



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Successful World Olympians Forum empowers Olympians

- ***150 participants from 107 National Olympians Associations (NOAs) come together in global Forum***
- ***NOAs further empowered to support Olympians at all stages of their lives***
- ***\$50,000 USD in WOA Grants announced as part of the WOA 2019 Grants Programme***
- ***Enhanced collaboration between IOC and WOA welcomed by participants***

Lausanne, Switzerland; 17 April 2019

World Olympians Forum has successfully concluded after three days of high-level workshops and plenary sessions in Lausanne, Switzerland, World Olympians Association (WOA) has announced today.

Under the theme *Olympians for Life*, the Forum brought together 150 participants from 107 National Olympians Associations (NOAs) to underline the special status of Olympians as the ambassadors at the heart of the Olympic Movement, and to strengthen and grow WOA's global network of NOAs.

The Forum focused on boosting the capabilities of NOAs, highlighted by the launch of the new *NOA Guide* online resource. This will allow NOAs to better connect and engage with Olympians at a national level, and deliver programmes and initiatives that align with WOA's mission to support the needs of Olympians and empower them to spread the Olympic ideals. The first-ever *Grants Challenge* also took place, delivering \$10,000 USD in funding to two NOA projects to mark the start of the WOA 2019 Grants Programme. The grants distributed today are in addition to the \$50,000 USD in funding available for Service to Olympians and Service to Society projects as part of the wider Grants Programme.

A further outcome from the Forum saw greater integration with the IOC through a joint working day with participants of the International Athletes' Forum, which took place ahead of the World Olympians Forum. This included a renewed ambition for WOA and the IOC Athletes' Commission to work collaboratively on initiatives that support the welfare, development and engagement of

Olympians at a global level, as well as greater cooperation between NOAs and National Olympic Committees locally.

WOA President, Jöel Bouzou OLY, said:

“The World Olympians Forum has been an outstanding success, bringing together Olympians from around the world to share ideas on how we can best support and empower our global community and secure the legacy of Olympians as the enduring ambassadors of the Olympic Movement. I would like to thank the International Olympic Committee for its support and all participants for the enthusiasm and commitment they have shown over the past three days. I look forward to continuing to work together in strong partnership as we seek to drive forward even more programmes to serve Olympians in the future.”

Among those to speak alongside WOA President Joël Bouzou OLY at the event were:

- IOC President, Thomas Bach OLY
- IOC Athletes’ Commission Vice Chair, Danka Barteková OLY
- IOC Sports Director, Kit McConnell
- WOA Secretary General, Anthony Ledgard OLY

NOA Guide

To further support the growth and development of WOA’s global NOA network a new online resource was unveiled at the Forum. The *NOA Guide* will provide information, tools and resources to help NOAs enhance local services and activities, engage with Olympians more effectively and ultimately advance their organisations.

Six key themes are covered in the guide: Member Engagement; Branding; Service Project Delivery; Leadership and Governance; Finance Management and Stakeholder Engagement. Participants at the Forum were guided through the resource as part of a workshop led by expert trainers from the World Academy of Sport and WOA leadership.

WOA 2019 Grants Programme

In addition, the WOA 2019 Grants Programme was launched with the WOA’s first-ever *Grants Challenge* taking place, which saw \$10,000 of Grants funding distributed to two NOAs to fund projects that serve the needs of Olympians and help them to spread the spirit of Olympism in their countries.

Five NOAs pitched their project ideas in front of an expert panel and fellow Olympians at the Forum to determine who would take home the additional funding on offer.

The winning projects came from Colombia and Lithuania, each picking up a \$5,000 USD grant.

A further \$50,000 USD in grants is available as part of the wider WOA Grants Programme.

Applications are now open to NOAs until **30 June 2019** in the following categories:

- Service to Olympians

- Service to Society
- NOA Development

Find out more [HERE](#)

WOA President, Joël Bouzou OLY added:

“We are delighted to unveil the NOA Guide at the World Olympians Forum in Lausanne. We understand the invaluable support NOAs offer Olympians at a national level. This resource has been designed to support and enhance the work that they do, providing NOAs with a foundation to assist them in the effective running of their organisations.”

“Likewise we are thrilled to have launched the WOA 2019 Grants Programme in Lausanne today. I would like to congratulate Colombia and Lithuania on their winning pitches as part of our first-ever live-action Grants Challenge and I would encourage all NOAs who have been inspired by today to get involved and apply for funding through the 2019 Grants Programme. As we have seen from previous years, this funding can and does make a vital difference to Olympians and their communities.”

Since 2016, WOA has given more than 120 grants to support NOAs worldwide. Projects have ranged from drowning prevention programmes in India and Lithuania, an Olympian-run community chicken farm in Zimbabwe, bringing sport to orphaned children in Malaysia and those affected by conflict in Colombia.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

Images

Image 1: IOC Athletes' Commission Vice Chair, Danka Barteková OLY, WOA President Joël Bouzou OLY and IOC Sports Director, Kit McConnell speaking during the joint session between WOA and IOCAC

Image 2: Olympians from all over the world participate in World Olympians Forum 2019

Image 3: Winners and participants on stage in the first-ever WOA Grants Challenge, which took place at the World Olympians Forum to launch WOA's 2019 Grants Programme

High resolution images available on request.

About World Olympians Forum

The World Olympians Forum took place at the SwissTech Convention Centre in Lausanne, Switzerland from 15-17 April 2019. The inaugural edition of the World Olympians Forum and WOA General Assembly was held in 2015 in Moscow, Russia,...

For any media enquiries please contact: Tom Lloyd on TLloyd@verocom.co.uk.

About World Olympians Association

WOA is the member organisation for the more than 100,000 Olympians worldwide. Our remit is to work for the benefit of all Olympians at all stages of their lives, empowering them to serve society and help make the world a better place. With 149 member National Olympians Associations spread across all five continents, WOA provides support to Olympian-run events and projects based on the Olympic ideals laid down by the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin.

For more information

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