



# NFCA™: THE CASE FOR GENDER EQUITY

We believe the time is now for the NCAA to reestablish their support and investment in softball. This begins with a commitment to gender equity. Softball is a GROWING sport! Overall, there are many stakeholders who have been committed and contributed to the growth and awareness of our sport.

1. Commitment to the sport. **Softball is a great sport to play and watch.** Participation numbers and viewership continue to elevate on an annual basis.
2. Commitment to the evolution of the game. Our coaches and various stakeholders have been proactive in making significant changes that assist in the recruitment, participation, retention and enhancement of our game for all invested parties. *Examples include moving the pitching plate from 40 ft to 43 ft, changing the core and color of the ball, incorporating a Division I three-day Super Regional, and implementing media rules to speed up the game.* These are only a few examples of how progressive modifications have enabled softball to achieve unprecedented growth. **Softball is a great sport to play and watch.**
3. Commitment to exposure, awareness, and visibility - Softball is one of the NCAA's most visible sports. At the Division I level, we consistently sell-out or have near sell-outs at every on-campus venue in the post-season for Regionals and Super Regionals. ESPN and other networks have seen the value in softball and have stepped up with more coverage during regular season. Additionally, all Division I post-season games (Regionals, Super Regionals, and the WCWS) are on the ESPN family of networks. The viewership numbers are eye-popping, continue to trend upward, and the 2021 viewership ratings were the highest on record for various games and rounds. **Softball is a great sport to play and watch.**
4. Commitment to tradition and the Division I national championship facility: USA Softball and the people of Oklahoma City joined forces to support major stadium renovations in order to keep the championship at Hall of Fame stadium. The 2021 championship saw an 40 % increase in seating capacity.

We invite you to read the document that was shared with the Kaplan Hecker Group.

This is not the first time we have shared feedback. For the last five years, NFCA leadership has met with the Division I NCAA Softball Championships Committee to share feedback collected from the 64 participating head coaches. We have also collected information from the participating head coaches the Division II and Division III national championships each year and shared this insight with their respective NCAA Softball Championships Committees.