

FAQs

What is More than Equal and who is involved?

More than Equal is a global, independent, not-for-profit initiative aiming to find and develop F1's first female World Champion. We have a strong and dedicated team with extensive experience in sport and business and a passion for gender equality. Thirteen-time Grand Prix winner David Coulthard and entrepreneur-philanthropist Karel Komarek founded the organisation, bringing on board Karen Webb Moss as Chair, Ali Donnelly as CEO and F1 veteran Kate Beavan as a strategic advisor. This leadership team is focused on bringing our vision and mission to life with expert partners such as Hints Performance and the Smedley Group.

Why have David and Karel backed this initiative specifically?

Both are dedicated supporters and advocates of motorsport, particularly F1, and both share the view that the sport must do much more to ensure that talented female drivers are given fair and equal opportunities. David has been a staunch supporter of female racing throughout his career, including through his chairmanship of the advisory board of the W Series. He himself describes his motivation behind starting More than Equal as going even further back: *"I always believed my sister Lynsay had more natural racing talent than me, but I was given the support towards a Formula One journey, and she was not. To succeed, talent needs early nurturing and I'd like every 'Lynsay' out there to have the same opportunities as men in the fight to reach Formula One and win."*

Co-founder Komarek describes his motivation in similar terms: *"There's a lot of energy and progress towards gender equal opportunity in F1 and motorsport in general. I know from my experience in business that there is always much more that needs to be done to level the playing field. More than Equal brings a bold but achievable ambition that David and I hope will open more eyes to female potential everywhere – in sports, business, and society."*

How long will it take to have a female F1 champion?

There is no quick way to making this a reality, but, based on our evidence, advice and insight and backed by an overwhelming appetite from fans and the industry to see women in F1 which is made clear in our research, we believe this is possible within a decade. It will require a multi-agency approach, coupled with a real desire for change.

How are you going to achieve your goal?

We are focusing on four key areas of work.

- Commissioning and publishing research and data in areas which have not been explored in depth before, so we and the sport have an evidence base for taking decisions.
- Scouting globally for top female racing talent with a data-led approach
- Developing a world-class female driver development programme to help talented drivers receive the same support young male talent receive, but in a way that is tailored towards maximising female athletic performance.
- Connecting that top talent with backers and teams that can help them succeed.

Why have there been so few women in F1 in its history?

There is no single, insurmountable barrier stopping this from happening - rather there are a multitude of factors at play. Our research makes clear that these are far and wide-ranging, including far too few women and girls participating, lack of dedicated training and development, difficulty accessing funding, inferior track time and outdated perceptions and stereotypes within sport. Our job is to help remove or mitigate those barriers, so talented female drivers have an equal opportunity to succeed.

What other changes need to happen in the sport to make sure women are included?

There needs to be greater understanding about the barriers women and girls are facing, followed by a dedicated effort from the entire motorsport ecosystem to break these down. Our commitment is to continue to highlight these and to take action in key areas – filling gaps that are not being addressed and encouraging others to act too.

What is your relationship with the other key stakeholders in motorsport.

We are a global, independent initiative and in this independence lies our objectivity and our singular focus on that one goal. But we know a world champion will be not found and crowned in a vacuum – and that making progress on this front, requires a multi-agency approach. We're developing strong partnerships with governing bodies, promoters, teams, sponsors and motorsport stakeholders globally to truly work in a collaborative way.

What is new in your research?

No research of this scale or as comprehensive has ever been undertaken before. This fact, in and of itself, makes the research unique as the most in-depth research ever into women's involvement in motorsport. It presents facts and insights from the sport's growing female fanbase and competitors and provides the most accurate picture yet of the female driver participation base. If any sport is going to grow female participation and have women reaching the top consistently, it must be data and evidence led.

Does this research prove that women are capable of driving at F1 level?

There is no evidence anywhere that women are not capable of driving at F1 level – and in fact our performance partners Hintsä, who have worked with multiple F1 world champions, have reviewed male F1 benchmark data and found that all of these levels are achievable by females. What this research highlights is that the industry itself, expert trainers and female drivers all agree that women are capable of competing at the highest level, provided they are given the same opportunities and support as talented male drivers. That is where our focus must be.

Tell us more about your work with Hintsä?

Hintsä is our performance partner. They are working with us to design and deliver a world-leading, multi-disciplinary driver development programme for female drivers. Other elite level sports have recognised the need to develop training and development programmes specifically tailored for female athletes and now is the time for motorsport to do the same.

What will this programme look like?

We will work with a cohort of young female drivers and offer support which will be tailored for each driver. This will be aimed at reducing the blockers to retention in the sport and accelerating their rate of development. Support provided will include access to training and racing, technical and tactical coaching, physical and cognitive preparation, commercial opportunity, and personal brand development. Crucially, this will all be tailored to female athletes and will be age appropriate depending on their stage of development.

How will you choose the drivers?

The programme membership will be limited and offered to drivers identified via a worldwide talent identification and assessment process. This process will consider each individual as a driver, an athlete, and as a person, and we are building it out now.

What's unique about it?

We are building a programme totally dedicated and focused to maximising the performance of female drivers. On an individual level, drivers will benefit from aligned and coordinated support

that reduces their need to compromise. But it's more than that. The unique position of working so broadly with a critical mass of female talent means that learning will happen quicker. The structure and approach will enable instant adjustments and it will have the capacity to develop new intelligence targeted at solving performance questions.

What are the top three takeaways from your research

- Motorsport and Formula 1 have a passionate and engaged fan base who want to see the sport deliver better on gender equality and will reward the sport if it delivers.
- The sport is not doing enough to attract female competitors and keep them in the sport
- Formula 1, as the world's biggest gender-neutral sport needs to work better on developing a culture that is truly meritocratic not just in its rules but in its culture