers and individuals through consultation

What insight is available or what do you need to find out first?

**2**

### Improved communication and market reach: Connecting with disabled people

#### Key principles to help drive participation



##### Drive awareness

1. Use the channels I already trust
2. Stay local to me



##### Engage the audience

3. Don't lead with my impairment
4. Talk to as many of my values as possible
5. Continue to fulfil my values in new ways



##### Offer support and reassurance

6. Reassure me I'm going to fit in
7. Make me feel I can do it
8. Make it easy for me to tell you my needs
9. Ensure my first experience is good
10. Encourage me via existing advocates

### 3

### Workforce development: Building capacity in the workforce

- Better skilled, more informed, confident and competent workforce delivering sport and physical activities for disabled people
- Greater confidence in delivering sport for disabled people
- Greater capability within the sector
- More volunteers and support workers to support the delivery of sport for disabled people
- Increased numbers of disabled people becoming coaching and leaders



### 4

### 4. Funding and investment: Increasing financial resources

- The potential for increased investment into sport for disabled people
- Greater availability of resources through improved efficiency and partnership working
- Increased opportunities developed

#### Checklist

You can get more information on these four areas in the documents on the specific topics. If you are not sure where to start you may want to refer to the checklist below to help you identify where you need to concentrate your efforts.

**Improve your provider engagement.  
Use this checklist as a guide to where you need to focus your efforts.**

- ✓ Who is your audience? eg. older people, wheelchair users or young people
- ✓ What insight is available or what do you need to find out first?
- ✓ Who will you work with to reach your main audiences? Eg. project partners, local contacts, clubs and disability organisations
- ✓ How knowledgeable and confident in disability are the people involved in the work?
- ✓ How inclusive and accessible are your marketing communications to your target audiences?
- ✓ How will you monitor the success and impact? With whom will you share your better practice?

If you need more information on engaging disabled people in sport and physical activity, please contact us.

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