Race Guidelines

To get the SheRunner tick of approval for equality and equity, our team have developed a list of 'must haves'. This list has been devised using a number of tools. In 2023, the SheRunner team conducted a survey of female athletes to find out what they looked for in a race, what they didn't like, and if they had thought about doing an ultra, why they hadn't yet. We have also used our own experiences of training, racing, race directing, coaching and being immersed in the sport to guide our ideas and decisions.

We understand that every race is different, but also know that most of these suggestions can be implemented at the majority of events. As a race director, it is also important that you understand what trail and ultra racing is like from a female perspective, and how gender differences can have an impact on race day.

Our suggestion is to use this list as a tool to make your event more equitable and accessible for women. You and your team can then widely promote on your website, in social media, and in race day guides, the fact that your event using these

- **Equal Prize Money and Awards**
  Prize money should be of equal value for both men and women, and any awards given should be of equal value.
- **Toilets at start line and finish area**
  On our survey of female athletes. 72% of respondents said that this was one of the most important factors to consider when entering a race. Adequate numbers of toilets, and in large scale events such as UTA, include female only toilets.
- **Gender specific race qualifiers**
  For races that require a qualifier, offer qualifying times that reflect gender differences.
- **Pregnancy Policy**
  Offer a deferral policy that allows women who become pregnant after entering a race to defer for up to 2 years post birth, as well as considering a deferral option for partners who will become parents after entering an event. Kunanyi Mountain Run have an excellent pregnancy policy - https://kunanyimountain.run/rego-policies

- **Access to detailed and well marked maps**
  This is a given for any event, but a map that has as many details as possible on the route is ideal, including checkpoints and toilets. The Bondi to Manly Ultra has the location of all public toilets on the course pinned on their map. This helps with planning for toilet stops if an athlete is on their period, has incontinence problems, or digestive and bowel issues due to fluctuations in hormones during the menstrual cycle.

- **Well marked course**
  73% of our survey respondents identified a very well marked course of high importance when entering an ultra. Knowing that the course is safe and well marked gives women confidence when tackling an ultra, especially at night.

- **Equal use of female and male imagery**
  Including female imagery that shows not only elite athletes, but a wide range of body shapes, ages and ethnicities.

- **Provision of menstrual product packs at aid stations**
  Sometimes a woman's period can start unexpectedly, especially for women in peri-menopause who have erratic menstrual cycles. Including period products at aid stations and with medics is ideal.

- **Equity in time based awards**
  Time-based awards should be gender specific to reflect gender differences. For example, at Ultra Trail Australia, a Gold Buckle is awarded to the winning female and male, a silver buckle to a sub 16 hour female and a sub 14 hour male finishers, and a bronze buckle to a female that finishes between 16 and 22 hours and a male that finishes between 14 and 20 hours. All females who finish after 22 hours receive a finishers medal, and 20 hours for all males. Rapid Ascent recently announced changes to their time based awards at their Surf Coast Century event - ""Global race data shows that proportionally women are 10 - 13% slower than men in running events. Rapid Ascent has made the step to increasing the female time allowance by 12.5% which means that the new time-based awards for females will be 13 hours and 30 minutes for the 1 litre stein, and 18 hours for the smaller stein. Men's cut-off times will remain at 12 hours and 16 hours respectively."

- **Gendered change areas at finish line**
  Provision of a safe and private area where women can change after completing a race. This can be as simple as a walled marquee at the race hub. Removing a sweaty sports bra after an event is a contortionistic nightmare and not something that can be done discreetly!!

- **Equitable race cut off times**
  If applicable and achievable considering race logistics, consider race cut-off times that are equitable for women and reflect gender differences.
- **Offer female specific event apparel**
- **Present gendered race results**
  When presenting race results, please present them as separate gendered results and not the male and female results mixed together. If the results are presented together, the women's race results are lost in the men's results. It will show an 'overall' result when it should actually show the women's result and men's result for what they are, which is separate races. On socials, please don't refer to the women's result as an 'overall' result, as this takes away from her performance by comparing it to the men's race.
- **Privacy**
  Offer an option for athletes to remain anonymous with race results and photography. Some women may want to remain anonymous and not have images or their run locations shared on social media due to domestic violence situations.

  The following is a list of other considerations that you could implement that can make your event more female friendly -

- **Childcare**
  Consider working with a local child care provider to offer child minding facilities at the race hub.
- **Female volunteers and medics at aid stations, especially at night**
- **Toilets on course at Checkpoints (if achievable)**
  Portaloo's can be driven in to checkpoints that have vehicle access
- **Family friendly facilities - Are there nappy changing facilities available? Are there areas for breastfeeding and/or to warm up baby food?**

  Elite Energy Events offer a women's only marquee at the finish line of the Husky Running Festival – for mother's to breastfeed, pump, as well as using the area as a change room.

- **Is your event pram friendly? If so, then please promote this.**
  We have a lot of women (and men) who run with their children in prams – if there is an event that offers this, then they will participate.
- **Offer check point crew access for the family of breastfeeding women**
- **Allow pacers for night time sections, especially on public roads**