

World Olympians Association awards financial support to inspirational Olympian-led initiatives

Recipients will receive \$5,000 funding to enhance their communities and the lives of fellow Olympians



Lausanne, Switzerland – 4 June 2021: World Olympians Association (WOA) has today announced the awardees of its WOA 2021 Service to Society and Service to Olympians Grants Programme, with ten Olympian-led initiatives receiving \$5,000 each.

Split across all five continents, projects include using sport to integrate refugee children in Mali, upskilling Olympians with modern agriculture practices in Sri Lanka, preventing obesity by encouraging healthy lifestyles in Papua New Guinea and promoting sport as a tool of social cohesion in France.

WOA's grants will support National Olympians Associations (NOAs) and Olympians to spread the Olympic Values through implementing inspiring projects that create new opportunities in local communities or offer support to Olympians at every stage of their careers.

2020 saw awardees adapt to the ongoing impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and, overseen by their NOAs, Olympians have supported their communities by promoting sustainable environmental and healthy-living practices, launching cycling to school schemes for children and facilitating more opportunities for competitive sport in underprivileged areas.

World Olympians Association President and Chair of the Grants Panel, Joël Bouzou OLY, said:

“Awarding NOAs and supporting Olympian-led projects with our WOA Service to Olympians and Service to Society Grants is a highlight of our year and, as the world continues to endure the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, these initiatives are even more significant.

“Each year we see first-hand the direct, positive impact Olympians are able to make in their communities and for their fellow Olympians with this funding. We are very pleased to be able to help Olympians and NOAs across the world bring these inspirational projects to life.”

Mali Olympians Association President, Abdoulaye Traoré OLY, said:

“Our project is inspired by the Olympic Values and the funding provided by WOA will allow us to make a positive impact on the lives of refugee children living in our community. Sport is a powerful tool for social integration and I'm certain the Grant we have been awarded will transform the lives of many young people.”

Sri Lanka Olympians Association President, Sriyani Kulawansa OLY, said:

“Supporting the community of Olympians after their competitive career ends is a key focus of the Sri Lanka Olympians Association and the WOA Grant we have been awarded will enable us to enhance the lives of many. Through our project we will be able to offer education in modern agricultural methods and create more opportunities for Olympians to benefit from sustainable incomes.”

The 2021 Service to Society Grant awardees:

- **Mali's Support for refugee children through sport** will use sport to facilitate the integration of child refugees into society in the refugee camps of Niamana and Faladjie in Bamako with the creation of sports activity centres.
- **Panama's Sport as a tool for social change** will use face-to-face classes with Olympians and elite athletes to inspire physical activity, promote sustainability and teach new skills to vulnerable children in Panama's SOS Children's Villages.
- **Hong Kong's Series of short Olympism Education Videos** will inspire school children and bring the values of the Olympic Movement to life with a series of engaging videos designed to be adopted as part of the school curriculum.
- **France's For sport without violence** project will promote the fight against violence in sport in all forms and use the Olympic values to demonstrate how sport can be an indisputable factor of social cohesion.
- **Papua New Guinea's Obesity Prevention** initiative aims to lead a society shift towards healthy eating, active lifestyles, good nutrition and regular physical activity to prevent obesity.

The 2021 Service to Olympians Grant awardees:

- **Uganda's Against All Odds: Uganda's Olympic Legends** will raise awareness of Olympians' achievements with a documentary, TV miniseries and book on Uganda's Olympians and the struggles they endured to train, participate and, for some, win medals at the Olympic Games.
- **Colombia's Olympic Warriors** will organise an event incorporating sports, academic and cultural activities led by Colombian Olympians who will share their skills and knowledge to children, youths and adults.
- **Sri Lanka's Livelihood enhancement of yester year needy Olympians** will enhance the livelihood of Olympians and offer educational opportunities in modern agricultural methods resulting in sustainable incomes and increased capabilities.
- **Portugal's Unleash the Olympic Potential GALA** will increase the organisational structure of the Portuguese NOA, creating a detailed database of Olympians and supporting greater cohesion to deliver its social purpose of helping those in need.
- **Italy's Passion and Victory** will provide educational support and services to Olympians towards the end of their career to support them as they enter their new life and look to develop professionally.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

About World Olympians Association

WOA is an IOC recognised organisation supporting the 100,000 Olympians worldwide. Its 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 through sport. With 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. www.olympians.org

Connect with World Olympians Association

Website: www.olympians.org

Twitter: @worldolympians

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WorldOlympiansAssociation/