

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY 29th JUNE, 9:00AM BST

World Netball Announces ‘Voice of the Athlete’ Working Group

World Netball has announced its ‘Voice of the Athlete’ Working Group following the launch of its Strategic Plan. Under its core strategic pillar, ‘Govern’, World Netball highlights the importance of working collaboratively with those that live and breathe netball every day in order to develop the sport. The Voice of the Athlete Working Group will begin this process by working together throughout 2021 to determine a suitable framework for a future Athletes Commission, which will be established following recommendations by the Working Group to the World Netball Board.

Following a successful recruitment campaign in April 2021 which attracted athletes from all Regions, the following athletes will make up the Voice of the Athlete Working Group:

- Liz Watson – Australia
- Francinah Eyman – Botswana
- Stacey Francis-Bayman – England
- Bryony Rovegno – Gibraltar
- Malysa Kelly – Jamaica
- Katrina Rore – New Zealand
- Auteletoa Tanimu – Samoa

- Emily Nicholl – Scotland
- Aqilah Andin – Singapore
- Samantha Wallace – Trinidad & Tobago

The VOA Working Group will be chaired by Rhona Toft who brings a wealth of experience both as an international athlete in hockey and in sports governance through leadership of two athlete bodies. Rhona was appointed as Chair of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Athletes Commission, a role which was established when the Games were awarded to Scotland in 2007. Following this in 2016, Rhona was selected to develop and implement the first Athletes Advisory Commission on behalf of the Commonwealth Games Federation.

World Netball President, Liz Nicholl CBE, comments: “World Netball is committed to ensuring the voice of the athlete is at the heart of our decision-making. This Working Group has been appointed to develop recommendations on how this can best be enabled, and I am delighted that the group includes athletes from every region and with a wide range of collective experience. They are a credit to our sport, and I look forward to seeing their work off the court as they help to build the future of netball. Their collaborative input will be invaluable in helping us to grow, to play, and to inspire through netball.”

Lyn Carpenter, World Netball Regional Director for Europe, comments: “This is an exciting step forward in achieving our vision as a sport. Having played netball internationally, I know first-hand the importance of ensuring athletes are heard and considered fully as everything we do involves, impacts, and affects them. I am very

proud and passionate to be supporting this Working Group and I look forward to seeing the recommendations made which will impact the future of our sport.”

The Working Group consists of current international athletes with at least 3-years’ international playing experience and have been endorsed by their Member/Regional Federation or Executive Board. The athletes have been selected to ensure representation across the 5 World Netball Regions across teams ranked 1-5, 6-20, and 21+.

England Netballer, Stacey Francis-Bayman comments: “To be involved in the first World Netball, Voice of the Athlete Working Group is a great privilege. I am incredibly invigorated and passionate about being able to use my ‘seat at the table’ to be able to add creative, athlete-centred ideas that will help to drive evolution, growth and engagement across the international game.”

Supported by World Netball Board Directors, Lyn Carpenter for Europe, and Gaby Hochbaum for Asia, alongside World Netball Head of Events, Lindsay Impett, the Working Group will meet up to 4 times in 2021 and recommendations will be made to the World Netball Board by the end of the year.

To read the Athlete bios, click [here](#).

To find out more about World Netball, click [here](#).

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Image:**Notes to Editors:**

World Netball is the sole, internationally recognised, governing body for netball affiliated to GAISF, the International World Games Association and the Association of Recognised International Sports Federations (ARISF), receiving funding from the International Olympic Committee.

World Netball creates a better world through netball, inspiring netballers to embrace opportunities and achieve their potential. Netball is played in more than 100 countries around the world with 76 National Netball Associations affiliated to World Netball. The associations are grouped into five Regions – Africa Netball, Americas Netball, Asia Netball, Netball Europe, and Oceania Netball – each with a respective Regional Federation. Regional Federations are an integral part of the global governance structure and assist in the implementation of World Netball policies and the development of the sport in their respective regions.

For more information visit www.netball.sport