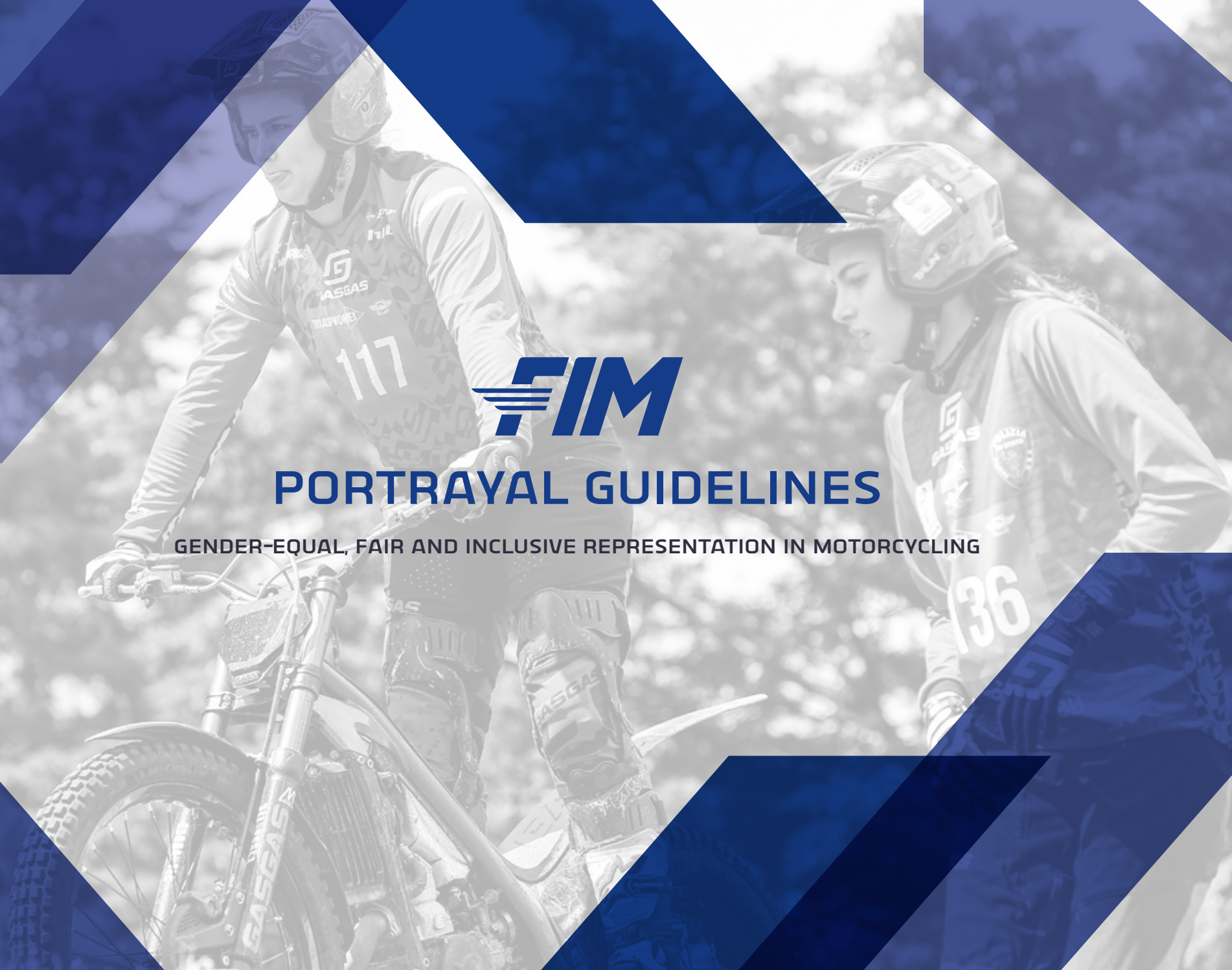




# PORTRAYAL GUIDELINES

GENDER-EQUAL, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION IN MOTORCYCLING



# INTRODUCTION

Sport is one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls, and sports coverage is very influential in shaping gender norms and stereotypes. Sport has the power to shift how women and minorities are seen and how they see themselves. As leaders, communicators, content creators and media outlets within the sports movement, we set the tone as to how sportspeople and athletes – globally – are pictured, presented, described, talked about and represented, i.e. portrayed, across all forms of media and communication.

The following Guidelines are intended to raise awareness of what constitutes gender bias across the various aspects of portrayal within the sporting context, and how this can be overcome to ensure our content and communications are more inclusive, balanced and representative of the world we live in.



# PORTRAYAL DEFINED

The language (words and expressions), images and voices used, the quality and quantity of coverage and the prominence given, when depicting individuals or groups in communications and the media.

All individuals have multiple intersecting identities and are not solely defined by their gender. Other social markers of difference such as race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, culture or sexual orientation (to list but a few) inform a person's identity. Balanced portrayal practices should also ensure that the diversity and intersectionality within and among different groups are both considered and reflected. After all, not all sportspeople look or sound the same, nor do they experience life exclusively as "women", "men" or "athletes".



# TERMS TO KNOW

## SEX

Assigned at birth and refers to the biological characteristics that define a person as female, male or intersex (World Health Organization).

## GENDER

Refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men (UN Women).

## UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

An association or attitude about a person or social group formed beyond our control and awareness (Catalyst 2019).

## GENDER STEREOTYPES

Preconceived ideas on women's and men's traditionally assigned roles, attributes and characteristics according to whether they are female or male. For example, the role of women has generally been confined to the domestic and family sphere (OHCHR 2014). Negative stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes ultimately perpetuate gender inequality and hold back change (UN Women 2020).

## GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

When the language being used is not gender specific (EIGE 2018), meaning with no specific reference to a particular sex or social gender but rather considering people in general. Using gender neutral or gender-inclusive language avoids words and expressions which could be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or sexist, instead placing women and men at the same level, and helping reduce gender stereotypes (UN Women 2017).

## GENDER BALANCE IN COMMUNICATION

The process of integrating a gender perspective or lens into all aspects of an organisation's strategies and initiatives, and into its culture, systems, operations, and communications. Applying a gender lens means factoring in how your decisions impact genders differently.

## GENDER BIAS

Prejudiced actions or thoughts that affect a person or a group of people based on their perceived gender. Gender-biased language either implicitly/unconsciously or explicitly/consciously favors one gender over another, leading to unequal and/or unfair treatment. It is a form of gender discrimination (EIGE 2018).



# ADOPTING FAIR AND BALANCED PORTRAYAL PRACTICES

## CONTENT AND EDITORIAL

Extensive research carried out by various bodies shows there is still a significant difference in the media coverage of women's and men's sports. Clearly, it is not possible to anticipate gender representation in news and current events – you can't give an account of something that hasn't happened.

All content needs to be based on editorial merit. However, one can always enrich content with highlights, documentaries, profile series or special features. Whether it's athletes to watch or lesser-known pioneers, lessons learned through overcoming adversity or comebacks from injury or illness, sporting tips or performance analysis and career progressions – there is a gold mine of incredible human stories waiting to be told. After all, a good story is a good story, irrespective of who the protagonist is. Researchers argue that the under- and misrepresentation of women's sports accounts for the lack of interest among sports fans and reinforces the public's generally negative attitudes towards women in sport. Moreover, the lack of proper coverage of women's sports may be holding sports fans back from developing an interest in and becoming fans of specific athletes, teams, manufacturers etc.

### The FIM shall encourage:

1. Clear and balanced editorial direction and tone of content
2. Bold and compelling storytelling in regard to both genders
3. Consistency in portraying both genders across editorial and social media content



## IMAGERY

Stories are told through images, whether still or moving. How we use images must reflect the diversity among disciplines, athletes, fans, coaches, staff, volunteers, and officials. Ensuring there is balance in the quality and quantity of portrayal of genders on television, web, or social media platforms should become our constant conscious effort.

### Here are some guidelines to bear in mind:

- Active, authentic and respectful visual imagery of athletes in their environment.
- Avoid passive, sexy imagery of riders, which reinforces stereotypes.
- Performance and sporting skills should be the focus of the imagery.
- Do not focus unnecessarily on looks, clothing, or intimate body parts (e.g. crotch shots, cleavage, backsides) of the athletes, entourage and product promotion personnel.
- Give equal exposure to all the athletes in the competition.
- Do not focus too much or only on the same athlete within the team unless it links to sport and performance.
- Capture diversity among riders, entourage, staff, officials and volunteers in terms of gender and other dimensions such as ethnicity or age.
- Ensure there are not significantly more images of one gender or community in relation to the other.
- Balance strength, power, and speed with gracefulness, agility, and elegance in athlete imagery.
- Avoid reinforcing feminine and masculine stereotypes or focusing solely on "gender-appropriate" roles within motorcycling.



## LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

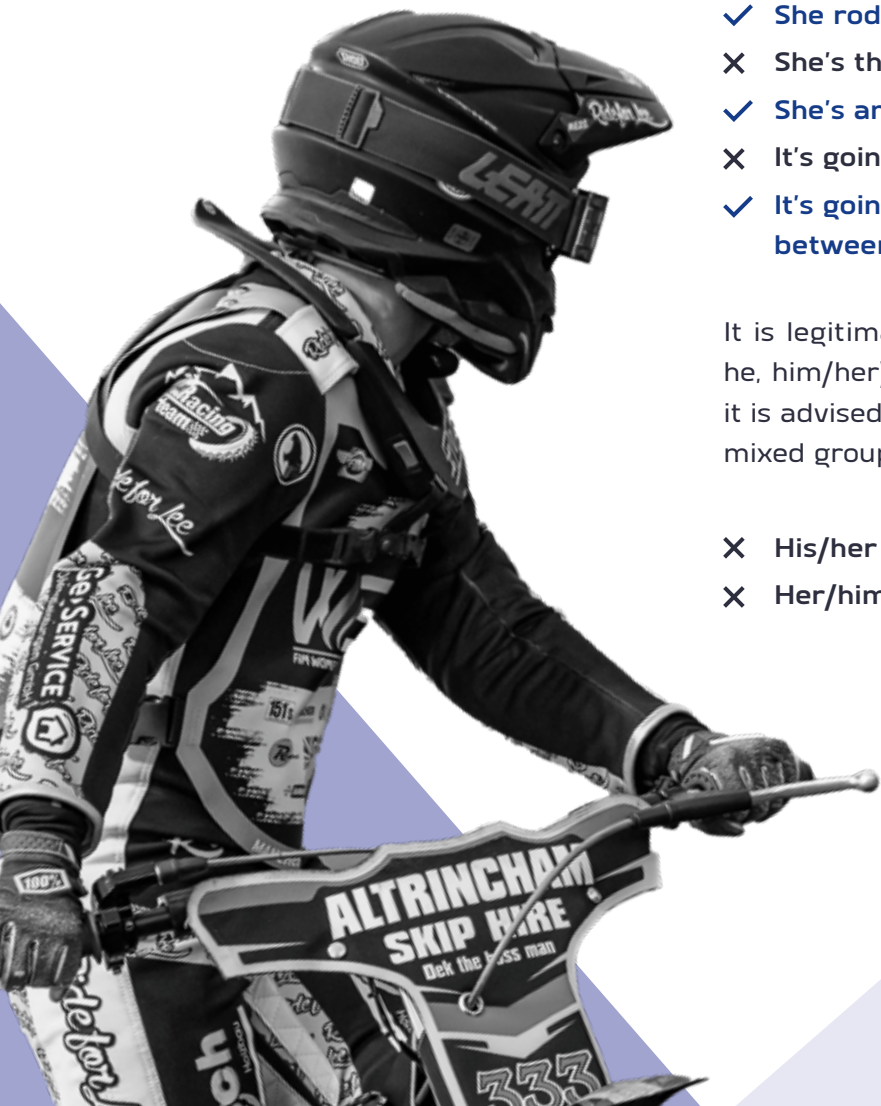
The verbal communication we use in our communication is equally as impactful. It is, therefore, important to use bias-free language and avoid gender stereotypes, expressions or words that compare women to men and/or imply the superiority of one gender over the other.

### For example

- ✗ She rode "like a man/beast"
- ✓ She rode with determination
- ✗ She's the next Toni Bou
- ✓ She's an extraordinary athlete
- ✗ It's going to be a "catfight"
- ✓ It's going to be a tough battle between two strong competitors

It is legitimate to refer to an individual's gender (e.g. she/he, him/her) when referring to a specific person. However, it is advised to use neutral descriptions when referring to a mixed group.

- |           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| ✗ His/her | ✓ Their |
| ✗ Her/him | ✓ Them  |



## WHEN REFERRING TO PEOPLE

Always use “female/male”, “women/men” and not “girls/boys”, unless referring to minors.

### For example

- ✗ The use of “ladies” is inappropriate when “men” is being used. The term should be women. The same applies for using the term “girls” when “men” is being used.
- ✓ Ladies is appropriate when used with the term Gentlemen, as in a speech: “Ladies and Gentlemen”; or when it is an official title, e.g. “Sir John and Lady Smith”

## PRONOUNS

When referring to a mixed-gender group, the neutral plural should be used, they/them/their.

### For example

- ✗ Each rider must always have his licence on him.
- ✗ All riders are required to always have their licence on them.
- ✓ The rider is required to always have their licence on them.

## NOUNS AND PROPER NAMES

Where possible, use gender-neutral terms.

### For example

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| ✗ Sportsman                                 | ✓ Sportsperson/<br>Athlete        |
| ✗ Anchorman                                 | ✓ Anchor                          |
| ✗ Spokesman                                 | ✓ Spokesperson                    |
| ✗ Cameraman/<br>Cameramen                   | ✓ Camera operator/<br>Camera crew |
| ✗ Chairman                                  | ✓ Chair/Chairperson               |
| ✗ Mankind                                   | ✓ Humankind/<br>Humanity          |
| ✗ Boyfriend/<br>Girlfriend/<br>Husband/Wife | ✓ Partner/Spouse                  |

## ADJECTIVES

Avoid making evaluative comments on an individual’s appearance. When describing an athlete’s performance, use adjectives that apply to both women and men.







## COVERAGE AND AIRTIME

The FIM believes women's and men's events are of equal importance, and this should be reflected in their treatment. It is therefore important to show and celebrate sporting journeys and achievements – irrespective of gender, race or sexual orientation – with the same passion, respect and consistency throughout the year, and beyond.

In broadcast activities – coverage of events, interviews, athlete profiles, commentary, etc. – ensure as much as possible that equal airtime and coverage are devoted to women's and men's sport. The intent is to balance both the duration and scheduling of the coverage. When preparing articles and publications, both print and digital, as far as possible women and men should be given equal exposure to ensure that the reporting is balanced between the different genders.

Avoid excessive focus on only one gender. The quality (production) of women's and men's sports coverage and the presentation of athletes should be equal. Neither gender should be favoured. The competition schedule should be adapted to host women's and men's events closely together and/or change the times to ensure women's teams and female athletes are not an "opening act" or playing during "off hours".

# PORTRAYAL IN MOTORCYCLING CHECKLIST

## Check your content

Equal editorial attention, where possible:

- Are there considerably more stories and profiles of one gender over another?
- How are you framing your questions and storytelling?
- Consider if they are gender-driven or sport-driven. Are you packaging your content and presenting women's and men's sport with the same enthusiasm and quality?

## Check your imagery

Be balanced and steer away from gender stereotypes:

- Is there a gender balance across the images being used?
- Are women represented in an active and empowered position, and equally visible and prominent?
- Is the focus of the images on performance and sport instead of aesthetics?

## Check your TERMINOLOGY

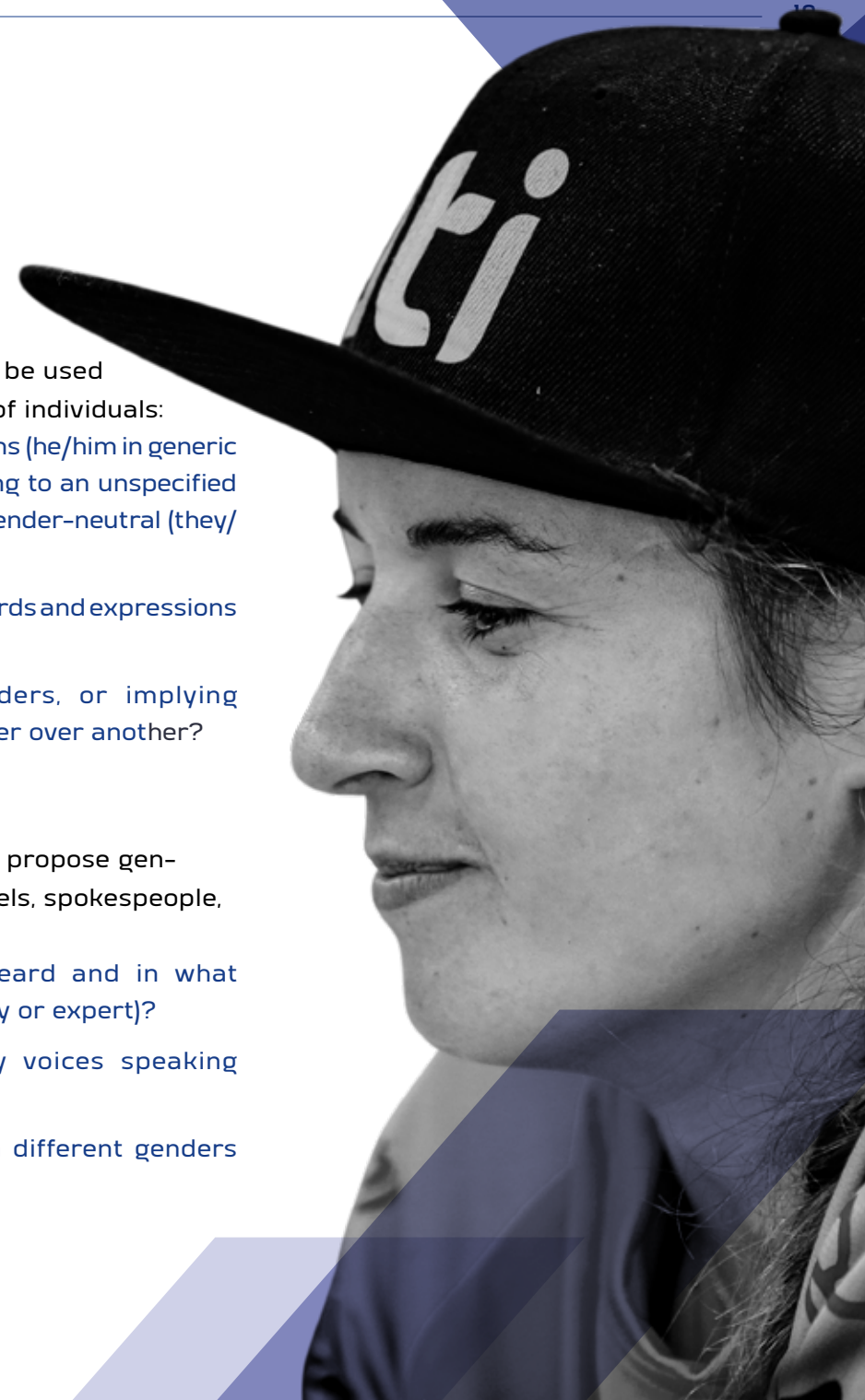
Use neutral language that can be used for all individuals and groups of individuals:

- Are you using masculine forms (he/him in generic references, i.e. when referring to an unspecified group of people? Or being gender-neutral (they/them)?
- Are you using descriptive words and expressions that can apply to anyone?
- Are you comparing genders, or implying the superiority of one gender over another?

## Check your "voices"

Diversify your storytellers and propose gender-balanced and diverse panels, spokespeople, trainers, role models, etc.

- What voices are being heard and in what capacity (e.g. as an authority or expert)?
- Are women and minority voices speaking for themselves?
- Are your storytellers from different genders and backgrounds?



## HOW SPORTS ORGANISATIONS CAN FACILITATE GENDER-BALANCED COVERAGE

There are several initiatives a sports organisation can undertake to facilitate gender-balanced coverage.

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Ensure the competition schedule is equally balanced for women's and men's events.

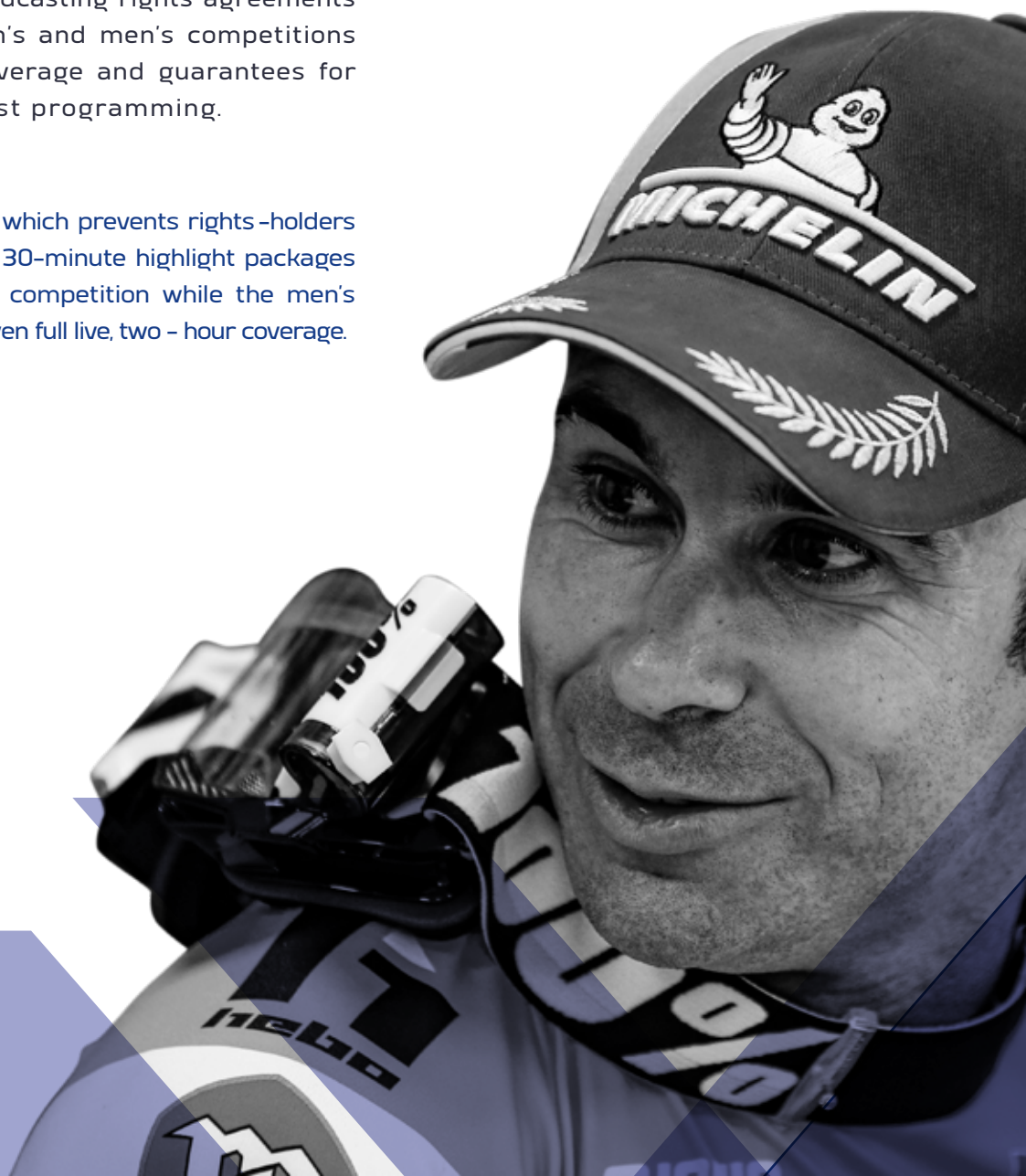
### For example

- Alternate the women's and men's finals between the last and second-last event of the competition.
- Ensure events are equally scheduled to prevent one gender competing in time slots where TV coverage is limited or non-existent.
- Make sure women's and men's events are equally sequenced to avoid women's events being reflected as the opening act for the main events later in the day.

2. Negotiate broadcasting rights agreements so that women's and men's competitions have equal coverage and guarantees for equal broadcast programming.

### For example

- Include a clause which prevents rights-holders from producing 30-minute highlight packages of the women's competition while the men's competition is given full live, two - hour coverage.



3. Stipulate in host event contracts that women's and men's host broadcaster coverage must be of equal quantity and quality.

#### For example

- Same number of hours and same number of cameras and amount of specialised equipment.
4. If your organisation hires the host broadcaster directly, include the clause noted in point 3 above. Also include an expectation for a staffing plan in their bid proposal which sees key roles also being assigned to women (producers, directors, camera operators and on-air talent) and include that plan in the final contract.



5. Organise women's and men's competitions so that they occur at the same location and in the same time frame. Note, this makes it cost-effective for media outlets to assign reporting coverage.
6. Ensure female athletes and female coaches are put forward as potential interviewees.
7. Offer incentives to media outlets to assign female staff.

#### For example

- Offer additional accreditations for key positions such as producer, director, camera operator, editor or photographer.
8. To underscore that gender-balanced portrayal is a priority, invite a media outlet to conduct a joint content analysis of their coverage and your organisation's coverage of an event. Engage a university journalism department to conduct the analysis, then meet with the media outlet staff to discuss.

9. Distribute your organisation's portrayal guidelines to the accredited media, asking for feedback on the content and requesting distribution to their staff.
10. Ensure your organisation's policies and sports rules are free of gender bias to avoid fostering the myth that women's sport is inferior or second class.



## CONCLUSION

Sport can be a great driver of equality and inclusion, showcasing athletes and sportspeople from all walks of life excelling at various levels of motorcycling. As leaders, communicators and content creators in sport, we are in a unique position to set the tone and help change the conversation and defy negative stereotypes. To generate new strong, positive and different role models. To promote balanced coverage – both in quantity and quality – and fair and inclusive portrayal of not only sportspeople but also the entirety of our stakeholders, in all their diversity.

Diverse and empowering portrayals of athletes, coaches, officials and everyone who makes up the FIM Family will have a positive impact on the sport and, particularly, participation rates both as competitors and spectators.

**IT'S AS MUCH WHO YOU SHOW  
OR WRITE/TALK ABOUT AS  
HOW YOU SHOW THEM OR  
WRITE/TALK ABOUT THEM.**

