



A group of 8 people standing at the red corner of a boxing ring, holding an image of the 360 Degrees logo, and of the campaign tagline "There's room for everyone in the squared circle"



IABA Club Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit

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**THERE'S
ROOM FOR
EVERYONE
IN THE
SQUARED
CIRCLE**

360

There's room for everyone in the squared circle

PARTNERS

IABA is grateful for the collaboration & support of key organisations in creating this toolkit:



**SPORTING
PRIDE**

*Image description:
Sporting Pride Logo*

*Image description:
Sport Against Racism Ireland logo*



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SPORT AGAINST RACISM IRELAND



*Image description:
Active Disability Ireland logo*

The design, layout, font size, text alignment, colour palette and use of image descriptions throughout the 360 Degrees toolkit is in reflection of Vision Sport Ireland recommendations.





Team Ireland Head Coach Zauri Antia doing padwork with High Five Academy boxer, Darragh Kane.

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360 INTRODUCTION

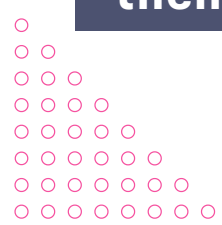
There's room for everyone in the squared circle

An image of 2023 Elite Championship Finals at the National Stadium, Dublin

Boxing is Ireland's most successful sport, bringing home 18 of Ireland's 35 medals up to Tokyo 2020. Our sport is also one of Ireland's most successful on the World and European stages. These incredible achievements inspire thousands of people in their own clubs to strive to box at their very best. Every one of these 355 clubs is vital to their local community, as much for their sporting prowess as boxing's ability to bring people together. Boxing clubs are home to people of all nationalities, ethnicities, cultures, abilities, genders and life experiences

Boxing clubs provide a sense of belonging, opportunities to make new friends, opportunities to learn new skills, development of leadership qualities and an improvement in social, physical and mental well-being.

This toolkit is designed to support boxing clubs in accessing the resources to allow everyone in their local communities to experience those benefits, no matter their background or ability.



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SPORT SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITY, AGE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, CULTURE OR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. BOXING CLUBS HAVE A REAL OPPORTUNITY NOW TO STRENGTHEN OVERALL COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE FOR INDIVIDUALS TO GAIN POSITIVE SOCIAL AND HEALTH OUTCOMES AND TO CREATE MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, NO MATTER THE INDIVIDUALS BACKGROUND



*Sophie Doolan
Inclusion Officer,
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KEY DEFINITIONS

Diversity: The practice or quality of including and/or involving people from a range of different social, ethnic, cultural & religious backgrounds and of different ages, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities.

Inclusion: The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Openness

Lack of restriction; accessibility. The quality of being receptive to new ideas, opinions, or arguments

Awareness

The state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects, or sensory patterns

Promotion

Activity that supports or encourages a cause, venture, or aim.

Training

Teaching, or developing in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge

A red punchbag on a black background. Red boxing gloves hang off the chain attaching the bag to the ceiling



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BOXING IS: Club. Family. Sport. Community.



Double Olympian Michaela Walsh giving her brother, Olympic bronze medalist, Aidan Walsh, a drink of water as he stands in a ring after sparring. Image: OFI

The Irish Boxing community is home to people from a diverse range of ethnicities and nationalities. The Travelling Community is a key pillar of the Irish Boxing family, which is proud to include members from 5 continents across the globe.

More than 1,800 boxers with additional needs are in training in clubs in Ireland, including as part of the IABA's High Five Boxing Academy. High Five was founded in 2021 by four clubs: Drimnagh, Crumlin, Palmerstown and St. Catherine's, to ensure children with additional support needs could learn the benefits of boxing in an environment tailored to their needs.

High Five is now an Association-wide programme.



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DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ARE AT THE OF BOXING

The IABA recognizes and is enriched by the unique identity, life experiences, abilities, learning styles, knowledge and contribution of every individual within the existing boxing community and seeks to support the growth of our community to be even more inclusive of people from a diverse range of backgrounds at all levels of our sport including participating, coaching, officiating, volunteering, spectating and administering.



European Games boxer, Daina Moorehouse, standing in the red corner of a boxing ring, wearing boxing gloves. Daina is holding two images saying "There is room for everyone in the squared circle"

Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of boxing, and the IABA. We have committed to continuing to infuse and evolve these principles and those of openness, awareness, promotion, and training throughout the boxing community.



What is an **INCLUSIVE CLUB**?

Everyone has the right to participate in boxing – regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, sexuality or social status. Being a truly diverse and inclusive club means offering access to boxing training to all, without restriction. Clubs can assess their own level of inclusiveness by breaking down the IABA’s core principles and asking the following questions:

- Does our club already welcome people with a disability or people from a different cultural background? If not, is this a new action we can take?
- How does our club community feel about inclusion?
- What adaptations could we make to training sessions, equipment, rules or policies to increase accessibility?
- Do our committee, volunteers & members reflect the diverse make up of our community?
- Is our accessible (ramps, wide doors, changing rooms) to people with a disability? IABA acknowledges that the majority of clubs don't own their premises and that large-scale accessibility works are beyond their control.
- If our club does not have enough changing space to accommodate women & girls/boys & men/non-binary members appropriately, have we considered staggered or time-tabled use of these spaces?
- Is our club aware of dietary requirements/ faith-based food considerations/food allergies our members may have so that, if we are holding a club event, we can cater to all, appropriately?

OPENNESS



An image of a boxer's sparring boots as they stand in their corner in a boxing ring



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WITH A WORRYING INCREASE IN UNPROVOKED ATTACKS ON MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY ACROSS IRELAND, THE SKILLS LEARNED IN BOXING, AS WELL AS BEING A FANTASTIC FITNESS WORKOUT, CAN PLAY A REALLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN GIVING LGBTQ+ PEOPLE THE CONFIDENCE TO WALK DOWN THE STREET.

Aidan Walsh
Chairperson
Sporting Pride Ireland



**SPORTING
PRIDE**



AWARENESS

- How do people get to our club and get in?
- Is it safe to walk to and from our club (adequate lighting, pathways)?
- Do we have a dress code? If so, does it allow for a degree of modesty, for anyone who may wish to train whilst keeping their body covered?
- Are our club events/training sessions held on a day religiously significant for ethnic groups in our community?
- Does our club have an inclusion or diversity policy?
- Are our club officials and members regularly made aware of our policies, statements and strategies that support inclusion and diversity?
- Do we participate in community events, festivals and cultural celebrations?
- Do we know the local migrant and refugee community organisations in our area?



Male coach holding pads for a young boxer/Pixabay



TRAINING

What training can we offer and access for our coaches and volunteers to support inclusion?

If our club needs more information on training, have we contacted the IABA Inclusion Officer? Sophie Doolan can be contacted through sophie@iaba.ie

PROMOTION

- **Are our club signs and promotional material clear, easy to read and understand, and in languages other than English?**
- **Do they show positive images featuring boxers from diverse backgrounds?**
- **Are people able to find out about our club and what it offers?**
- **Do they have access to the right information in their language or in a format they can understand?**



ENGAGING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Increasing participation

Almost every boxing club in Ireland is based in a city, town or village which is home to a diverse range of communities. Every community may be approaching our sport differently. The way your club establishes a relationship with one community in your area, may differ from another. It is important to be open and understanding when engaging with different communities. Some of the ways your club can do this are



Side view of boxing ring in the High Performance Unit/OFI

Learning about boxer's language, background and culture

Understanding specific needs & accepting that existing training models might not be suitable i.e. a person with a hearing difficulty may require you to speak a little louder or slower (but don't shout or speak extremely slow expressly asked to do so!), persons from different religious backgrounds may require a more open uniform policy to allow them to cover their bodies.

Asking questions respectfully to learn about the variety of diverse communities in your club's surrounding area





Consider making information such as club policies and safety procedures as accessible as possible; this can include increasing font-size or translating to different languages



Working in partnership with the IBA, your Local Sports Partnership and other sporting bodies to adapt existing training models to make them more accessible



Reflect and gather feedback from your members and be open to change



IABA Ulster Engagement Officer Louise McKenzie, IABA Inclusion Officer, Sophie Doolan, Double Olympian Michaela Walsh and European Games boxer Daina Moorehouse



It can be challenging for any club, in any sport, to be fully inclusive and open to all, but those that do open themselves up to a wide range of benefits, one of which is increasing participation in boxing. But how do we go about that? Some of the ways in which clubs can increase participation are:

Connecting with the IABA Inclusion Officer and your Local Sports Partnership for guidance and access to training in the areas of diversity and inclusion

Develop a Diversity & Inclusion policy for your club - you can use the IABA Diversity & Inclusion Policy as a guide!

Review your promotional material and social media content - does it feature diverse and inclusive imagery? Does it clearly state that membership is open to all people regardless of age, race, gender and ability and perhaps offer materials in a variety of languages? Small changes like this can make the club feel more welcoming

Speak with service providers who work with new migrants in your area and provide them with information about your club. This can help to build new relationships and encourage members of these communities to join our sport



Encourage your committee and coaches to complete Sport Inclusion & Disability Awareness training

Be open to developing participation days/programmes within your club, separate from higher level training sessions

Identify the club's physical needs to be more open i.e. accessible facilities/equipment

Be aware that people who speak English as their first language tend to speak quickly, which may be difficult for a person learning English to comprehend. Try to speak clearly and avoid slang, but don't speak with a false accent, shout, or talk slowly



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WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR CLUB, CONSIDER WHOSE VOICES YOU'RE NOT HEARING, WHOSE VOICES AREN'T IN THE ROOM. BY INCLUDING DIVERSE VOICES IN DECISION-MAKING CONVERSATIONS, YOU CAN UNCOVER HIDDEN BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION. AS THE SAYING GOES "NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US".



*Perry Ogden,
CEO of SARI, Sport Against Racism Ireland*



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WHAT IS INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE?



Woman wearing boxing gloves preparing to punch

Language is the most powerful tool that we have. It is important to remember that we can sometimes choose our words without thought and this in turn can unintentionally hurt or upset members of our club without us knowing.

Taking an extra moment to assess the language that we use when speaking to club members can make a huge difference in how inclusive our club really is. For example, when addressing a group of boxers in training, it is important to remember that we may not be aware of the gender of every member of the group.

Try to avoid using words such as “lads” and “girls” when it is just as easy to say “everyone” “folks” and “you all”, respecting the pronouns of every person in the group.



Another example is the pronunciation of words – take the time to learn how to correctly pronounce the names of your club members and, if they happen to share with you, the name of the place that they are from. It should never be assumed that a person’s name can be shortened to make it easier for you to pronounce.

While we could provide a list of inclusive language dos and don’ts, it would be ineffective as inclusive language is not limited to the written word; is fluid and always changing. Instead, here are some key points to remember:



**Team Ireland European Games boxer,
Kelyn Cassidy/OFI**

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IS

- Being considerate of and respecting others
- A reflection of your club’s values
- A constant learning process
- Developed through conversation and dialogue
- Recognising that words can affect how people feel

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IS NOT

- Avoiding discussion out of the fear of offending someone
- Ignoring people’s differences
- Something that can be done perfectly; it requires an open mind and a willingness to learn and adapt
- A strict set of guidelines
- “Just a trend”

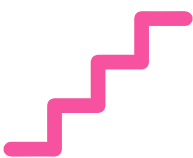


MODIFICATIONS

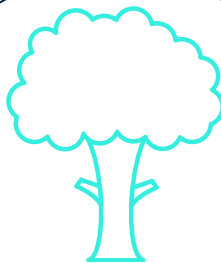
There are many ways in which your club can modify activities to be more inclusive. Some simple tools that coaches can use are the STEP model, the TREE model and the CHANGE IT model.



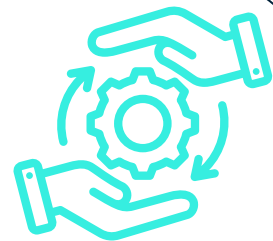
Image of a boxer wrapping their hands



The STEP Model

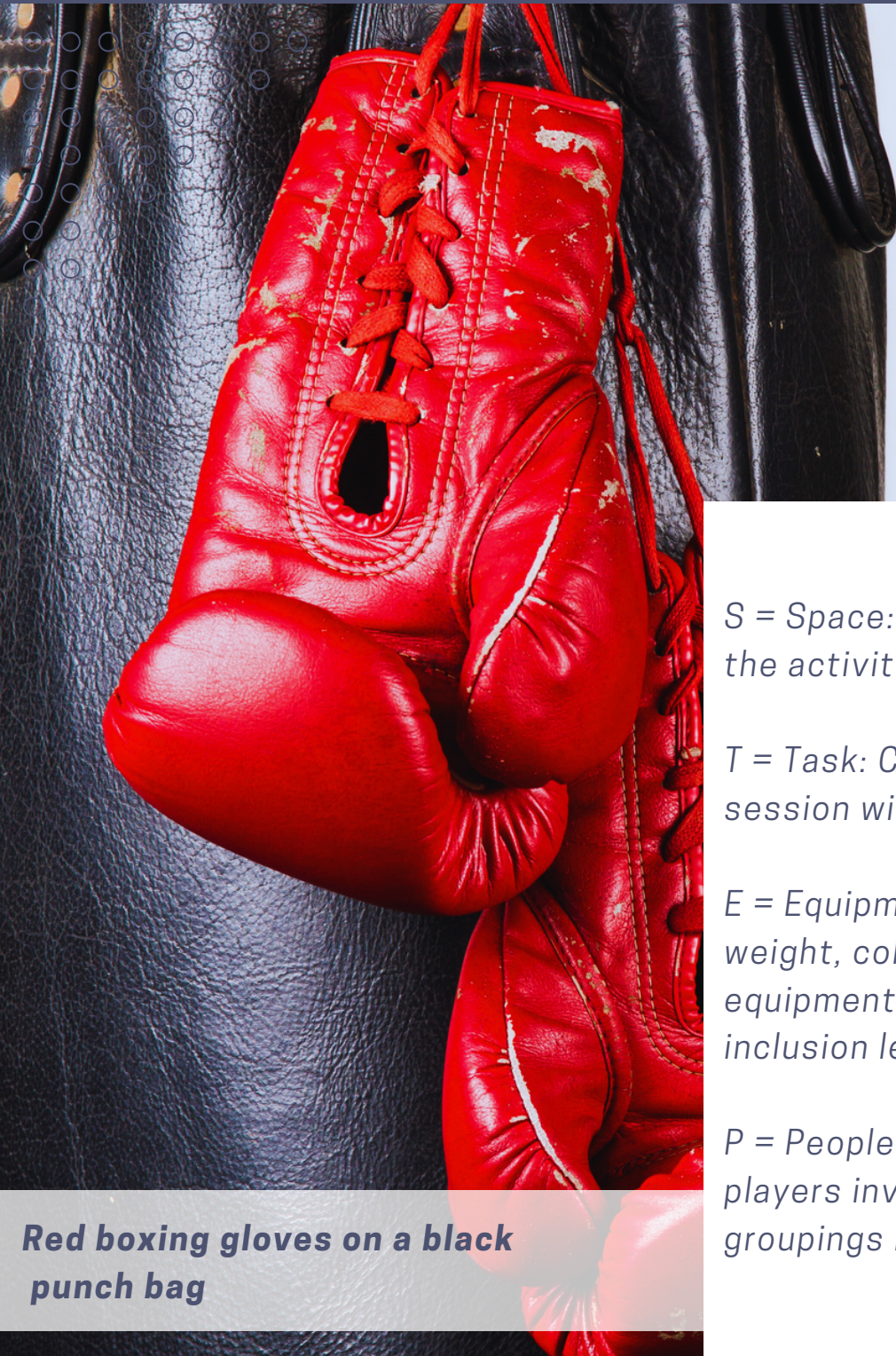


The TREE Model



The CHANGE IT Model

THE STEP MODEL



Red boxing gloves on a black punch bag

S = Space: Change the space in which the activity is taking place

T = Task: Change the demands of the session with respect to skill level

E = Equipment: Change the size, shape, weight, colour or arrangement of equipment to meet skill levels or inclusion level of the session

P = People: Change the number of players involved. Utilise different groupings based on skill levels.

The TREE Model



T = Teaching/coaching style: how the coach organises, leads and communicates

R = Rules: changes to the rules governing activities to promote inclusion

E = Environment: changes to the space, for the whole group or individuals within the group

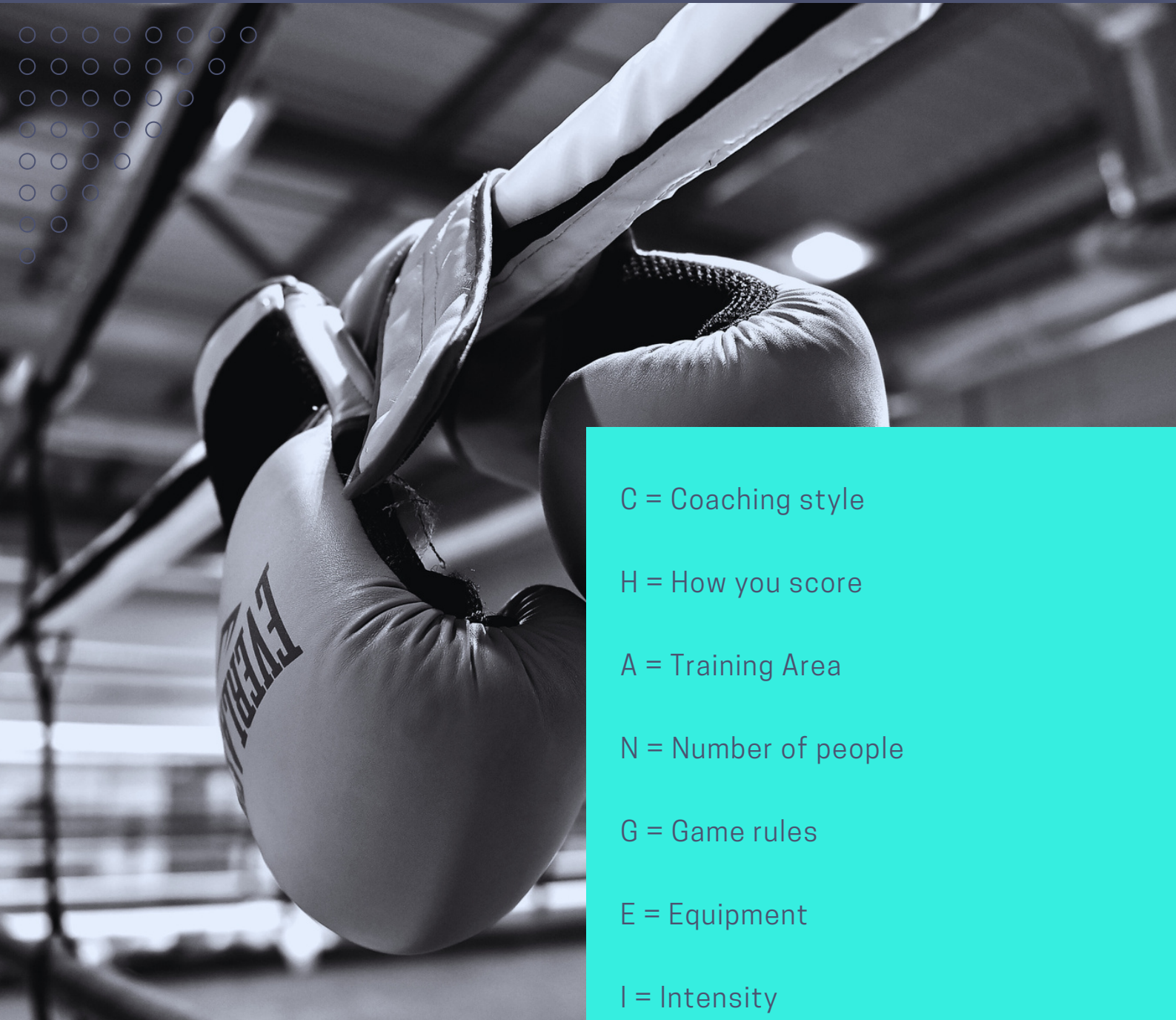
E = Equipment: as in STEP, change the size, weight, colour, etc.

High Five Boxing Academy Training
Sesion, Drimnagh Boxing Club, Dublin



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CHANGE IT MODEL



C = Coaching style

H = How you score

A = Training Area

N = Number of people

G = Game rules

E = Equipment

I = Intensity

T = Time

A pair of boxing gloves on the ropes of a boxing ring/OFI



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**SPORTING
PRIDE**

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Sporting Pride Logo

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission
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*Image description:
Sport Ireland logo*

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*Image description:
Sport Northern Ireland logo*



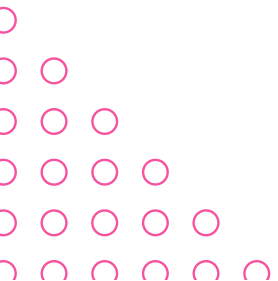


For help and support:

Sophie Doolan
IABA Inclusion Officer
sophie@iaba.ie



Young boxers doing footwork ladder drills in a ring, with their coach



iaba.ie

