

James Vakrinos

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Statement for ECCV's All One Together campaign

For over 50 years, Port Melbourne Soccer Club has been part of the local Port Phillip community. Our club was founded by European & Greek immigrants, providing a local meeting point in an unfamiliar cultural landscape where a love of soccer could be shared. Today, we recognise that our home grounds are located on the traditional lands of the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung, and acknowledge their continuing relationship with the land.

As Australia has grown in diversity, so has our club. A key component to the growth of our club has been the increased inclusion and acceptance of community members of ethnically diverse backgrounds – all bound by love of the world game. The only colour we see is red and blue. We've also seen a recent increase in female participation which has been welcomed by the club and supported with the official recommencement of our women's program.

Our football family, with increased female participation and players from all backgrounds, is a wonderful opportunity to use the "world game" as a platform to reflect and support the community of City of Port Phillip.

We currently enjoy the benefits of a number of community programs and our football club fosters an environment of cultural harmony and equality amongst all players and members, regardless of the playing level, from community girls and boys programs, through to the elite NPL seniors.

The invitation to become a community champion is one of privilege and excitement. We believe that our game, being truly "global and inclusive", along with our organic growth in diversity and community engagement programs, will set a new benchmark for community inclusion and diversity in sporting club programs.

