



# Engaging disabled people through effective use of research and insight



The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) considers research and insight as a vital part of the charity's work. We have increased our focus and support in this area to understand more about disabled people, their lifestyles, influencers and motivations.

## Why do we need research and insight?

Research and insight can help us to understand what sport and physical activities disabled people enjoy and what they want to take part in. It asks disabled people their views and opinions of sport, what they enjoy doing and who they enjoy taking part with.

## What research already exists that can help you understand what disabled people want?

There is a lot of secondary data (research conducted by others). This could answer some of the main questions you have. These include what sports and activities disabled people enjoy doing and how you can provide something better, which appeals to them.

## To what extent are disabled people interested in sport? How does it fit into their lives?

EFDS's Lifestyle Survey in 2013 shows that 7 in 10 disabled people want to do more sport or activity. The same research gave insight into disabled people's lives and where sport and activity fits. It also shows the types of sport disabled people find interesting and how they want to take part in them. For example, they may prefer to take part with a mix of disabled and non-disabled people.

## What stops disabled people from taking part in sport?

Research shows that the main barriers preventing disabled people from being more active can be grouped into three categories.

### These are:

- Physical barriers
- Logistical barriers
- Psychological barriers being the most restrictive

Psychological barriers refer to the views and opinions of disabled and non-disabled people. They refer to the capability of disabled people to take part in activities and the suitability of activities for disabled people.

The Understanding Barriers to Participation report highlights the different barriers disabled people face, as well as indicating barriers which are more prevalent for people with certain impairment types.

## How many disabled people currently do sport or physical activity?

Sport England's Active People Survey (now called Active Lives) provides the answer to this. It is a national survey designed to capture how active the nation is. It provides statistics of the proportion of disabled people currently taking part in activity.

In addition, Sport England has an interactive tool that allows you to look at the data in different ways: [activepeople.sportengland.org/Query](https://activepeople.sportengland.org/Query)



## How do we encourage disabled people to try our sport?

Feedback from disabled people shows that in order to offer activities that are more likely to appeal to them, do not focus on disability. Instead, try to link your activity to their values - the things that they hold important in life.

EFDS's research report 'Motivate Me' outlines six key values that disabled people have. The more values that you link to, the more appealing your activity will be.

EFDS's report 'Talk to Me' outlines 10 principles that providers can follow to make their activity more attractive to disabled people. Our 'Principles in action' document gives examples of how other providers have applied the various principles.



### My values

Everyone has values. Understanding what my values are and linking an activity to these can make taking part more appealing.

## What other opportunities have other people delivered?

There are a number of case studies for all the reports mentioned above. They give examples of ways of providing inclusive provision to disabled people. In addition, EFDS's Active Together report offers even more examples of ways in which to provide inclusive provision – where disabled and non-disabled people can take part together

Ask yourself, do you know if what you are currently providing is the right thing?



### My life story

As people grow older our values change. Keep me interested over time through new ideas.

For more information about EFDS research and insight, please visit our website: [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)



## Me, not my impairment

Many people do not identify with being disabled and are put off by advertising that focuses on disability.

## Do you know what disabled people think about what you currently provide?

Think about conducting some monitoring and evaluation of your activities.

Use membership forms to capture whether or not people consider themselves to be disabled to know the number of disabled people taking part.

Provide participants with a way to give feedback about the activity to understand what you are doing well and areas where you could improve.



## My channels

Use communication channels that I already trust e.g. social media, local media.

## Do you know how to make changes to your offer to make them more appealing?

You need to ask disabled people what they think about new ideas and how they could be more appealing.

Consult with disabled people in your local area. Perhaps talk to some people who are already taking part or approach local disability groups or charities. Share your ideas and ask for their feedback of what they would like to see.

Think about asking other relevant stakeholders (such as leaders, coaches etc) for their opinions too.

As people change over their lifetime, their likes and dislikes change too. Remember to review your insight regularly to assess trends or gaps for people from different age groups and so on.