



WOMEN'S  
ENG25

HOW WE CHANGED THE GAME:

# THE STORY OF AN ERA-DEFINING WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP ENGLAND 2025

WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP  
2025 IMPACT REPORT





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**ALAN GILPIN**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WORLD RUGBY**

Women's rugby is at the heart of World Rugby's 2025–31 Strategic Plan to power rugby, unite the game and enrich lives. It is the fastest growing area of participation in our sport, and key to making rugby more accessible, more inclusive, and more relevant to a broader global audience. As the first event delivered under our new Rugby World Cup operating model, England 2025 was designed to be an iconic event that would grow the profile, impacts and value of women's rugby. It delivered beyond expectations.

Together with our key partners, the RFU, UK Sport, and eight outstanding host cities and venues, we set ourselves the highest standards across every dimension: social impact, revenues, fan experience, and global reach. From senior leadership to thousands of volunteers, excellence was the benchmark.

The results speak for themselves. England 2025 has been a resounding success, shattering records and confirming the extraordinary pace of growth in women's rugby. None of this was accidental. Every decision was intentional: expanding the tournament to 16 teams to reflect the game's worldwide growth, taking rugby across the country to iconic venues that matched our ambition, and ensuring that players, match officials, and fans alike experienced rugby's biggest stage at its very best. This was a tournament designed not just to succeed, but to inspire.

At its core, Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 was about people. Our wonderful players and match officials were given the environment to perform at their peak. Our fans, many new to the sport, were welcomed with a bespoke approach that celebrated the unique personalities of women's rugby and created lasting connections. And beyond the field, the tournament drove positive change: championing gender equity, enriching local communities, and reshaping perceptions of rugby worldwide.

This impact report details the breadth of those achievements, but I want to take this moment to acknowledge the collective effort behind them. Our board of directors, member unions, partners, public institutions, commercial brands, staff, and volunteers all played vital roles in turning vision into reality. Together, we have not only delivered an iconic event but also built a sustainable blueprint for the future of the sport.

There is a clear before and after Women's Rugby World Cup 2025. Its global impact and resounding success have created an unstoppable wave of momentum. More importantly, it has established a robust foundation to support the phenomenal growth of women's rugby for years to come.





**GILL WHITEHEAD OBE**  
**CHAIR, RUGBY WORLD CUP 2025**

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 surpassed expectations, not only in the hearts and minds of the players and fans but also against our targets. One of the Board's first tasks was to agree the vision for the tournament, underpinned by six specific key performance indicators. These were rigorously benchmarked and set to be stretching, reflecting our bold ambition for what this tournament could deliver for women, women's rugby and the growth of the game. I am delighted to confirm that we exceeded all six targets, in some cases smashing them.

Thanks to the investment in the tournament that Alan Gilpin at World Rugby committed to providing from the outset, combined with the investment from the UK Government, we were able to bring new audiences to the game at scale. The invaluable home nation knowledge that the RFU brought, combined with an excellence in major sports events of many colleagues and from UK Sport, meant that of the significant economic value that the tournament brought, over 80% of the benefit went outside London – demonstrating the tournament's reach and impact across the nation.

I want to extend my thanks to the Board for their dedication and commitment to this tournament from the very outset. Each member generously gave their time, expertise and passion to ensure its success. I would also like to thank Sarah Massey and the leadership team. They worked tirelessly throughout to ensure no detail was overlooked, and the results of their commitment and care are evident in this report. As a young girl growing up and playing rugby on any patch of grass going, I never thought I would see the day of the Allianz stadium packed to the rafters for the women's game. And yet now, that record breaking milestone feels like just the beginning.





**SARAH MASSEY MBE**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR, RWC ENGLAND 2025**

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 was an unforgettable celebration of sport, unity, and empowerment. Across six weekends and eight host cities, England welcomed the world to a tournament that broke records, captivated audiences, and created memories that will endure for generations. From the opening whistle in Sunderland's Stadium of Light to the trophy lift at Allianz Stadium in Twickenham, fans witnessed rugby of the highest calibre, with nations making history, new stars emerging, and stories that inspired a new wave of supporters.

What set this tournament apart was not only the thrilling action on the pitch, but the atmosphere off it. Matchdays became festivals of joy, where players and fans connected in ways that transcended cultures and generations. Seamless organisation, welcoming environments, and the dedication of thousands of staff and volunteers ensured that every detail reflected the pride and passion behind this event. Their tireless efforts transformed complexity into excellence, creating a world-class experience at every venue.

The success of England 2025 was built on collaboration. World Rugby, the RFU, UK Sport and UK Government, host cities and venues, broadcasters, and commercial partners all shared a collective ambition to set new standards.

Equally important was the tournament's social purpose. Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 played a central role in shaping positive perceptions of women's sport at all levels of the game, championing gender equity, and enriching local communities. It was designed not only to deliver a world-class tournament, but to create a lasting, positive impact for women and girls in sport. From grassroots initiatives to national campaigns, the ripple effects of this event will continue to empower change long after the final whistle.

More than a tournament, it was a movement, showing every woman and girl that they can 'be anything, do anything, and belong anywhere: in rugby, in sport, and in society'.





**SALLY HORROX**  
**CHIEF OF WOMEN'S RUGBY,**  
**WORLD RUGBY**

### OUR GLOBAL PROMISE

With Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025 complete, it is now clear that this tournament has redefined what's possible for women's rugby on the global stage. Beyond the success of the tournament itself, World Rugby's commitment was always to create lasting change – not just in England, but across its 134 member unions and six regional associations.

Through Impact Beyond 2025, our global legacy programme, we continue to work with unions to ensure this momentum translates into tangible progress. We're already seeing participation, competition and commercial growth worldwide, strengthening leadership pathways, and expanding the pipeline of female coaches and match officials. Our Impact Beyond 2025 Report highlights the outcomes of that commitment, both on and off the field. Together, these advances are building a stronger, more sustainable and inclusive future for rugby.

The momentum generated around Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 is only the beginning. Our focus now is ensuring the tournament's impact continues to shape the game for generations to come— as we build towards Women's Rugby World Cup 2029 and beyond.

[View Impact Beyond Report →](#)





**BILL SWEENEY OBE**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 presented a once in a generation opportunity to grow women's rugby in England and inspire new players to give rugby a try. With thrilling matchups, broken records and unforgettable moments across the length and breadth of the country, the tournament was an unmissable celebration of rugby at the highest level.

Across England, being the host nation of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 was a source of great national pride. Throughout the tournament we watched week after week as the country rallied behind their Red Roses and shared not only in their successes, but also in the performances of all the other teams. The Red Roses were in turn bolstered by the support of the nation, in each host city and in every stadium.

Beyond the field, the tournament played a central role in empowering real change, enriching local communities, championing gender equity, and inspiring people at all levels of the game through Impact '25, England Rugby's transformational legacy programme. Impact '25 is delivered by the RFU in partnership with UK Government, Sport England, and UK Sport.

The RFU has long set the benchmark when it comes to supporting and growing women's rugby, and we couldn't be prouder to have been the host nation of the greatest occasion women's rugby has ever seen. We are committed to continuing this work and have set ambitious targets in our new five-year action plan – Every Rose: Our Time – to build on the success of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 and drive the next era of growth for women and girls' rugby in England.

We are deeply grateful to World Rugby, UK Government and our key partners for the collaborative effort that went into this tournament, in which every person played a vital role to not only the tournament's success, but also the greater impact that Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 has had on women's rugby across England and beyond.





# RECORD-BREAKING ATTENDANCE, VIEWERSHIP AND REACH

**RECORD**

The most watched Women's Rugby World Cup

**444,465**  
TICKETS SOLD<sup>1</sup>

**RECORD**

The most attended women's rugby match:

**81,885**

attended the RWC 2025 Final – the second-most attended RWC Final of all time (Men's and Women's)<sup>1</sup>

**RECORD**

The most watched Women's Rugby World Cup:

**147.8M**

global broadcast viewing hours<sup>2</sup>

NPS score of attendees' experience:

**84%**   
EXCELLENT<sup>1</sup>

 **94%**  
of people who attended a match are very likely to attend or watch future women's rugby matches<sup>4</sup>

**44%**   
of attendees had never been to a women's rugby match before<sup>4</sup>

 **1.1B**  
social media impressions on owned tournament platforms (2nd biggest RWC ever)<sup>3</sup>

 **330%**  
increase in sponsorship revenue compared to RWC 2021<sup>7</sup>

**82%**   
of players rated their overall RWC 2025 experience as **EXCELLENT/GOOD**<sup>8</sup>

 **84%**  
of attendees believed that England was a great host of major sporting events<sup>5</sup>

**94%**   
of attendees who had never been to a women's rugby match before intend to watch women's rugby in the future having attended Women's RWC 2025<sup>4</sup>

**£294.7M**  
delivered in economic impact to host cities<sup>5</sup>

**83%**   
of total economic impact generated for cities outside London<sup>5</sup>

**92%**   
of all tickets sold<sup>1</sup>

**£201M**  
in media value generated for RWC 2025 Commercial Partners<sup>6</sup>

 **£54M**  
in media value delivered for host cities<sup>6</sup>

More points scored:  
 **58.7**  
points scored per game (vs 46.2 – RWC 2021)<sup>9</sup>

More tries scored:  
**9.2**   
tries scored per game (vs 7.1 – RWC 2021)<sup>9</sup>

# EMPOWER REAL CHANGE - WHERE WE BELONG

## GIRLS BELONG IN SPORT - STRONG BODIES, STRONG MINDS

**4.76M** 

views from 306 pieces of Strong Bodies,  
Strong Minds social media content<sup>10</sup>

NEARLY  
**3 IN 4**

women and girls between the ages of 13-25  
(74%) feel more motivated to do more sport  
and physical activity following the Women's  
Rugby World Cup<sup>11</sup>

## WOMEN BELONG IN THEIR CHOSEN CAREERS

**100%**

of senior leadership and

**74%**

of the total RWC England 2025  
workforce were women<sup>12</sup>

**1500+** 

women developed their careers via  
Women's RWC 2025<sup>13</sup>

## WOMEN AND GIRLS BELONG IN RUGBY

**95%** 

of attendees agree that rugby is just as much  
a sport for women and girls as it is for men and  
boys, as a result of following or attending  
RWC 2025<sup>4</sup>

NEARLY  
**9 IN 10**



young people between the age of 13-25 said  
RWC 2025 showed that women can achieve  
anything in sport<sup>11</sup>

## CHAPTER 1

BEHIND THE BREAKTHROUGH:

# THE MAKING OF THE MOMENT WOMEN'S RUGBY CHANGED THE GAME

Women's RWC 2025's success was built on a bold new tournament blueprint and the collaboration and commitment of the entire rugby community.





## OUR VISION:

# BOLD AMBITION

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 was a generational moment for our sport: an era-defining tournament that shattered all records for attendance, viewership and engagement. We made it the biggest, most accessible and inclusive celebration of women's rugby ever staged and accelerated the game's trajectory towards a phenomenal future ahead.

Women's RWC 2025 transformed the way the world sees women's rugby and reshaped the future for women and girls in sport. This is how we did it.

# WE CREATED A NEW BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

World Rugby's mission is to drive the sustained global growth of the women's game, building its audience, participation base and commercial value, by making it more accessible and more relevant to more people worldwide.

Transforming the Rugby World Cup delivery model has been central to accelerating progress towards that goal: bringing all planning and implementation in-house to unlock greater organisational synergies and new commercial opportunities for the event and the sport. England 2025 was the first tournament to be staged by World Rugby in this way, through a joint venture with the RFU and UK Sport that embodied our shared ambition of creating an accessible, inspirational showpiece that would act as a catalyst for long-term uplift in participation, visibility, and opportunity for women and girls across England and beyond. On the ground, that vision was made reality by our joint delivery company, RWC England 2025.

The new model created a milestone occasion for women's sport but has also built expertise and capability to take forward to other World Rugby events and ensure they too deliver on all their stakeholders' objectives.



# WE BUILT THE ULTIMATE TEAM

It took an entire sporting ecosystem to realise our ambitions for Women's RWC 2025 and launch women's rugby into its next exciting phase of global growth. The tournament was powered by World Rugby, UK Sport and the RFU, but it galvanised support across the rugby community and beyond, bringing together the stakeholders large and small whose every contribution was critical to success.



**UK SPORT**, on behalf of the UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), was a major funder of the tournament as part of its wider remit to support women's sport and major events across the country.

**THE RFU**, had over many years laid the foundations for the women's game's growth. To ramp up that progression further still, it partnered with UK Sport and the UK Government to create Impact '25, a transformational tournament legacy programme to improve facilities and opportunity for women and girls at all levels of the domestic game. **Read more in Chapter 4.**

**OUR HOST CITIES, VENUES AND COMMUNITIES**, gave Women's RWC 2025 its unique character and trademark festival atmosphere. From Exeter to Sunderland, these eight iconic locations became second homes to the teams they hosted, showcased their individuality with pride, and made lifelong memories for players, fans and local people at the family event of the year. **Read more in Chapter 2.**

**THE PLAYERS**, of course, were at the heart of these magical moments, bringing their skill, athleticism and individuality to their sport's biggest stage and capturing hearts and headlines with the thrilling brand of rugby they produced. Off the field too, the stars of 16 nations – assembled, for the first time, from all six World Rugby regional associations – inspired the next generation of players and brought new fans to the sport with their unique voices and the power of their personality. **Read more in Chapters 2 and 3.**

**FANS** were drawn to our sport in unprecedented numbers by the spectacle of Women's RWC 2025 and the pull of its star performers, filling stadiums and fan zones across England, and lighting up every match with the electric atmosphere their joyful energy sparked. That wave of support and enthusiasm crashed through media channels too as fans engaged with digital and broadcast content as never before and a new audience discovered this great game. **Read more in Chapter 3.**

**OUR MEDIA PARTNERS**, including global broadcast and digital powerhouses the BBC, TF1, Nine/Stan, ESPN and CBS-Paramount, were at the heart of that audience growth, producing ground-breaking, in-depth coverage that changed perceptions of women's rugby worldwide. The BBC, our domestic broadcast partner, made the tournament unmissable across the UK, with every match available live and 50% screened free to air on terrestrial TV. It reached new audiences outside of sport too, with the integration of rugby content and personalities into non-sport programming both nationally and across the regions. **Read more in Chapter 3.**

**STRATEGIC AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERS** also played an invaluable role in our tournament's success by sharing their knowledge and expertise to help establish a sustainable business model for Women's RWC 2025 and the wider women's game. Many of them contributed directly to tournament delivery; others accelerated growth plans in performance and leadership; more again raised women's rugby's visibility in mainstream entertainment and consumer goods markets; and the charities we worked with maximised our social impact nationwide. **Read more in Chapter 5.**

And, above all, **TOURNAMENT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS** were at the heart of every success. Without the dedication of the Women's RWC 2025 delivery team, none of this would have happened; and without the thousands of volunteers and contractors who created unforgettable experiences for players and fans alike, we would never have reached the heights the tournament hit.



## CHAPTER 2

### RAISING THE BAR:

# NEW ELITE STANDARDS DELIVERED

Women's RWC 2025 transformed the player, team management and match official experience, elevated elite performance environments and prioritised all participants' welfare.



## WORLD-CLASS PERFORMANCE BEGINS BEFORE KICK-OFF

Women's rugby union is professionalising fast. Our era-defining Women's RWC 2025 stepped up the pace of that progression by setting new standards in facilities, preparation environments and welfare provision for players, team management and match officials.

By transforming the tournament's support systems, we enabled every team to perform at its dynamic best and moved the women's game further and faster towards having the elite performance infrastructure it deserves.



**THE MOST PLAYER-FOCUSED  
WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP YET**



**PRIORITISED PLAYER  
PREPARATION AND WELFARE**



**THE SAME HIGH STANDARDS FOR  
ALL TEAMS AND OFFICIALS**



# WE PROVIDED AN ELITE PREPARATION ENVIRONMENT

Our strategy focused on elevating core areas of the event's delivery that would make the biggest difference to players' experience.

In their preparation, this was about training, travel and accommodation.

Teams went from shared training facilities in the previous editions to having dedicated hotels with large meeting rooms and nutritionist-led menus, their own outdoor pitch and gym facilities with enhanced equipment, giving them flexibility in scheduling and helping them make their base home. RWC partner Perform Better, provided 4 bespoke gym facilities and additional equipment to 24 gyms, ensuring that every participating union had access to high-quality training environments throughout the tournament.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond the tournament, the partnership will aim to leave a lasting legacy, as the equipment has been redistributed to schools, colleges, and women's rugby teams throughout the country.

## PLAYER FEEDBACK<sup>8</sup>

**91%**

rated outdoor training venues excellent or good

**87%**

rated gyms as excellent or good

**80%**

rated accommodation excellent or good



**INDIVIDUAL TEAM HOTEL, GYM AND TRAINING PITCH FOR EVERY TEAM**



**AUTONOMY FOR TEAMS TO MANAGE TRAINING AND RECOVERY**



**MENUS DEVELOPED WITH A PERFORMANCE NUTRITIONIST**



**EXTENSIVE PITCH INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**

**"THE TRAINING PITCHES ARE THE BEST WE'VE EVER SEEN."**

– Quote from a player<sup>8</sup>





# WE PRIORITISED PLAYER WELFARE AND EXPERIENCE

Our match schedule placed player experience and welfare at its heart and aligned with World Rugby standards to create a balance between play, recovery and preparation that empowered the sport's top teams to perform consistently at their best.

Premium transport moved teams between cities from week to week, optimising recovery and preparation. Players and officials were also able to enjoy England as tourists and meet their host communities through inclusive open training sessions and community engagement that brought more people closer to the sport.

## PLAYER FEEDBACK

**86%**

rated transport services excellent or good<sup>8</sup>

**80%**

rated international travel standards excellent or good<sup>8</sup>

## SMART SCHEDULING



**ALL MATCHES FRIDAY TO SUNDAY**



**MINIMUM 5 REST DAYS BETWEEN ALL MATCHES<sup>13</sup>**

## TRANSFORMING TRAVEL WHERE POSSIBLE



**PREMIUM ECONOMY FOR ALL INBOUND 8+ HOUR INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS AND BUSINESS FOR FLIGHTS OVER 12 HOURS<sup>13</sup>**



**AIRPORT LOUNGE ACCESS AND A PERSONAL MEET AND GREET SERVICE FOR TEAMS**



**DEDICATED BUSES AND SUPPORT VEHICLES, WITH AN ADDITIONAL BUS FOR LONG TRANSFER DAYS**



**DEDICATED CARRIAGES FOR TEAMS TRAVELLING BY TRAIN**

# WE MADE EVERY STADIUM FEEL LIKE HOME

We gave our venues a major tournament upgrade – in look, feel and facilities too. No triple-header and fewer double-header matches meant more space and transition time for players to enjoy their team-branded changing rooms, which were prepared specifically for female use with sufficient toilet cubicles and free sanitary provision.

And, for the first time, players' children were allowed to join them on the pitch after matches: another means by which the tournament's united family atmosphere shone through.

In addition, as part of cyber resilience planning ahead of RWC 2025, World Rugby invested over £20k in partnership with venue owners to deliver network upgrades, leaving a legacy at our host venues<sup>13</sup>.

## PLAYER FEEDBACK

# 86%

of RWC debutants rated their overall RWC 2025 experience excellent or good<sup>8</sup>

## PROGRESSIVE VENUES



**FEMALE-SPECIFIC TOURNAMENT BRANDED CHANGING ROOMS**



**4 COACH BOXES AND WARM UP PITCHES FOR DOUBLE HEADERS<sup>13</sup>**



**SEPARATE MALE CHANGING SPACES FOR TEAM MANAGEMENT**



**UPLIFT IN MEDICAL PROVISIONS FOR MATCH DAYS**





# WE GAVE OUR MATCH OFFICIALS ELITE TREATMENT TOO

Match officials also benefited from improved support standards, with nutrition advice, a prestigious central London base offering accommodation, meeting space, training, gym and pool facilities, first-class train travel to aid preparation and recovery, and – in another first – women’s-fit match kit from Macron, World Rugby Match Official Apparel Supplier.

In taking all participants’ tournament experiences to the next level and beyond, we raised the bar on what’s possible for elite women’s events.

## MATCH OFFICIALS’ FEEDBACK<sup>14</sup>

### 93%

of match officials rated their overall experience of Women’s RWC 2025 as good or excellent

### 80%

of match officials rated the transport services at Women’s RWC 2025 as good or excellent

### 87%

of match officials rated the accommodation at Women’s RWC 2025 as good or excellent

### ON RUGBY COMMUNITY

**"THE TEAM OF MOs AND ENGAGEMENT FROM THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE WAS ELECTRIC."**

– Match official<sup>14</sup>

### ON TRAINING FACILITIES

**"HIGH PERFORMANCE AND PROFESSIONAL!"**

– Match official<sup>14</sup>



**WOMEN’S-FIT MATCH KIT - FIRST TIME IN WOMEN’S RWC HISTORY**





# WE LOOKED AFTER OUR PLAYERS' AND MATCH OFFICIALS' WELFARE

The mental pressures players face can be just as testing as the physical demands sport makes on their bodies. So, we were determined to support all Women's RWC 2025 participants as people as much as players or match officials by always prioritising all aspects of their health.

To support World Rugby's successful Impact Beyond 2025 programme in advancing the global player welfare agenda, we created a Women's Rugby Players Hub, which provided learning and development courses addressing physical and mental health and performance issues for female players, match officials and their coaches.

All 16 competing nations and the RWC 2025 match officials also attended a pre-tournament workshop discussing mental health in team environments, providing open spaces for honest conversation, addressing vulnerability, and developing practical support strategies. Another landmark initiative, the players peer support group, trained 37 former internationals in peer-support skills and assigned them to participating unions.

**"WE, AS PLAYERS, GET TO HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR OURSELVES, MENTAL HEALTH AND FRIENDS."**

– Player<sup>8</sup>

## Players Hub

**95%**

found courses useful and enjoyable<sup>15</sup>

## Online education

**99%**

would recommend to peers<sup>8</sup>

## Peer support network

**84%**

rated excellent or good<sup>8</sup>

## Mental health workshops

**77%**

felt confident their team will create a process to address mental health concerns<sup>16</sup>





## TACKLING ONLINE ABUSE

# WE PROTECTED PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS ONLINE

### World Rugby's Commitment

World Rugby's Social Media Protection Service helps create a safer online environment through a proactive, action-focused approach to athlete protection. By raising awareness of the scale of online abuse, educating key stakeholders, and generating insights to drive meaningful change, the initiative encourages ongoing discussion while keeping athlete welfare at its core. Safer digital spaces empower athletes to share authentic stories, build stronger connections with audiences, and enhance overall brand value.

[Access the full report here →](#)

## INDIVIDUALS AT THE WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP 2025 WERE

# 69%

### MORE LIKELY TO BE TARGETED WITH ONLINE ABUSE THAN INDIVIDUALS IN THE MEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP 2023.<sup>17</sup>

World Rugby took a powerful stand against online abuse towards players and match officials, with the launch of the social media protection service for the RWC 2025.

# 45

accounts targeted for abuse and threat<sup>17</sup>

# 440,340

posts and comments analysed<sup>17</sup>

# 14,439

posts and comments flagged by Threat Matrix AI and reviewed by analysts<sup>17</sup>

# 1,189

posts verified as abusive following the Threat Matrix review<sup>17</sup>

Any abusive, discriminatory or threatening messages were escalated to the platform and / or the relevant authorities and unions.



# WE BROUGHT IT ALL TOGETHER ON THE PITCH

Raising standards across facilities, logistics and match-day provision gave teams the best possible platform to perform. This translated into measurable improvements in performance standards throughout the tournament, improved from RWC 2021, with more tries scored per game, better skills execution and a faster, more dynamic style, delivering a more entertaining game.

## IN-GAME STATS<sup>9</sup>

### SCORING OUTPUT

**58.7 POINTS PER GAME**  
(vs 46.2 – RWC 2021)

### TRY SCORING

**9.2 TRIES PER GAME**  
(vs 7.1 – RWC 2021)

### PLACE-KICKING EXECUTION

**85% PENALTY SUCCESS**  
(vs 74% – RWC 2021)

### GAME SPEED

**AVERAGE RUCK SPEED OF 3.1S**  
(vs 3.3s – RWC 2021)

### TEMPO AND CONTINUITY

**BALL-IN-PLAY TIME OF 36M 13S PER MATCH**  
(vs 35M 37S – RWC 2021)

## CHAPTER 3

UNMISSABLE. UNFORGETTABLE. UNSTOPPABLE:

# HOW THE TOURNAMENT CAPTIVATED THE WORLD

Women's RWC 2025 powered women's rugby into the sporting mainstream, set new attendance records, grew global audiences and made its players cultural icons.





# THE CREST OF THE WAVE OF WOMEN'S RUGBY'S GROWTH

Women's RWC 2025 was the generational moment at which women's rugby broke through to the sporting mainstream, a tournament that redefined what's possible on the next level of the game's rising popularity.

But this phenomenon didn't come out of nowhere. The tournament was the crest of a fast-swelling wave of unstoppable global growth. Its previous edition generated 33.9 million global viewing hours<sup>18</sup> in 2022. More than 260,000 attended the women's sevens competition at the 2024 Paris Olympics<sup>18</sup>. Last year's Guinness Women's Six Nations drew a global audience of 18.2 million<sup>18</sup>. And ahead of Women's RWC 2025, Ilona Maher became the most followed rugby union player – male or female – on social media, with 8.7 million followers<sup>18</sup>.

## RIDING THE CREST OF A WAVE



RUGBY  
WORLD CUP  
NEW ZEALAND 2021

**33.9M**  
global viewing  
hours<sup>18</sup>



PARIS 2024

**260,000**  
attended women's  
rugby sevens  
matches<sup>18</sup>



GUINNESS  
W6N

**18.2M**  
global audience<sup>18</sup>



WOMEN'S  
ENG25

**147.8M**  
global viewing  
hours<sup>2</sup>

# WE MADE WOMEN'S RUGBY IMPOSSIBLE TO MISS

We saw the scale of the opportunity, and we knew what it would take to trigger even more seismic growth. Our research showed this was the right moment to open the throttle – 49% of fans who have come to the sport in the last two years, said they were hyped by the prospect of their first Women's Rugby World Cup<sup>18</sup> – and guided the strategy through which we would do it. Two elements were key: a dynamic and innovative broadcast product – 53% of fans have discovered the game through TV or streaming<sup>18</sup> – and a platform on which we could showcase players' unique personalities and the rockstar energy they bring.

To break every attendance, viewership and engagement record in the book, we needed to be across all broadcast, social and digital media channels, empower players to show up there as they are, give fans more opportunities to watch, and create moments and storylines that would captivate core fans and new audiences alike.

A new generation  
discovering rugby

**49%**

of women's rugby fans  
have become fans in the  
last two years<sup>18</sup>.

Broadcast is women's  
rugby's growth engine

**53%**

of fans have discovered  
the game through TV or  
streaming<sup>18</sup>.



# WE SET NEW ATTENDANCE RECORDS FOR OUR SPORT

England 2025 was by far the biggest Women's Rugby World Cup yet: the most-attended tournament ever sold three times as many seats as the previous edition. Fans bought 444,465 tickets in all – 92% of the total available – and the electric 81,885 who rocked the Allianz Stadium set a new attendance record for the women's game!

## THE MOST ATTENDED WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP EVER\*

**444,465**

tickets sold (x3 v RWC 2021)

**92%**

of total tickets available were sold

**81,885**

attended the final – a new attendance record

**20 OF 25**

matches sold out





# WE MADE EVERYONE WELCOME

We broke these records through an ambitious ticketing strategy and fan-friendly match schedule designed to reflect our sport's inclusive nature by making Women's RWC 2025 the most accessible and family-centric event of the year. That approach covered everything from host city selection – we made sure there was a tournament venue less than two hours away for 95% of England's population – to affordable ticket pricing: 60% of all seats cost less than £25 and we offered reductions for children at all matches, including the final<sup>19</sup>. We also designed the schedule to give as many people as possible the chance to attend, staging all matches at weekends – the majority with afternoon kick-offs – and using double headers to create festival experiences everyone could enjoy.

**95%**

of England's population less than 2 hours away from a tournament venue<sup>19</sup>

**44%**

of spectators were attending their first women's rugby match<sup>4</sup>

**52%**

of ticket buyers were women<sup>4</sup>

**60%**

of tickets cost less than £25<sup>19</sup>

**"THE ATMOSPHERE WAS ELECTRIC - THE BEST WE HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THE WOMEN'S GAME."**

– Spectator<sup>4</sup>

# WE KEPT FANS COMING BACK FOR MORE

While the numbers tell us England 2025 was the biggest Women's Rugby World Cup yet, fan feedback says it was the best ever too.

At +84, the tournament's impressive Net Promoter Score, an indicator of overall event satisfaction and loyalty, beat those of other recent major sporting events held in England, including the UEFA Women's Euros 2022 (+73)<sup>20</sup> and Netball World Cup 2019 (+81)<sup>21</sup>.

That level of positive feedback reflected the incredible matchday experiences our venues created. Fans and families of all backgrounds packed the stands in a loud, proud and colourful atmosphere that made the crowds almost as big a part of the spectacle as the teams themselves. And they loved it so much they kept coming back for more: one in five attended multiple matches<sup>22</sup>.

## NET PROMOTER SCORE

# +84<sup>1</sup>



**20% OF TICKET PURCHASERS ATTENDED MORE THAN ONE MATCH<sup>22</sup>**



**96% OF WOMEN/GIRLS ATTENDING SAID THEY WERE VERY LIKELY TO WATCH WOMEN'S RUGBY AGAIN<sup>22</sup>**



# WE CREATED MUST-SEE TV

Our ambitions for England 2025 did not end at the stadium gates: to drive the next major phase of women's rugby's global growth we needed people around the world to see our players' skill and athleticism, and get to know their stories, for themselves. To make those viewers' experiences as exciting and compelling as the live spectacle that got every match-going fan on their feet, we set out to expand not just our broadcast reach but the quality of production and distribution too.

Our broadcast partnerships and the resources they provided were a clear step up from previous tournaments. Upgraded match coverage, enhanced scale and quality of production, innovative behind-the-scenes non-matchday story-telling – all made available to our broadcasters on a central content hub to tailor to the specific needs of their audiences, be they experienced fans or newcomers to the game around the world.



## ENHANCED MATCH COVERAGE

with more cameras, larger production teams and premium broadcast technology



## IMMERSIVE VIEWING EXPERIENCES

using drone, cinema-style and cable cameras



## DEEPER STORYTELLING

through behind-the-scenes access and player-focused content



## FLEXIBLE DISTRIBUTION

via a central content hub with live feeds, highlights and graphics



## NEW-FAN FRIENDLY COVERAGE

with accessible in-venue commentary and introductory content for children and new international markets



# WE REDEFINED THE REACH OF WOMEN'S RUGBY

We made Women's RWC 2025 the most-watched edition ever and took the game's global visibility and profile to unprecedented heights. We achieved an incredible 147.8 million viewing hours<sup>2</sup> globally – over four times the previous tournament's high – and dramatic uplifts in target international markets.

Free-to-air coverage widened access to the event and the sport, with UK audiences watching 57 million hours<sup>2</sup> of BBC television output – and 10.5 million streams<sup>2</sup>. Average UK watch time was a remarkable 3 hours 24 minutes<sup>2</sup> – another expression of how deeply fans engaged with Women's Rugby World Cup 2025.

Globally, 15 countries televised all matches, with France registering the second most viewing hours behind the hosts with 56 million<sup>2</sup>, a 465% increase on Women's RWC 2021. France's 35-17 defeat to England hit a peak of 4.4 million viewers on TF1<sup>23</sup>. Beyond Europe, 10 million viewing hours were recorded in South Africa (491% increase) and 2 million in the USA (94% increase), while Canadian audiences spent 6 million viewing hours watching their team reach an historic final (212% increase)<sup>2</sup>.

## A TRULY GLOBAL VIEWING PHENOMENON

**147.8M** viewing hours globally<sup>2</sup>      **336%** increase on RWC 2021<sup>2</sup>

**15 COUNTRIES** televised all matches

## GLOBAL VIEWING HOURS<sup>2</sup>

**THE AMERICAS**  
**217%**  
average increase in viewing hours

**EUROPE**  
**470%**  
average increase in viewing hours

**AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST**  
**403%**  
average increase in viewing hours



# WE ENTERTAINED, INSPIRED AND ENGAGED

The tournament significantly expanded awareness of women's rugby, reaching far beyond existing fans and placing the tournament firmly in the mainstream sporting conversation. As more people engaged with the event, the quality, energy and impact of the women's game were experienced at scale – reinforcing the tournament's ability to entertain, inspire and connect with audiences across the UK and worldwide.

## HIGH AWARENESS, POSITIVE SENTIMENT<sup>24</sup>

**57%**

tournament awareness among the UK population (+10 percentage points vs pre-event)

**69%**

of UK rugby fans believe broadcasters should screen as much Women's Rugby World Cup coverage as men's, rising to 81% amongst those who followed RWC 2025, demonstrating the success of the coverage

**88%**

of people engaging with RWC 2025 described it as entertaining

**87%**

described it as empowering

**83%**

described it as powerful

**88%**

of UK adults agree RWC 2025 will inspire girls to play rugby



**BBC**

# WOMEN'S RWC 2025 AND THE BBC

Our partnership with the BBC extended our accessibility pledge from stadium to screen, giving Women's RWC 2025 the widest reach of any host nation broadcast deal in tournament history. This committed to a minimum of 50% of matches being shown live free to air<sup>19</sup>, and every game being available to stream on BBC iPlayer or through the BBC Sport website and app.

The tournament was promoted widely across the BBC, from its terrestrial channels and nations and regions networks to BBC News and its radio stations, while content teams from Rugby World Cup and the broadcaster collaborated on social media output. Special programming with The One Show brought the draw, the start of the tournament and preparations for the final to BBC1 primetime, while children's channels CBBC and CBeebies got their own dedicated output around the event. Further cross programming into non-sport output, including Bargain Hunt and Songs of Praise, also brought the tournament to new audiences. We also worked with BBC Introducing to curate an all-female line up of rising stars to perform at Match Venues and Host City Fan Zones, using our platform to provide opportunities to female talent from industries outside of the world of sport.

Coverage during the build up helped promote attendance too, with more than 100,000 tickets sold in the month prior to kick off<sup>13</sup>.



**57M**

Broadcast and streaming viewing hours on BBC platforms<sup>2</sup>

**3H  
24M**

Average UK watch time<sup>25</sup>

**7.3M**

Total live OOH (Out of home) viewing hours<sup>2</sup>





WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP 2025



THIS ENERGY NEVER STOPS

#THISENERGYNEVERSTOPS

# WE STARRED ON SOCIALS

## SOCIAL REACH AT UNPRECEDENTED SCALE<sup>3</sup>

Social impressions

1.1B

Video views

+272%

v RWC 2021

+121%

Social engagements

15.3M

followers across RWC accounts

2<sup>ND</sup>

most engaged RWC in history (Men's and Women's)

Social media has played a powerful positive role in the rapid rise of women's rugby union, and so was a key focus for us in widening our tournament's reach, attracting new fans, and giving our players a platform on which their star quality could shine. This was fan-first and entertainment-led, placing players at the heart of outstanding and authentic storytelling.

We did that and more with a youth-focused social media strategy designed to meet these digital-first audiences on their own terms and present our players' inspiring stories and the community spirit of our game in impactful and innovative ways. Strategic partnerships and initiatives with Snapchat, including immersive in-stadium experiences via Snap Cam, and TikTok, including a dedicated Rugby World Cup search hub and influencer events, significantly expanded rugby's reach among younger fans, fuelling engagements and placing rugby in the day-to-day conversation via those coffee machine and water cooler moments.

Allied to this was our unique tone of voice which was designed to represent the best aspects of the rugby clubhouse on social media. It was fun, inclusive, positive, respectful yet cheeky and humorous. It was crafted to amuse, amaze, inspire and inform.

As a result, Women's RWC 2025 generated a remarkable 1.1 billion social media impressions<sup>3</sup> on our owned channels, including 853 million video views and 31.1 million engagements<sup>3</sup> – significantly outperforming all previous editions. It was the second most engaged RWC in history. The tournament's social media following grew by 512,000 over the course of the tournament<sup>3</sup>.



# WE FUSED ELITE SPORT WITH CREATOR CULTURE TO TURN STARS INTO ICONS

The catalyst for this growth was our Content Creator Programme, a best-in-class initiative that blended elite sport with online entertainment culture to bring fans closer to the action and the players than ever before. Content creators embedded with the teams shot exclusive footage from inside their camps, sharing crowd interactions, celebrating the cultures, identities and values of the participating nations, and documenting rugby history as it was made.

**31M** impressions and **29M** views from Content Creators posts at RWC 2025<sup>26</sup>

The programme, alongside World Rugby teams and agencies, supported players in creating their own content and building their presence online, tapping into social media trends like Get Ready With Me and She Is Mother to show their authentic selves and provide a unique insight into their lives as elite female athletes.

For the first time at any Rugby World Cup – men’s or women’s – players were also allowed to share match content on their social channels, creating more visibility for the women’s game. Collectively, these initiatives helped player-led social content generate 270 million views and 17.7 million engagements<sup>3</sup>. The players’ combined following grew 672,000 to 12.1 million, while six of them doubled their follower count<sup>27</sup>. Women’s RWC 2025 was where women’s rugby – and its star performers – got Instagram famous.

**+392K** followers and **+6%** growth in players following<sup>27</sup>

## PLAYER FOLLOWER GROWTH<sup>27</sup>

**270M**

views on player-led social content

**12.1M**

combined player following post-tournament



**HANNAH BOTTERMAN**

**332%**

increase



**ANNA MCGANN**

**297%**

increase



**ASEZA HELE**

**244%**

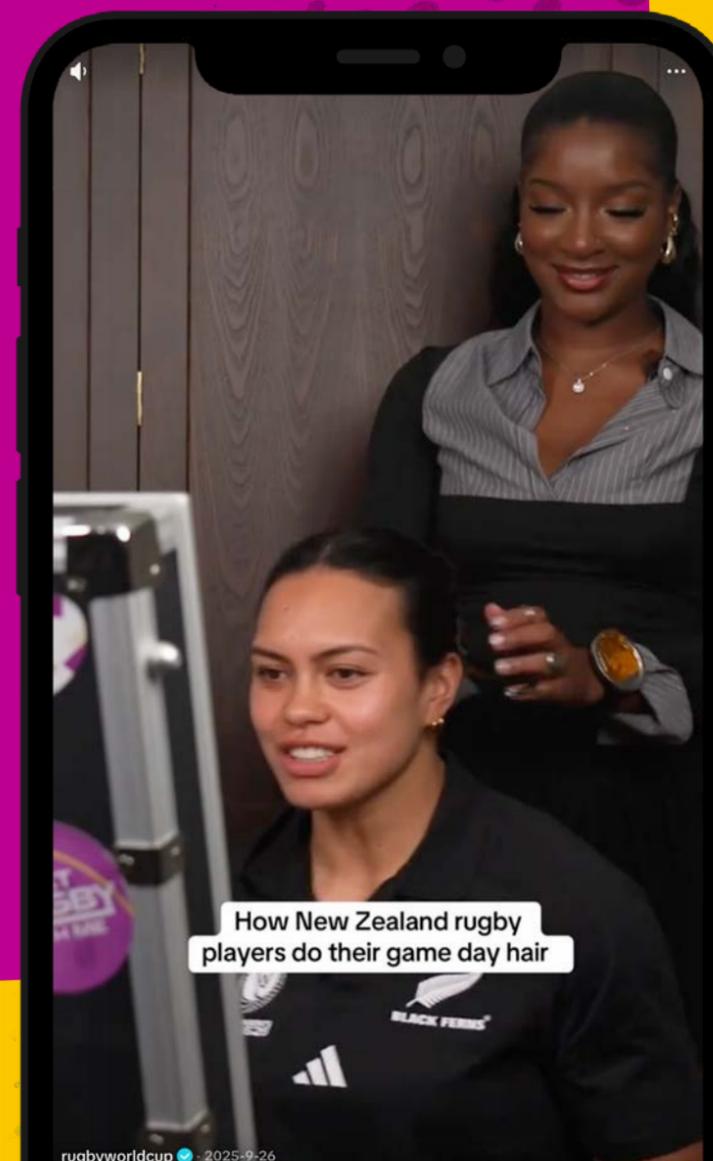
increase



**JULIA SCHELL**

**234%**

increase



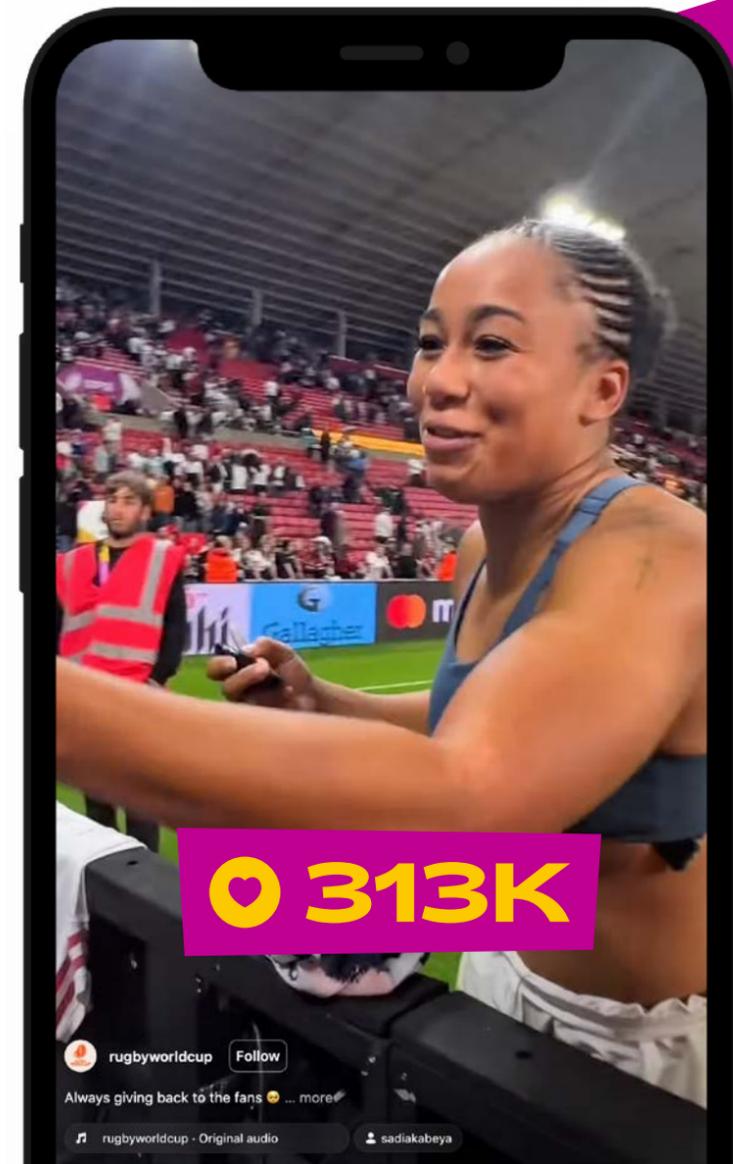
# VIRAL MOMENTS

Among the huge quantity of highly engaged social content Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 created, two emotive moments of authentic insight summed up what the tournament was all about – and went viral as a result.

The first of these was the emotional moment shared between Australia's 18 year-old sensation Caitlyn Halse, running over to her dad post-match. He lifted her up and over the advertising hoardings in a bear hug. It was a wholesome moment which epitomised the 'girl dad' trend and showed rugby in a new light to audiences.

The second was one of the most simple yet unapologetically rugby moments of the tournament – England's Sadia Kabeya greeting young England fans – with the boys equally as excited showing the amazing power of the tournament – and giving them her match jersey. She then spent minutes signing other items for them. A superstar at the top of her game, on the biggest stage, up close and personal with her fans.

These two moments encapsulated the power of social media, and the huge potential of women's rugby to authentically connect with people through it.





## CHAPTER 4

WHERE WE BELONG:

# EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women's RWC 2025 created new equity and opportunity for women and girls in rugby, careers and sport.



## REAL CHANGE STARTED HERE

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 was about far more than its thrilling action and powerful role models on the pitch. Our ambition was to spark meaningful change for women and girls in sport – to give them new confidence to play, new opportunities to build rewarding careers, and a new perception of rugby as a place for them.

The social purpose initiative embedded into the tournament 'Where We Belong', capitalised on the phenomenal growth of women's sport and used the unique platform of Women's RWC 2025 to show every woman and girl that she can do anything, be anyone and belong anywhere – in rugby, in sport and in society.

From athlete storytelling and EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion) campaigns to workforce strategy and industry engagement, everything we did had these three progressive goals in mind.

These programmes strengthened confidence and participation pathways for girls, expanded leadership and career opportunities for women, and reinforced rugby's position as an inclusive sport. Embedded across tournament planning, delivery and communications, Where We Belong aligned with World Rugby's ambition to drive sustainable growth in the women's game and deliver impact beyond the field of play.



**57% OF TEENAGE GIRLS ARE QUITTING SPORT, WITH LOW BODY CONFIDENCE THE NUMBER ONE REASON WHY<sup>28</sup>**



**ONLY 49% OF WOMEN FEEL COMFORTABLE BEING THEMSELVES IN SPORTING WORKPLACE<sup>29</sup>**



#### CHAPTER 4, PART A

### CHANGING FUTURES:

# WE SHOWED GIRLS BELONG IN SPORT

Generations of girls have grown up feeling sport isn't for them. We believe rugby can change that.

Our game offers something different: a sport that says to girls, show up exactly as you are – strong, powerful, unapologetically you. Women's RWC 2025 was where we proved it.

# WE CELEBRATED STRONG BODIES, STRONG MINDS

In July 2025, we launched the Strong Bodies, Strong Minds campaign, using our tournament's platform to confront the pressures holding young women back, spotlight the body confidence issues at their heart, and promote a new appreciation of strength, self-assurance and belonging through the lens of the women's game.

A compelling editorial and social media campaign centred on our athletes' voices, stories and authenticity, while accessible content formats – from short-form social videos and player diaries to in-depth editorial and podcast pieces – ensured it resonated with diverse audiences and demographics at every stage. With unprecedented reach and a cultural relevance felt far beyond sport, Strong Bodies, Strong Minds achieved awareness, impact and a deep emotional connection with its message.

## SEEN AND HEARD



Notebook ran a front cover and photoshoot with Gwen Crabb and three-page ambassador feature, supported by coverage across Mirror and OK!



Stylist published exclusive interviews with Sarah Bern and Jess Breach, accompanied by bespoke digital content.



A dedicated Should I Delete That? episode featuring Em Clarkson, Alex Light and Gwen Crabb introduced the campaign to one of the UK's most influential podcast audiences.





**MAGGIE ALPHONSI**



**JODIE OUNSLEY**



**SHAUNAGH BROWN**

**HOME UNIONS PLAYER AMBASSADORS**



**SARAH BERN**  
England



**LINDA DJOUGANG**  
Ireland

**"NOW BEING STRONG IS COOL. I WANT TO BE THAT ROLE MODEL THAT I DIDN'T HAVE."**

- Rhona Lloyd

**BEYOND SPORT AMBASSADORS**



**EM CLARKSON**  
Writer and Podcaster



**SCOLA DONDO**  
Content creator

# WE ELEVATED OUR AMBASSADORS

Maggie Alphonsi, Jodie Ounsley, and Shaunagh Brown were standout, high-profile ambassadors for RWC 2025, playing a pivotal role in championing the tournament through sustained public engagement and visibility across key moments in the lead-up to the tournament. As respected voices within the sport, their involvement elevated the profile of the event and reinforced the credibility, reach, and impact of the tournament.

The credibility and lived experience of our extraordinary group of Strong Bodies, Strong Minds ambassadors – elite rugby players and influential advocates from beyond sport – made Strong Bodies, Strong Minds a powerful, trusted movement that embodied the values of our sport and helped young women and girls see a place for themselves within it.

These iconic ambassadors drove home our message through storytelling, social content, national media features, podcast conversations and powerful digital moments. Their passion and personality generated high-profile editorial coverage, earning features across major UK glossies, digital platforms and top-ranked podcasts, and underpinned a dynamic, always-on social media strategy whose multi-format content sustained momentum throughout the tournament.

**MESSAGE RECEIVED<sup>10</sup>**



**306 PIECES OF MEDIA COVERAGE EARNED**



**COVERAGE ATTRACTED 4.76M VIEWS**



**414M PEOPLE REACHED VIA SOCIALS**



**CONTENT GENERATED 64,000 ENGAGEMENTS**



# WE GAVE YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS A NEW CONFIDENCE TO PLAY

The uplifting, inclusive spectacle of Women's RWC 2025, and the powerful vision of the Strong Bodies, Strong Minds campaign wrapped around it, changed perceptions of what strength looks like, who belongs in sport, and what girls can aspire to. By celebrating real women, real bodies and real stories, the tournament reframed the way in which young women perceive their place in sport and laid strong foundations for lasting cultural change.

## BUILDING BELIEF

**82%**

of women aged 18-24 attending RWC 2025 said the experience made them feel more motivated to be active<sup>4</sup>

**81%**

said it made them feel more confident being active<sup>4</sup>

**74%**

of women more widely said RWC 2025 made them more motivated to take part in sport and physical activity<sup>4</sup>

**88%**

said it made them believe that women and girls can achieve anything in sport<sup>11</sup>

**89%**

of girls and women aged 13-25 agreed RWC 2025 showed women can be strong and powerful<sup>11</sup>

**83%**

agreed it showed that different body types can excel in sport<sup>11</sup>

**86%**

agreed the tournament showed everyone has a place in rugby, regardless of size, shape or ability<sup>11</sup>





WELCOME TO ALLIANZ STADIUM

#RWC2025

CHAPTER 4, PART B

CHANGING LIVES:

# WE SHOWED WOMEN BELONG IN CAREERS IN SPORT

While progress is being made, inequality in the sports industry still exists. Women and under-represented groups are less visible in leadership roles and research shows they are far less likely than men to feel the industry welcomes them.

At Women's RWC 2025, we didn't just challenge this status quo, we tackled the stereotypes on which it is built by showing what inclusive leadership and visible representation can achieve in the planning, delivery and storytelling of a major sporting event.

LOCKED OUT<sup>29</sup>



**WOMEN HOLD ONLY 24% OF LEADERSHIP ROLES ACROSS UK SPORT**



**JUST 7% OF THE SPORTING WORKFORCE IS DRAWN FROM ETHNICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS**



**58% OF WOMEN FEEL THE INDUSTRY WELCOMES PEOPLE LIKE THEM - COMPARED TO 78% OF MEN**



# WE DEVELOPED FEMALE EXPERTISE

Through inclusive recruitment, strong female leadership visibility and an intentional focus on access, we opened doors and championed women and under-represented groups, enabling them to participate meaningfully and see themselves reflected in the industry. And by prioritising training, mentoring and accessible pathways, we worked to create an environment and sense of belonging to enable women to thrive in sport in the long term too.

## 25

scholars from around the world were part of the Capgemini Women in Rugby Leadership Programme in '24/25, designed to drive visibility of female leaders in rugby<sup>30</sup>

## 70+

female leaders from around the world convened at Childfund Grassroots to Global Connect to present recommendations on increasing female participation in coaching from grassroots to elite levels ahead of the World Cup<sup>30</sup>

## 47

female coaches have had exposure to elite level coaching, mentorship and competition since 2023 through the Gallagher High Performance Academy<sup>30</sup>

## 1500+

women developed their careers via Women's RWC 2025<sup>13</sup>

## 32%

of coaches at Women's RWC 2025 were female – a record<sup>30</sup>

By designing an ecosystem in which women were visible, valued and supported, we modelled a bold new standard for equity across the industry and reshaped what meaningful opportunity looks like in major events.



### FOR WOMEN - BY WOMEN<sup>31</sup>

## 100%

of the senior management group were women

## 70%

of the RWC England 2025 team were women

## 75%

of match officials were female

## 94%

of team security advisors were women

## 65%

TV commentators in the WR broadcast team were women



### FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE FINAL HAD AN ALL-FEMALE GROUNDS CREW



WOMEN'S  
ENG25

WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP 2025



THIS  
**ENERGY**  
NEVER STOPS

#THISENERGYNEVERSTOPS

# WE HIRED HOLISTICALLY

Our inclusive recruitment strategy produced a diverse Rugby World Cup workforce and challenged practices that have left women and people from ethnically diverse backgrounds locked out of employment in sport.



**PRIORITISED TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS  
OVER UNNECESSARY 'ESSENTIAL' ONES**



**PROVIDED CLEAR, WELCOMING  
JOB COMMUNICATIONS**



**ATTENDED CAREER EVENTS TO ATTRACT  
CANDIDATES FROM A NON-TRADITIONAL POOL**



**CHALLENGED NETWORK-BASED  
HIRING PRACTICES USING PROACTIVE  
OUTREACH**

# WE SUPPORTED THE NEXT GENERATION

Our mentorship, internship and professional development programmes mapped rewarding new career pathways in sport for women and other under-represented groups and accelerated their journeys along them.

## MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME<sup>31</sup>

- ✔ Senior Leadership and managers mentored 35 members of staff
- ✔ Mentorship was provided during, and in many cases since, the tournament
- ✔ Support beyond traditional line management structures

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME<sup>31</sup>

- ✔ 15 young women took part in the bespoke internship programme
- ✔ Hands-on event operation experience at 5 match venues
- ✔ Two interns have now secured roles with Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games

We also helped other team members explore post-tournament opportunities in sport through a special Careers Day at which organisations including FIFA, UEFA and Invictus Games helped them plan their long-term futures in the industry.





# WE LOOKED AFTER OUR PEOPLE

A Rugby World Cup is physically and mentally tough for the people organising it, as well as for those playing in it. So we invested significantly in a staff wellbeing support programme that ran across the tournament's six weeks and brought in experts to help colleagues build resilience, manage their energy, and recover effectively.





# WE VALUED OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our ground-breaking volunteer programme, supported by Allwyn, was created as another means of opening doors into major sports events for under-represented groups. It was designed to challenge and change the traditional profile of major event volunteers, widening access to reflect the diversity of our sport's modern fan base. By welcoming new demographics and empowering first-time participants, we not only began building the next generation of volunteers but created an army of long-term advocates for women's rugby too.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I wanted to give back to rugby what it gave me – a real sense of belonging in an accepting community, no matter where you come from, what you look like. To be a small cog in a big part of the sport's history is something I'll always be grateful for."<sup>32</sup>

"I first laced up my rugby boots in 1988, so I was probably the second wave of female players told to go back to the kitchen. I could only imagine selling out Twickenham Stadium and showcasing the women and girls' game to 5.8 million viewers on terrestrial TV. Thank you for empowering me to be part of making history and contributing to the unstoppable rise of women's sport."<sup>32</sup>

## STEPPING UP

# 64%

of volunteers were women (target: 60%)<sup>31</sup>

# 25%

were aged 18–25, with many volunteering at a major event for the first time<sup>32</sup>

# 71%

of volunteers said they are now more likely to attend women's rugby in future<sup>32</sup>

# 91%

were satisfied with their volunteering experience<sup>32</sup>

# 89%

agreed volunteering at RWC 2025 helped them meet new people and develop their networks<sup>32</sup>





# WE USED PROCUREMENT TO POWER SOCIAL CHANGE

We set out to make our procurement function a strategic engine for equity, embedding Rugby World Cup values into the evaluation criteria for every contract and creating a new benchmark for socially responsible, women-led supply chains. This ensured that suppliers championed women within their organisations as a result of their involvement with the tournament.

Our procurement team sought suppliers whose ethos aligned with our tournament mission and sustainability focus, embedding environmental and social considerations into every decision. This included strict ethical and sustainability standards for procurement, with suppliers evaluated on labour practices, supply chain transparency and environmental impact. By buying local wherever possible, they reduced environmental impact while strengthening host communities. As a result, they developed an invaluable infrastructure template for future Women's Rugby World Cups and a new blueprint for delivering socially responsible procurement at scale.

To support the delivery of domestic impact, the RFU was identified to be a key recipient of items as part of the tournament asset dissolution strategy. Overall, they received approximately 4,000 items across categories such as medical equipment, strength and conditioning equipment, consumables (such as stationery and hygiene products), and rugby equipment. England 2025 then worked with the RFU to further distribute these items. In some cases they were retained centrally by the RFU to manage, but the majority of items were distributed to 23 rugby clubs throughout England following a submission process that identified those with the greatest need, with a prioritisation to those that clubs with existing women and girls teams.

 **OVER ONE IN FIVE OF ALL CONTRACTED SUPPLIERS WERE LED BY WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLES<sup>12</sup>**

 **52% OF SUPPLIERS WERE BASED WITHIN 20 MILES OF A RWC 2025 STADIUM, TRAINING BASE OR TEAM HOTEL<sup>12</sup>**

 **80% OF ASSETS WERE RENTED, REDUCING ONE-OFF PURCHASES, MINIMISING WASTE, AND MAXIMISING REUSE<sup>13</sup>**



## CHAPTER 4, PART C

### CHANGING PERCEPTIONS:

# WE SHOWED WOMEN BELONG IN RUGBY

Women's rugby is growing fast – but, like many women's sports, it has not yet achieved the level of visibility it needs across participation, media coverage, sponsorship and investment. Visibility matters – you can't be what you can't see. When women and girls see themselves represented, they are far more likely to view the sport as a place for them.

Women's RWC 2025 was where we started to change that, demonstrating the value of our sport and using the tournament's bold modern media campaign and the widespread presence of women in its broadcast, digital and leadership roles to reframe rugby as a sport in which women belong.





# WE BROUGHT THE BEST OF OUR SPORT TO A WHOLE NEW AUDIENCE

Women's RWC 2025 was unmissable; its message was unmistakable: rugby is a powerful, entertaining and inclusive sport where everyone belongs – especially women and girls.

The most accessible and widely watched women's rugby event ever staged captivated audiences on screens as well as in the stands as free-to-air broadcast coverage and cross-platform digital output brought the game into millions of homes for the first time. As well as enjoying elite sport at its physical, skilful and emotional best, everyone watching became absorbed in the inspiring stories of our incredible players: charismatic, joyful and powerful – breaking stereotypes, rewriting expectations and turning them into household names and relatable role models for young women and girls.



## SEEING IS BELIEVING

**SPECTATORS OVERWHELMINGLY DESCRIBED THE TOURNAMENT AS INSPIRING (96%), INCLUSIVE (94%), ENTERTAINING (98%) AND EMPOWERING (93%)<sup>4</sup>**

**91%**

of girls and women aged 13-25 agreed that RWC 2025 will inspire more of them to play rugby<sup>11</sup>

**82%**

of new fans said women's rugby felt more inspiring after they had watched RWC 2025<sup>4</sup>

**96%**

of spectators reported a high likelihood of attending women's rugby union in the future<sup>4</sup>



# WE SHOWCASED RUGBY AS A SPORT FOR ALL

Women's RWC 2025 was women's rugby at its powerful, inspirational and entertaining best. Our role model players and ground-breaking marketing proved rugby is anything but a game only for men. We sparked a seismic shift in attitudes towards the sport and created a new demand for equal opportunity within it.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

**97%** of women (and **93%** of men) agreed RWC 2025 showed rugby is as much a sport for women and girls as it is for men and boys<sup>4</sup>

**83%** of 13-25-year-olds also said the tournament made them feel rugby is not just a sport for men<sup>11</sup>

**85%** of 13-25-year-olds said RWC 2025 made them feel hopeful about the future of women's sport<sup>11</sup>

Agreement among female fans worldwide that women's rugby should get the same exposure and investment as the men's game rose from **56%** before RWC 2025 to **67%** afterwards<sup>24</sup>

In the UK, the same figure jumped from **68%** to **87%**<sup>24</sup>

**80%** of men who engaged with the tournament agreed broadcasters should show as much of women's RWC as they do the men's tournament<sup>24</sup>

# WE PUT INCLUSIVITY FIRST

Seeing women's rugby up close transformed the way people view the sport, particularly as an accessible and inclusive environment for girls. The way the game was played, the spirit in which the tournament was contested and the family-friendly atmosphere in which it was watched all drove a shift in perceptions.

## FAMILY FRIENDLY

**70%**

of parents said they were more likely to take their children or grandchildren to women's rugby matches following RWC 2025<sup>4</sup>

**86%**

of parents who attended RWC 2025 now feel more likely to encourage their children to engage with the sport<sup>4</sup>

**12%**

increase in female fans post-tournament who agree that rugby is a safe sport for teenage girls to play<sup>24</sup>



## CHAPTER 5

**BREAKING NEW GROUND:**

# **PARTNERSHIPS POWER RECORD REVENUES AND ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Women's RWC 2025 unlocked new commercial value and delivered strong economic impact while raising sustainability standards.



## A CATALYST FOR WOMEN'S RUGBY'S NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH

The phenomenal growth of women's sport is about more than just the quality of its play or the size of its audience: women's teams, leagues and events are now amongst the biggest investment opportunities in sport.

At Women's RWC 2025, we set out to capitalise on this commercial momentum to take tournament revenues to new heights, showcasing our sport's ability to generate value for all its stakeholders and its potential to deliver even more again in years to come.

We did all that and more. We provided visibility, created positive brand association and delivered strong return on investment for our partners and broadcasters. For our host cities, we generated economic impact, built civic pride and elevated their destination brands. And for our partners in government, we used these impacts to show that women's rugby, the game as a whole and women's sport more widely are properties in which the UK should continue to invest.

We did it sustainably too, considering environmental responsibility at the different stages of the planning and delivery process and further testing our blueprint for minimising the impacts of Rugby World Cups. Commercially and environmentally, we showed women's rugby's numbers stack up.



### GEARED FOR GROWTH

Deloitte forecast women's sport to generate

# £1.8B

in global revenue in 2025<sup>18</sup>



## CHAPTER 5, PART A

### REVENUES AND PARTNERSHIPS:

# WE SHOWED OUR SPORT'S COMMERCIAL WORTH

Women's rugby's commercial ecosystem is primed for further rapid growth, but it needs bold investment, fan-first strategies and innovative thinking to really fly. Record attendances, viewership and social media engagement gave Women's RWC 2025 the opportunity to be that catalyst; the success of our ambitious commercial programme made sure we took it.

That achievement was underpinned by essential government support and built on brand partnerships, ticketing and hospitality, retail and licensing, and broadcast and media activity. The overall impacts were clear: we beat our commercial revenue target by 10% and generated more than £200 million in media value alone for our partners and sponsors<sup>6</sup>.





### POTENTIAL PROVEN

- ✔ **330%** increase in sponsorship revenue from RWC 2021<sup>7</sup>
- ✔ Commercial partners increased from **19** (RWC 2021) to **24** (RWC 2025)<sup>7</sup>
- ✔ **42%** of women's rugby fans are more likely to talk to family and friends about a brand that sponsors their favourite sports team or league, compared to 33% of men's rugby fans<sup>18</sup>
- ✔ **65%** of women's rugby fans have become more engaged with the sport over the past four years<sup>18</sup>

### TOURNAMENT REVENUE BREAKDOWN<sup>13</sup>

Government and other public agencies:	Sponsorship:	Ticketing:
<b>36%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Broadcast:	Hospitality:	Licensing:
<b>10%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

# WE PRIMED OUR PARTNERSHIPS TO PERFORM

Our partnerships strategy had two key priorities. Firstly, we encouraged established rugby sponsors to be part of the long-term growth story of the women's game by building a global commercial platform for women's rugby that is always-on and lives outside tournaments. Then we sought to show major consumer brands, with a track record of activating, that the tournament was an ideal platform for them, capitalising on a unique market moment created by England's potential for success and nationwide anticipation of the event as a whole.

We also made sure the tournament's values underpinned all our partnerships. The brands we worked with embraced ambition to align with partners who are purpose driven.

As a result, we increased sponsorship revenue by 330% on Women's RWC 2021, expanded commercial partnership numbers from 19 to 24<sup>7</sup>, and now four out of five principal partners are extending their involvement in women's rugby post-event through partnerships with World Rugby, the RFU, Professional Women's Rugby and Women's 6 Nations<sup>13</sup>.

Our brand partners brought additional value over and above their rights fee, including increasing awareness and engagement through impactful brand campaigns, elevating the fan experience and driving our wider tournament objectives around high performance, social impact and sustainability.





Capgemini

## CASE STUDIES

# BRANDS BUILDING THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S RUGBY

As part of our long-term women and girls' rugby strategy, World Rugby developed partnerships that went beyond typical tournament sponsorship assets of branding, ticketing and hospitality. Bespoke women's rugby programmes were created in collaboration with selected partners to achieve their strategic objectives and drive the women's game forward globally both on and off the pitch, thus contributing to the tournament's sporting legacy.

### CAPGEMINI WOMEN IN RUGBY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME<sup>30</sup>

The Capgemini Women in Rugby Leadership Programme was launched in 2022 to accelerate the game's development by supporting the next generation of female leaders in the sport. The 2024/25 programme supported 25 female leaders from across the global rugby family by providing bespoke training, development, mentoring and networking opportunities. Capgemini's internal university provided the programme's scholars with a dedicated coach and personalised training and coaching sessions, while World Rugby paired each with a mentor from within the game. Together, the scholars are becoming a growing network of role models for women in the game, with many progressing into senior leadership roles across Member Unions and the wider sports industry, including representation on World Rugby's Council.



## GALLAGHER HIGH PERFORMANCE ACADEMY<sup>30</sup>

The Gallagher High Performance Academy was a key enabler of World Rugby's ambition to increase the number of women coaching at elite level. From its launch in 2023 through Women's RWC 2025, the academy gave 47 female coaches invaluable experience of high-performance environments and international competition. The academy embedded them within their national teams and provided mentorship support and workshops on leadership, tactics and technical skills. The programme received best-in-class recognition from the International Olympic Committee, helped 28 participants into permanent elite roles and contributed to a record 32% female coaches at Women's RWC 2025.

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



### OFFICIAL PARTNERS



### OFFICIAL SUPPORTERS & SUPPLIERS





# WE UNLOCKED GREATER VALUE FROM PARTNER RIGHTS

Our tournament’s broadcast and social media reach, as well as strong stadium attendances, offered new levels of visibility that enabled more partners to activate their rights in a wider variety of ways and boosted Women’s RWC 2025 commercial media value as a result. Tournament-owned assets inevitably gained most exposure, but World Rugby and our sponsors, partners and host cities also benefited significantly.

Across Rugby World Cup social channels, successful partner activations included content series such as Get Rugby With Me presented by SharkNinja, Stronger Than You Think brought to you by Defender, and Rugby Rising Girls’ Locker Room in partnership with Mastercard.

At stadiums, we delivered unique brand experiences ranging from the Women’s Rugby Cup World

Opening Show, presented by O2, to the Asahi Coin Toss, Defender Trophy Car and Mascot, and Mastercard Player of the Match. Brands also took women’s rugby beyond the stadia and into new spaces, introducing it to new audiences through activations and merchandise sales. Examples of off-location brand activations included the Asahi Arms pub takeover, O2’s England, Meet England Red Roses campaign, and on-pack promotions from Asahi, KETTLE Chips, Volvic and Unilever.

Mastercard’s central London ‘Style Of Our Own’ (SOOO) women’s sport concept store allowed brands including Asahi, Volvic and Unilever to run in-store promotions, while other partners contributed with fan zone activations and by taking Digital Out-of-Home advertising packages with Ocean Outdoor, driving royalties to suppliers Fanatics, Gilbert and Macron as a result.



## GET RUGBY WITH ME **Shark NINJA**

Presented by SharkNinja<sup>13</sup>

**2.8M** impressions    **2.7M** views    **146K** engagement

## STRONGER THAN YOU THINK **DEFENDER**

Brought to you by Defender<sup>13</sup>

**1.7M** impressions    **1.5M** views    **70K** engagement

## RUGBY RISING GIRLS’ LOCKER ROOM

In partnership with Mastercard<sup>13</sup>

**2M** impressions    **1.3M** views    **13K** engagement

### SUCCESS FOR OUR PARTNERS - HEADLINE NEWS\*

Media exposure generated **£201M** in media value\* to commercial partners

**737% INCREASE** on RWC 2021 in media value delivered to commercial partners

Partners received **5.1X MORE** media value at RWC 2025 compared to RWC 2021

\*Media value is defined as Futures Net Value, a realistic, quality-adjusted estimate of the true value of brand exposure over media calculated by Futures Sport and Entertainment

# WE SOLD MORE TICKETS AND MERCH THAN EVER BEFORE

Women's RWC 2025 revenues were not dominated by any one segment, but matchday inventory made an important contribution to our tournament's commercial success. The 444,465 tickets we sold generated 24% of all revenue<sup>33</sup>, as well as a record 13,420 hospitality packages bought by clients from 33 countries<sup>33</sup>.

Working with Fanatics, Women's RWC merchandise registered more than £1.1 million in sales<sup>34</sup>, primarily in stadiums but also through fan zones and partner activations such as Mastercard's Style Of Our Own pop-up women's sports store on London's Regent Street, which sold tournament souvenirs and apparel around the watch parties and community rugby events it hosted.



OFFICIAL MERCHANDISE



**£4.5M GENERATED IN HOSPITALITY SALES<sup>33</sup>**



**RECORD 13,420 PACKAGES SOLD ACROSS 33 COUNTRIES<sup>33</sup>**



**OVER £1M IN IN-STADIUM MERCHANDISE SALES GENERATED<sup>34</sup>**



# WE EXPANDED BROADCAST FOOTPRINT TO RECORD LEVELS

The best Women's Rugby World Cup ever generated the most media coverage and attracted the biggest audiences ever.

Our tournament's broadcast footprint was the largest of any women's rugby tournament, with 29 broadcasters in 186 territories reaching 290 million households worldwide<sup>1</sup>, allowing us to more than treble viewership from the last edition, played in 2022<sup>25</sup>. The value of Women's RWC broadcast rights rose accordingly and accounted for 10% of all 2025 event revenues<sup>13</sup>.

**29** broadcasters  
**186** territories  
**290M** households worldwide

## TOURNAMENT BROADCASTERS<sup>7</sup>

### EMEA

France – TF1 & France TV  
UK – BBC  
Ireland – RTE  
MENA – StarzPlay  
Italy – RAI  
Spain – RTVE & Telefonica

DACH – Pro7/Joyn  
Czechia, Slovakia & Romania – Saran  
Georgia – LEPL  
Netherlands – Ziggo  
Portugal – SportTV  
South Africa – SuperSport

### AMERICAS

USA – CBS / Paramount+  
Latin America – ESPN  
Canada – TSN

### APAC

New Zealand – Sky NZ  
Australia – Nine/Stan  
Japan – JSports

South East Asia – Beln  
Pacific Islands – Fiji TV  
Taiwan – Elta

## CHAPTER 5, PART B

### BENEFITS TO THE HOST DESTINATION:

# WE DELIVERED SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR HOST CITIES

Women's RWC 2025 delivered exceptional value for public investment, generating £294 million in economic impact from £14M of government funding. Beyond the strong economic return, the tournament elevated the profile of women's sport, reached new audiences through record broadcast engagement, and created lasting benefits for host communities and the women's game.

We wanted Women's RWC 2025 to be an occasion enjoyed by the entire nation, and one from which all its host regions would benefit. We achieved that goal by delivering a remarkable economic and social return on our host cities' investment, and showcasing the best of our country to the world.

Unlocking the tournament's huge potential began with the record-breaking attendances that delivered unprecedented economic impact for our eight host cities.

Economic impact is a measure of the incremental inflows of money that a major tournament brings into a given host region. It is crucial to understanding an event's return on investment.

At Women's RWC 2025, our host cities' accommodation, hospitality and transport sectors in particular enjoyed a major boost as a direct result of staging the event, while more than 80% of all economic impact was generated outside London<sup>5</sup>.

The spending of international visitors was an important driver of these effects – generating £18.2 million overall<sup>6</sup> – but our venue selection strategy also maximised the value of unprecedented domestic interest in the event by prioritising accessibility for every match. Some 74% of attendees said they lived within two hours of the venue and a third of all direct spectator spending was generated by UK residents who lived outside the host cities<sup>5</sup>.



## ECONOMIC IMPACT<sup>5</sup>

**DIRECT EXPENDITURE** £176.3M

- of which £41.4 million was generated for the UK accommodation sector and £24 million was generated for the hospitality sector
- £94 million was generated from England-based fans from outside host cities
- £18.2 million was generated from international visitors



**INDIRECT EXPENDITURE** £118.4M

Generated from:

- Indirect effects of supply chain stimulation from direct spending and first-order spending effects from supporting businesses
- Induced effects of increased household wages re-spending throughout the local economy



**TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT** £294.7M

Generated to host cities

of which £246 million was generated for cities outside London

### RWC 2025 HOST CITIES<sup>5</sup>

#### BRIGHTON & HOVE

- Attendees: 60.5k
- Total Economic Impact: **£28.5M**

#### BRISTOL

- Attendees: 91.7k
- Total Economic Impact: **£47.7M**

#### EXETER

- Attendees: 58.7k
- Total Economic Impact: **£31.7M**

#### LONDON

- Attendees: 81.9k
- Total Economic Impact: **£48.5M**

#### MANCHESTER

- Attendees: 19.9k
- Total Economic Impact: **£22.8M**

#### NORTHAMPTON

- Attendees: 48.8k
- Total Economic Impact: **£47.6M**

#### SUNDERLAND

- Attendees: 42.7k
- Total Economic Impact: **£31.1M**

#### YORK

- Attendees: 37.0k
- Total Economic Impact: **£36.9M**

# WE PUT NEW DESTINATIONS ON THE TOURISM MAP

At Women's RWC 2025, we showcased the very best our great English host cities have to offer and did so with a focus on elevating destinations outside London. With the capital hosting the final and third place play-off only, we were able to bring fans and media exposure to locations that might not otherwise enjoy the benefits of being a major sports event host.

This strategy created a nationwide festival of rugby that brought domestic and international visitors together with their hosts: almost 50,000 people enjoyed the atmosphere of our seven host city fan zones<sup>35</sup>. The prominent positioning of these fan zones in iconic locations such as Battersea Power Station and Bristol city centre helped extend the tournament's reach and introduce it to many more people. Record levels of global interest generated record volumes of media coverage, which in turn generated valuable mentions and recognition for tournament hosts. We also moved the dial in terms of how our host cities were perceived: all received at least a 60% recommendation rating, with York and Sunderland seeing the greatest positive change in how they are viewed<sup>5</sup>.

In bringing new tourism and international visibility to host cities across England, we not only delivered a strong positive return on their investment but demonstrated the power of major events as tourism drivers and provided a springboard to attract more visitors again over the longer term.





## THE VALUE OF VISITORS

# 47K

people enjoyed our host city fan zones, including more than 17k in Sunderland for the opening match<sup>35</sup>

# 73%

of visiting match attendees said that they would recommend England as a holiday destination – with 86% recommending York<sup>5</sup>

# £54M

generated in host cities' media value<sup>6</sup>

# 75%

of media value attributed to host cities outside London<sup>5</sup>

## RWC 2025 HOST CITIES' MEDIA VALUE\*<sup>5</sup>



\*Media value is defined as Futures Net Value, a realistic, quality-adjusted estimate of the true value of brand exposure over media calculated by Futures Sport and Entertainment.



# WE MADE PEOPLE PROUD

Major sporting events, and success in them, are well recognised as important sources of national pride, and Women’s RWC 2025 provided more powerful evidence of that. Across England, throughout English rugby, in all our host cities and within every community that played its part, we were proud to say we staged the greatest occasion women’s rugby has seen.

The nation was proud of the Red Roses who lifted the trophy for the third time, but also of the way in which we delivered the event and the positive image of England it left. Experiences of the tournament generated strong support for hosting future major events and set the stage for the country to become the host destination of choice for international women’s sport.

## PRIDE OF PLACES<sup>5</sup>

### 85%

of visiting match attendees agreed that England is a great host of major sporting events

### 98%

of England-based match attendees hope England continues to host major sporting events in the future

### 94%

of England-based attendees felt proud that England hosted Women’s Rugby World Cup

### 93%

of England-based attendees agree that hosting the tournament had a positive impact on communities in England

### 91%

of England-based attendees agree that hosting the tournament showcased England as a positive and vibrant place





## CHAPTER 5, PART C

### SUSTAINABILITY:

# WE CONTINUED TO INCREASE THE STANDARDS FOR OUR MAJOR TOURNAMENTS

At Women's RWC 2025, we showed how our tournaments can run sustainably without restricting their powers of commercial and cultural transformation. We worked closely with host cities and venues to embed environmental responsibility into every stage of tournament planning and delivery, and created a new blueprint for future editions to follow.

Smart venue selection and extensive public transport links meant most fans travelled sustainably, team logistics were planned in detail to minimise emissions, and we set new benchmarks in our waste diversion rates.

This was underpinned by a sustainability-led procurement approach, embedding World Rugby's sourcing criteria, including ethical labour practices, supply chain transparency and environmental impact, into delivery decisions, and reinforcing a scalable blueprint for future tournaments.

We didn't just minimise the Women's RWC 2025 carbon footprint, we adapted our approach and processes to achieve World Rugby's wider environmental commitments.



# IMPACT IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER

**81,337**

CO<sub>2</sub>e from activities linked to Women's Rugby World Cup 2025<sup>37</sup>  
(calculated using World Rugby's Carbon Emissions Reporting Tool incl. scope 1,2 and 3)

**83%**

of RWC 2025 volunteers travelled by sustainable modes of transport<sup>36</sup>

**56%**

of RWC 2025 fans chose sustainable modes of transport on match days<sup>36</sup>

**97%**

of tournament venue waste diverted from landfill<sup>36</sup>

**92%**

reduction in broadcast technical power emissions achieved by using hydrotreated vegetable oil fuel and implementing energy efficiency plans for mobile tech power<sup>36</sup>

**79%**

reduction in emissions (vs equivalent car journeys) from train-first policy approach for RWC 2025 local team and match official travel<sup>36</sup>



## RWC 2025 CARBON EMISSIONS BY SOURCE<sup>36</sup>

CATEGORY	% OF EMISSIONS
Fan travel	48%
Freight and logistics	33%
Travel - air	8%
Overlay (incl. IAL programme)	4%
Fan accommodation	3%
Fan food and beverage	1%
Energy	1%
Catering	1%
Sports equipment	0.4%
Uniforms & RAL	0.3%
Accommodation	0.3%
Transport	0.1%
Travel - land	0.04%
Electronic equipment	0.02%
Waste	0.01%
Water	0.01%



## CASE STUDIES

### TOURNAMENT TRAIN TRAVEL CUTS CARBON COSTS<sup>13</sup>

Prioritising rail over road enabled Women's RWC 2025 to save an estimated 110 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> as 410,000 miles of train travel reduced tournament emissions by 79% of the quantity that would have been generated by equivalent vehicle journeys.

We operated a clear 'train-first' policy for staff, operational personnel, match officials and guests, who made 3,134 rail journeys between them during the tournament's planning and delivery. Our centralised booking programme ensured consistency, reduced the need for ad hoc travel and enabled accurate emission tracking.

As well as reducing pollution and congestion, rail also offered predictable journeys, on-board connectivity and less travel stress, proving that sustainable transport can support effective event delivery at scale.



### WHISTLE-STOP TRAIN JOURNEYS SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE OFFICIATING<sup>13</sup>

Match officials played a key role not just in the on-field success of Women's RWC 2025 but in achieving our sustainability ambitions too, by agreeing travel and accommodation principles that balanced their welfare and performance with environmental responsibility.

All officials were based in London, where nationwide rail connections gave them efficient travel links to all host cities and minimised the need for domestic flights or long-distance car journeys. Across hundreds of trips, rail services proved reliable, while first-class seats ensured our officials had comfort, privacy and recovery time. These experiences showed low-carbon travel can meet the needs of elite officiating and set a benchmark for future events.

## VENUE GRANTS FUND LASTING ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE<sup>13</sup>

Our Venue Grants programme invested £80,000 in eight sustainability improvement projects at Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 stadiums. These included waste-reducing water refill stations, biodiversity enhancements through tree planting, energy-saving LED lighting upgrades, electric vehicle charging points, smart energy management systems, and electric heating that reduced reliance on gas.

The programme focused on targeted, achievable interventions that addressed sustainability gaps and gave venues ownership of delivery, allowing alignment with existing plans and ensuring improvements could be maintained and built upon long after the tournament ended.

### RWC 2025 VENUE GRANTS PROGRAMME<sup>36</sup>

#### BRISTOL & SALFORD

Installation of water refill stations to reduce waste by encouraging bottle re-use

#### BRIGHTON

Biodiversity enhancement through tree planting schemes, bird boxes and local engagement

#### EXETER & SUNDERLAND

LED lighting upgrades to reduce energy consumption and emissions

#### NORTHAMPTON

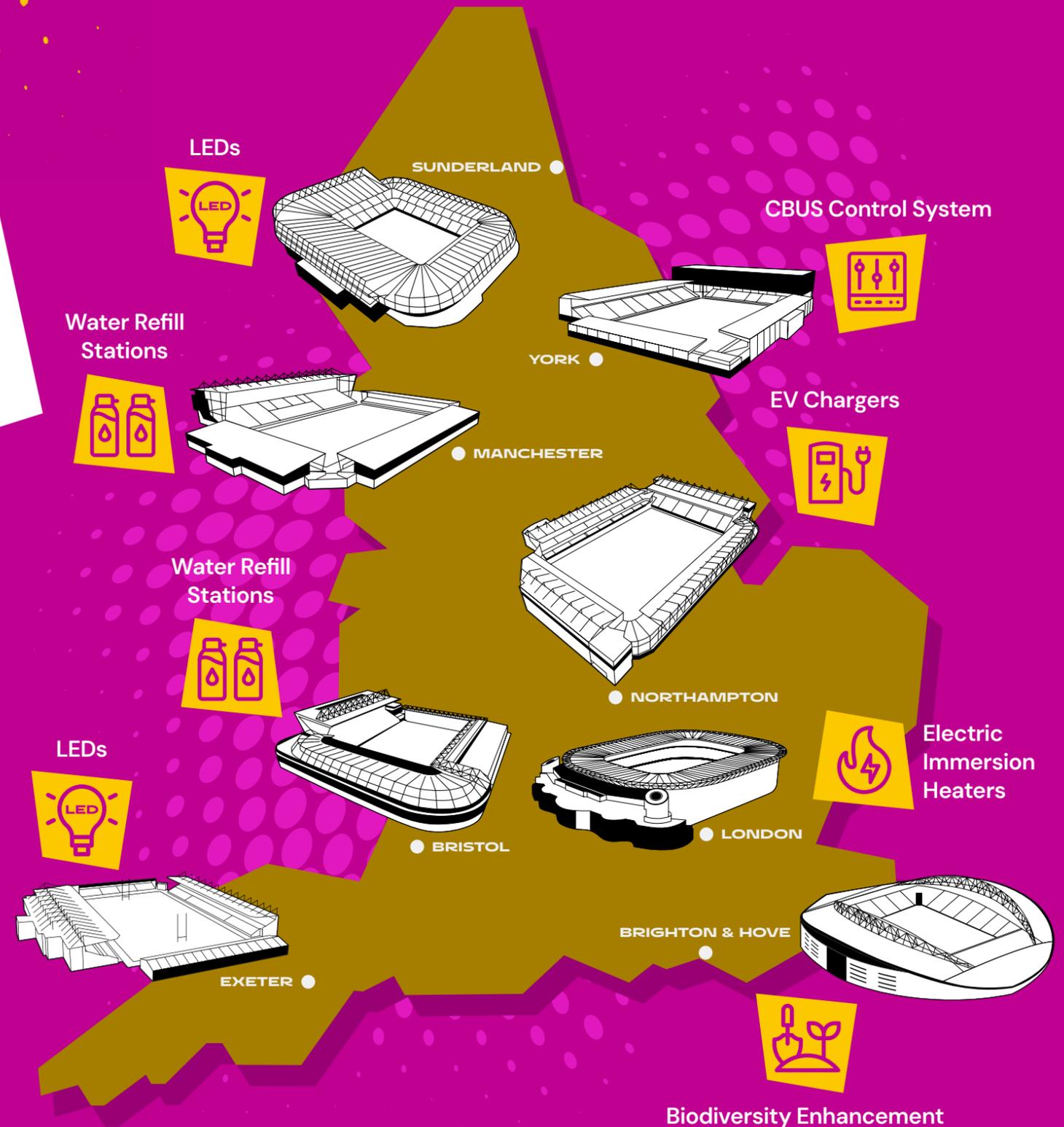
Installation of electric vehicle charging points to encourage low-carbon transport

#### YORK

Smart control systems for lighting, heating and concessions to manage energy use

#### TWICKENHAM

Use of electric heaters to reduce reliance on gas boilers



## CHAPTER 6

SUPERCHARGING GROWTH:

# THE NEXT LEVEL UNLOCKED

Capitalising on this generational moment – in participation, fan engagement, commercial development and audience growth – is now down to us.



# WE'VE BUILT THE PLATFORM

Over six spectacular weekends, England staged an era-defining Women's Rugby World Cup: a milestone tournament that accelerated the development of the women's game and set the stage for more unstoppable growth.

We raised the bar for standards of play, event organisation, content creation and fan experiences. We helped shape a new approach to staging major women's rugby events, bringing stakeholders together around World Rugby's evolving blueprint for the sport's biggest occasions. We also created a powerful catalyst for change in the way the world views women's rugby and in how women and girls see themselves, their place and their potential in sport.

## EXCITING AND INSPIRING

**83%**

of young women and girls felt inspired by RWC 2025<sup>4</sup>

**87%**

of people aged 13–25 found RWC 2025 exciting to watch<sup>11</sup>

**39%**

of women's rugby fans said the increased visibility of players has increased engagement in the game<sup>18</sup>





# WE'VE PICKED UP THE BALL

In England, the landmark success of Women's RWC 2025 was built on strong foundations laid by the RFU and its long-term commitment to the growth of the women's and girls' game. On a global scale, World Rugby's commitment was always to create lasting change, not just in England but across 130 plus countries and six regions. Through Impact Beyond 2025, World Rugby's global legacy programme the work continues. We are already seeing participation, competition and commercial growth worldwide, stronger leadership pathways and an expanding pipeline of female coaches and match officials. Together, with our union partners, these advances are building a stronger, sustainable and inclusive future for rugby.

[View Impact Beyond Report](#) →

Already, our partners and successors are picking up the ball and running with it.

Across the women's rugby landscape, we are witnessing strong sustained global growth. In England, Premiership Women's Rugby (PWR) continues to develop a compelling domestic league, while the Women's Six Nations goes from strength to strength in Europe.

France's domestic league remains one of the most established and successful globally, setting benchmarks for longevity and record-breaking crowds. Beyond Europe, domestic competitions are growing in strength across North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. On the global stage, there is a new women's global calendar, and the redesigned WXV Global Series launching in September 2026 offers players and fans the opportunity to compete against and follow the very best teams in the world. There are more than 100 top tier fixtures confirmed over the next three years on the road to RWC 2029. The first women's Lions tour to New Zealand in 2027 represents a further milestone in the global evolution of the game.

Above all, the next Women's Rugby World Cup hosts – Australia in 2029 and the USA in 2033 – are primed to build on the success of 2025 as World Rugby leads, together with its partners, regions and member unions, the unstoppable rise of women's rugby growth in Oceania and the Americas.



PWR opening round attendances are up

**183%**<sup>38</sup>

## GAINING MOMENTUM

**55%**

of women's rugby fans believe their interest in rugby union will grow in the future<sup>18</sup>

**49%**

of women's rugby fans have come to the game in the last two years (vs 22% of men's)<sup>18</sup>

**65%**

of fans of women's rugby have become more engaged with the game over the last four years<sup>18</sup>

**85%**

of 13-25-year-olds who watched RWC 2025 feel hopeful about the future of women's sports<sup>11</sup>

# LET'S MAKE MORE MAGIC HAPPEN

We want Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 to be a milestone in the continued rise of women's sport, not the peak of its ascent.

That means continuing to unlock the potential of women's rugby to meet under-served demand – giving more women and girls the confidence and opportunity to play and watch, and to stimulate new interest in our sport, particularly among families and under-represented groups. It means building more of the cultures and support networks we've shown can give women equitable career opportunities in sport. And it means letting women of all ages know that rugby is a place they can show up exactly as they are.

It will take a team effort to achieve these goals, so our final ask is that all our stakeholders take the next great steps together. It's critical we retain and share the knowledge the tournament generated within the ecosystems of women's rugby and sport. It's even more vital that we put it to good effect.

There's an opportunity here for government funding to be even more impactful, for commercial partnerships to be even more profitable. Governing bodies can accelerate participation growth, broadcasters and content creators can attract even bigger audiences. Host cities can derive even greater legacies from the next events they stage.

Looking ahead to Women's Rugby World Cup 2029, we have an opportunity to build on the momentum already created – driving further growth through targeted investment, broader participation, and more impactful government funding. By carrying the lessons and energy of 2025 into 2029 and beyond, we can build steadily on this progress and amplify its long-term impact.

But, above all, the opportunity is for women and girls to recognise that sport, and especially rugby, is a place they can play, work and belong. Let's finish what we started.



## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1  
**ECONOMIC IMPACT**

APPENDIX 2  
**MEDIA VALUE**

APPENDIX 3  
**BRAND HEALTH TRACKER**

APPENDIX 4  
**LET HER DREAM 2025**

APPENDIX 5  
**LIST OF SOURCES AND  
RESEARCH CONDUCTED**





# APPENDIX 1 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Respondents were asked to complete the survey on behalf of all in their group. In total, there were 23,310 respondents to the spectator survey.

## APPROACH

### Spectator Survey

- To measure the economic impact of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, a spectator survey was sent to all ticket purchasers via World Rugby's ticket database. Respondents were asked to complete the survey on behalf of all in their group. In total, there were 23,310 respondents to the spectator survey.
- Respondents were asked a series of questions about their spend on matchday and excluding matchday, per person over 18 and per person under 18.

### Calculate Regional Multipliers

- To ascertain the economic impact for each host, regional economic multipliers were calculated.
- A nationally representative survey was conducted in five waves, collecting data from 5000 respondents in total.
- This survey estimated the marginal propensity to consume in each region in England. The multiplier was applied to spend at each event location.

### Ticketing Data Integration

- To the extent that those completing the survey are not totally representative of event ticket buyers, their responses were weighted to reflect their respective composition in the total attendee base. This was the most robust way of calculating the overall economic impact of an event from the basis of a sample of survey respondents.

### Other spend data:

- World Rugby provided information on net organiser spend during the event.
- Net organiser spend directly attributed to the event was multiplied by the regional economic multiplier.

## REPORTING DEFINITIONS

- **Event Spending:** Expenditure by RWC 2025 attendees on event activities. This spending is wholly included as an economic impact of RWC 2025.
- **Non-Event Spending:** Expenditure by RWC 2025 attendees on non-event activities. This spending is only included as an economic impact of RWC 2025 if it is directly attributable to the event. E.g., if an individual travels from Europe to Sunderland primarily to watch RWC 2025, their non-event spending on accommodation, travel and food is included as an economic impact of RWC 2025.
- **Primary Visitor (PV):** Individuals (from other countries or areas of England) whose primary reason for visiting the host city was RWC 2025.
- **Casual Visitor (CV):** Individuals (from other countries or areas of England) whose primary reason for visiting the host city was not RWC 2025.

## REPORT TERMS

- **International Inflow Spending:** This is the spending that is attributable to RWC 2025 from visitors outside of England. This can be broken down as (Intl. PV Event & Non-Event Spending) + (Domestic CV Event Spending).
- **Local Spending:** This is the total spending that is attributable to RWC 2025 from residents of the host city who attended RWC 2025. This is simply the Event Spending of locally-based attendees.

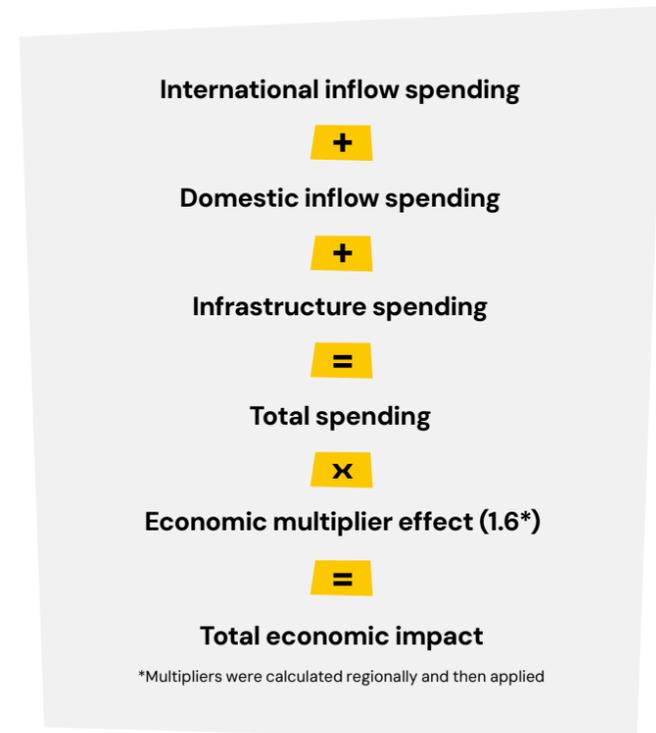
## ATTENDEES INFORMATION

- **Number of Attendees:** Futures obtained information on the number of attendees from World Rugby. The number of event attendees are a count of the total number of individuals who attended across the tournament.
- **Attendees Spend:** Average spend by attendee group was calculated using the spectator survey data provided by World Rugby. Respondents self-reported their individual and their children's spend on both event days and non-event days across: Food and Non-alcoholic Drinks, Alcoholic Drinks, Merchandise, Flights, Transport, Accommodation, and Daily Entertainment.
- **Survey Sample:** After the survey data was cleaned, there was a total sample of N=16,323. Local attendees and Domestic Primary Visitors made up the majority of survey respondents.

## TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

- The total spending (or direct expenditure) refers to the total amount of 'new' expenditure generated in the host economy as a direct consequence of staging the event.
- Across each of the host cities, the total spending was calculated by summing the international inflow spending with the domestic inflow spending and infrastructure spending.
- The total spending was subsequently multiplied by the economic multiplier effect, which was calculated regionally and applied to the sum based on the nationally representative survey which estimated the marginal propensity to consume in each region, to form the total economic impact.

- This economic multiplier effect incorporates the indirect impacts, which are the secondary effects or 'ripple' effect of the event. This is a measure of the increase in business-to-business activity through the recirculation of the direct expenditure and its impact on activity throughout the supply chain to meet increases in demand.
- In addition, the economic multiplier includes induced effects, capturing the impact of increased household wages earned by event staff and local residents as these earnings are re-spent throughout the economy.
- The total economic impact of the Women's Rugby World Cup totalled to £294.7 million.





## APPENDIX 2 MEDIA VALUE

Media value is defined as The Futures Net media value conducted by Futures Sport and Entertainment for Women's Rugby World Cup 2025.

As a member within IPG Mediabrands, an annual buyer of \$40B+ of media space, Futures Sport and Entertainment have access to and deep knowledge of the actual costs of airtime and uniquely positions theme to deliver the most accurate equivalent values in the industry. It provides them with:

- Access to actual costs of airtime
- Multiple parameters, rather than flat CPM, Futures' costs may vary by time, day, month, teams, round, broadcaster, and channel based on what brands are actually paying for specific types of broadcast integrations
- Integration: Futures' media-buying data underpins their valuation methodology

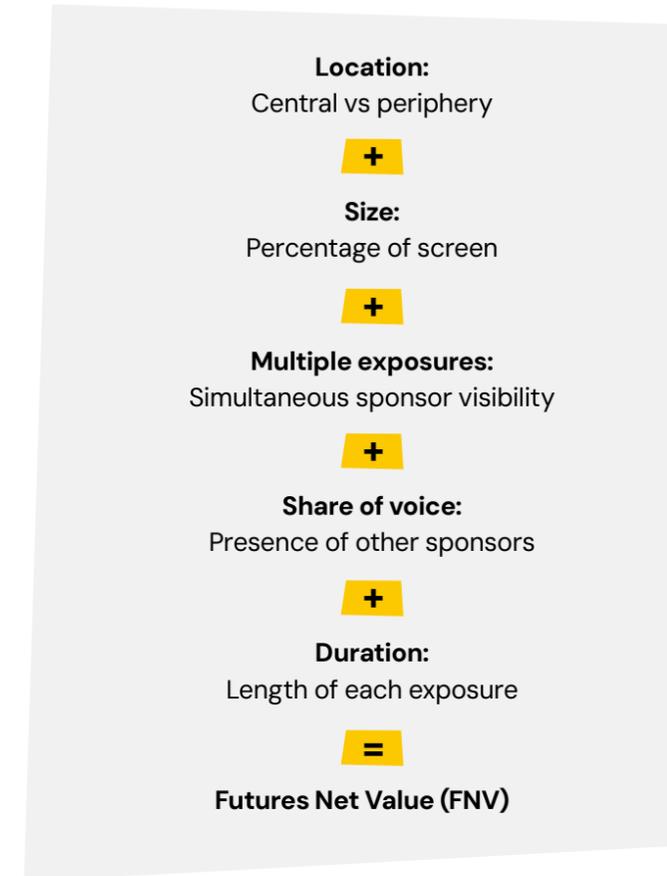
## MONITORING AND REPORTING OF EXPOSURE

- Futures calculate both the gross media value (GMV) and Futures Net Value (FNV) to provide a clear understanding of ROI to brands.



### Futures Net Value:

- Additional analysis is conducted to determine Futures Net Value to provide an accurate media valuation based on sourcing actual advertising costs from their network of sister agencies around the globe – for all markets, media and assets.
- The quality of each exposure in every medium is then assessed using a proprietary algorithm, taking into account a series of discount factors, generating the Futures Net Value



## APPENDIX 3 BRAND HEALTH TRACKER

- World Rugby and market research company, GWI, partnered in 2023 to research, monitor and influence the overall 'health' of the brand of rugby as a code, as well as the brands of World Rugby's owned products, platforms and experiences.
- The research set out to understand and be able to quantify wherever possible the impact delivered for World Rugby's commercial and media partners as a result of their relationship with World Rugby.
- The fieldwork was conducted using an online questionnaire, taking place in 5 markets: Australia, France, Japan, UK, USA, and across 4 World Rugby key target groups: Rugby Avids, Leisure Hungry's, Decision Makers in Young Families, Gen Z.
- Audiences were screened based on age to only include those above the age of 16 and under the age of 64.
- For the purposes of this report, the data used from the Brand Health Tracker was limited to centre around Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, recording responses pre-tournament and post-tournament to understand change in attitude and interest amongst key target segments.
- 3918 responses were recorded pre-tournament (06/06/2025 to 02/07/2025) and 4144 were recorded post-tournament (27/09/2025 to 22/10/2025).
- Responses were subsequently weighted within the GWI platform to ensure figures were representative of general population.



## APPENDIX 4

### LET HER DREAM 2025

- Women in Sport conducted and published 'Let Her Dream 2025 – the Rise of the Gender Dream Deficit in Sport', a report which tracks how the rising visibility of women's sport is shaping the attitudes and aspirations of young people aged 13–24 in the UK.
- This report uses data from the October 2025 data wave, and the report published in December 2025, which measures outcomes from after Women's Rugby World Cup has concluded.
- Women in Sport commissioned Savanta to carry out nationally representative surveys of young people aged 13–24.
- October 2025 represents Wave 5 of the survey, with N=2504 (1281 girls; 1223 boys).
- Some survey questions were not asked in every wave and were specific to particular events or points in time.
- All statistics in the report have been rounded, so totals may not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding adjustments.
- The full publicly available report can be accessed [here](#).

## APPENDIX 5

### LIST OF SOURCES AND RESEARCH CONDUCTED

- 1 World Rugby Data: RWC2025 Tournament Performance, November 2025
- 2 Futures Sport and Entertainment: Rugby World Cup 2025, Global Audience Report
- 3 World Rugby: Final Tournament Report, Record Breaking RWC, Overview of fan data and tournament performance across RWC25
- 4 World Rugby Data: RWC 25 In-tournament Survey
- 5 Futures Sport and Entertainment: Rugby World Cup 2025, Destination Media Value, Economic Impact, and Event Engagement Impact Report
- 6 Futures Sport and Entertainment: Rugby World Cup 2025, Exposure & Media Valuation Report
- 7 World Rugby Data: RWC2025 Partnerships Report
- 8 World Rugby Data: Player Satisfaction Survey
- 9 World Rugby Data: Performance Data
- 10 Run X: Strong Bodies Strong Minds Social Purpose
- 11 Women in Sport: Let Her Dream 2025 – the Rise of the Gender Dream Deficit in Sport
- 12 World Rugby Data: RWC 2025, Where We Belong, Empower Real Change
- 13 World Rugby: Owned Data
- 14 World Rugby Data: Match Officials Satisfaction Survey
- 15 World Rugby Data: Women's Player Hub Survey
- 16 World Rugby Data: Mental Health Workshop Survey Data
- 17 Signify Group: Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, Threat Matrix, Full Tournament: Analysis Report
- 18 World Rugby: A Blueprint for Growth, Women's Rugby Fan Data and Commercial Insights
- 19 World Rugby Data: The Story of the Tournament, Communications Playbook
- 20 Event Impacts: UEFA Women's European Championships 2022
- 21 World Netball: World Netball Declares Intention to Build Case for Olympic Games Inclusion at Brisbane 2032
- 22 World Rugby Data: RWC2025 Ticketing Insights, October 2025
- 23 SportBusiness: Wood, Ida: BBC, TF1 set records at Women's RWC semi-final, September 2025
- 24 GWI: World Rugby Brand Health Tracker
- 25 Women's Sport Trust: The Summer of Sport: How Women's Sport is being seen in 2025, A Women's Sport Trust Report into Visibility, October 2025
- 26 Two Circles: #RWCBTTS Content Creator Programme Data
- 27 World Rugby Data: Follower Growth Data
- 28 Dove: "How parents can build young girls' body confidence in sports", 2023
- 29 World Rugby: RWC 2025, Where We Belong: Perceptions of careers in sport and how we can change them, a Report by Women's Rugby World Cup 2025
- 30 World Rugby Data: Women's Rugby Case Studies
- 31 World Rugby Data: Women's RWC 2025 Social Purpose
- 32 World Rugby Data: Volunteers' Survey
- 33 World Rugby Data: Women's Rugby World Cup Experiences, Hospitality Infographic
- 34 World Rugby Data: IVR Post Event Report
- 35 World Rugby Data: WeTrack reporting , City Fan Zone stats
- 36 World Rugby Events & Media: Barrett, Ben: Post Tournament (Actual) Carbon Footprint, Women's Rugby World Cup 2025
- 37 Calculated using World Rugby's Carbon Emissions Reporting Tool including scope 1, 2 and 3
- 38 Premiership Women's Rugby: Press Release, The PWR Sees Attendance Spike in Opening Round



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