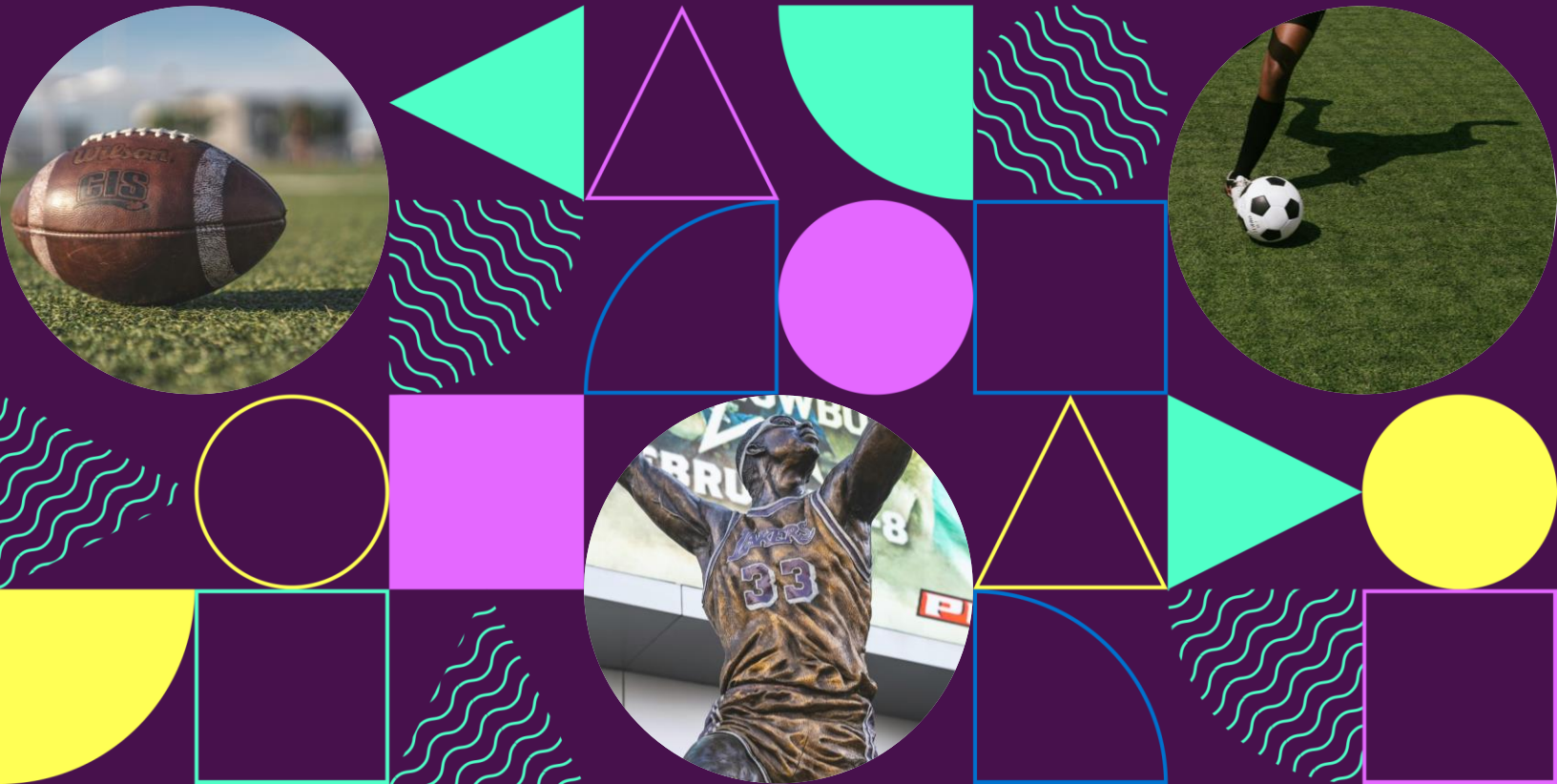


Building the Dream Team: Why Inclusion in Sports Matters

Industry Spotlight



DEI Has Always Mattered

From the athletes to the fans to the front offices of these sports organizations, **diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts benefit all parties**. Racial tensions and gender gaps have often prevented inclusion policies from having a real effect on the industry.

Inclusivity Matters

Past Racial Struggles

Major League Baseball (MLB) legend, Reggie Jackson, described the MLB world in the 1960s

Present Racial Struggles

International soccer star, Vinicius Jr., had fans arrested after racial threats

1960s

- Athletes would have to stay in separate hotels from their teammates
- Athletes of color would be threatened with physical harm or the KKK
- There were no formal protections in place for these athletes outside of coaches

2024

- Players of color are no longer legally segregated from their teammates
- The police now back the players instead of enabling the hate from fans
- Team members are fighting for more diversity internationally on their teams

By championing DEI strategies in this industry, organizations can help break down stereotypes and promote a more inclusive society. Organizations with DEI strategies in place also see an increase in fan engagement and audience reach, leading to greater opportunities for sponsorship and revenue generation.

Ongoing Work Leads to Success



Increase Access

Organizations such as USA Cycling and USA Fencing have started DEI programs to bring more access to their sport in BIPOC communities.



Create Safe Environments

At every level of sports, organizations are taking the proper steps to make the industry safe and inclusive for all races and gender identities.



Breaking Down Barriers

Roadblocks such as financial constraints often prevent BIPOC from joining the sports industry. Sports organizations can use DEI programs to help reach those who need the help.

Source: Marlene Lethang, NBC, "I would have got killed here": Baseball legend Reggie Jackson on racism he faced in Alabama," June 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/-got-killed-baseball-legend-reggie-jackson-racism-faced-alabama-rcna158312>; Dan Billingham, MSNBC, "How soccer's self-proclaimed 'tormentor of racists' is truly changing the game," June 2024, <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/real-madrid-soccer-star-vinicius-jrs-anti-racist-win-remarkable-rcna157289>; Matt Traub, "DEI Initiatives Ongoing Throughout U.S. Olympic Movement," March 2024, <https://www.sportstravelmagazine.com/dei-initiatives-still-ongoing-throughout-u-s-olympic-movement/>.

Full Court Press = DEI Success

The National Football League (NFL), Major League Baseball (MLB), and The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR), have all implemented strategies and policies to champion DEI within professional sports leagues. These organizations have said that they plan to continue these programs and policies, even in the light of legal challenges aiming to stop their progress. Here are three ways professional sports organizations are advocating for inclusivity in the sports industry:

NFL



The NFL's Rooney Rule requires teams to interview HET when hiring head coaches, coordinators, general managers, and senior executives

MLB



The MLB offers diverse hiring, fellowship and ticket sales training programs

NASCAR



NASCAR's Drive for Diversity program aims to attract and develop minority and female drivers and pit crew members

Keep the Pace with an Evolving Industry

Professional sports teams know better than other organizations how important inclusion is to the business of an organization. This work is necessary to stay optimistic about the future that is coming. Talented individuals on the field and in the front office deserve to be heard and celebrated for the incredible work they do.

1

DEI Now

This is "Our Time"-As more laws aim to obstruct DEI office progress, sustaining momentum is essential for continued change.

2

Reframe the Conversation

Evolve with the Changing Tides-These sports brands should ensure that fans and employees from every demographic feel included and represented.

3

Empower HET

Use Your Full Team-Explore the potential that Historically Excluded Talent (HET) can bring to the table by offering mentorship and promotion opportunities.

4

Data for Decisions

Follow the Trends-Use your organization's data to make changes according to the needs of your organization.

Source: Seramount resources; Bill King, "The pushback on DEI," March 2024, <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2024/03/11/dei-pushback>.

Want to Learn More?

Our DEI Research Partnership Empowers DEI and HR Leaders Through Today's Toughest Workplace Challenges

What Factors Make DEI and Talent Roles So Challenging?

Tense Workplace Dynamics

- Shifting demographics lead to competing priorities
- Evolving legal landscape
- Divided employee sentiment around sociopolitical issues

Risk Around Every DEI Decision

- **Risk of Abandoning Commitments:** Pullback can cause disengagement and friction
- **Risk of Inaction:** Holding steady can be perceived as non-commitment
- **Risk of Misstep:** Forging ahead might turn positive intentions into unintended consequences

Balancing Two Equally Vital Roles

- Maneuver Corporate and Cultural Risks
- Safeguard Nonnegotiable DEI Investments

Plus, You're in Good Company



Three Pillars of Service to Support Leaders and Their Teams



Rigorous Research with a Global Reach

Deploying proven research methodology to identify how to make change happen

- Resources to educate stakeholders and accelerate impact
- Custom research to answer your up-at-night questions



Collective Experience of a Peer Community

Convening DEI and Talent leaders to guide and shape our search for breakthrough ideas

- CDO roundtables and experience labs
- DEI practitioner roundtables and hot-topic webinars



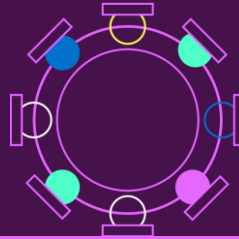
Commitment to Applying Lessons Learned

Facilitating buy-in for change and customizing implementation of lessons learned

- Access to expert advisors to increase your capacity
- Partner intensives bring insights to your broader team

Learn more about how the DEI Research Partnership can propel your strategy forward by scheduling a call with one of our experts.

seramount.com/contact-us



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Early Career
Talent**

Branding and recruiting platform that surfaces engaged, prepared candidates more efficiently, effectively, and at scale

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Enduring Employee
Engagement**

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Foundations and
Build Adaptable
Roadmaps**

Expert guidance rooted in research and experience to support and advance your strategic talent and DEI priorities in every environment

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More Resilient,
Connected
Workforce**

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