

# BELONGING BY DESIGN

How golf venues can create belonging for women, girls and families - as participants, staff, volunteers and leaders

## BELONGING IS THE FEELING THAT “THIS PLACE IS FOR ME.”

It is created through the small signals people receive: who welcomes them, whether questions feel safe, whose stories are visible and which behaviours are rewarded. These cues shape whether participants return and whether women working, volunteering, leading or governing in golf feel valued, heard and able to progress.

## WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

**Big Swings 2026-2030** sets an ambition for **100% of people in golf to feel they belong**, particularly women and families.

**60%** of new golfers in the last two years are women; **88%** of Get Into Golf participants are women.

**BELONGING SHAPES BEHAVIOUR:** confidence • motivation • willingness to learn and try • persistence through challenge • likelihood of returning and contributing

**THE CUES PEOPLE READ** Every interaction tells people whether they are welcome, safe to learn, able to contribute and able to participate on their terms.

### RELATIONAL CUES

#### Do people notice and value me?

Greet people warmly. Make eye contact. Learn and use names. Show curiosity. Check in after the session.

### COMPETENCE CUES

#### Am I allowed to be a beginner?

Explain what to expect. Normalise mistakes. Celebrate effort. Invite questions. Reduce jargon and fear of embarrassment.

### REPRESENTATION CUES

#### Are women visible, heard and influential here?

Include women across coaching, staff, management, boards and committees. Use diverse imagery and inclusive language. Make leadership and career pathways visible.

### CULTURAL CUES

#### What behaviours are rewarded here?

Model respect and support. Challenge exclusionary humour and bias. Ensure meetings, decisions and opportunities are inclusive. Value connection as well as performance.

## PUT BELONGING INTO PRACTICE

- **Design the first 10 minutes.** Review signage, parking, check-in and who provides the welcome.
- **Prepare people, not just programs.** Equip front-of-house staff, coaches, volunteers and leaders to create a consistent, inclusive experience.
- **Make participation practical.** Offer clear information, flexible times, shorter formats and family-friendly options.
- **Create a clear beginner pathway.** Explain the next step, make rebooking easy and personally invite people back.
- **Share visibility and influence.** Include women across staff, coaching, management, boards, committees, stories and decisions.
- **Listen, measure and respond.** Ask women who participate, work, volunteer and lead about their experience - and act on what they tell you.

**A QUICK BELONGING CHECK** Use these questions with participants, staff, volunteers, leaders and board members.

### WELCOME

Would a first-time visitor know where to go, who to ask and what will happen next?

### BEGINNER-SAFE

Can people ask questions, make mistakes and learn without feeling judged?

### VISIBLE

Are women visible across our staff, coaches, leaders, board, imagery and stories?

### PRACTICAL & EQUITABLE

Do our times, formats and opportunities work for participants, staff and volunteers with busy lives?

### RESPECTFUL

Do our workplace, meetings and venue culture actively address bias and behaviours that diminish others?

### RESPONSIVE

Do we seek and act on the views of women who participate, work, volunteer and lead?

## BELONGING IS NOT AN ADD-ON. IT IS THE EXPERIENCE.

### FOR PARTICIPANTS

What does a woman, girl or family experience in the first 10 minutes - and what tells them this place is for them?

### FOR THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE GOLF HAPPEN

Do women working, volunteering, leading or governing here feel heard, respected, safe to contribute and able to progress?

Sources: Australian Sports Commission Play Well; Big Swings 2026-2030.

