



Fund Priorities & Guiding Principles

About the Sport Together Fund

The [Sport Together Fund](#) brings together stakeholders in sport to stand in solidarity with, and to provide financial and material support to people and communities facing displacement due to conflict, human rights violations or climate change disasters in their regions or countries.

In times of crisis, sport at all its levels has consistently shown its unique ability to unite and uplift, to create safe spaces for people seeking refuge and to help build sustainable, peaceful communities.

With a strong call to action following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, in which over 14 million people have been forced to leave their homes, the Sport Together Fund initially set out to provide direct support to sports clubs and social organisations in Europe using sport to support individuals displaced and resettled from Ukraine.

However, the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine is not an isolated incident. There is systemic forced displacement of people from all walks of life across all continents worldwide.

The Sport Together Fund provides cash grants and capacity building support to sports clubs, non-profits and collectives in humanitarian crises and protracted crises settings, as well as to transit and host communities where people are rebuilding their lives. Following a set of values-based principles and an intentional grant-making approach, the Fund ensures that funding goes directly to initiatives that use sport to tangibly improve the lives of people experiencing displacement and resettlement.

The Sport Together Fund is guided by an [Expert Advisory Group](#) comprising activists, practitioners, athletes and researchers, many of whom have their own lived experiences as refugees, in addition to years of professional experience in the areas of refugee and migration support, social inclusion through sport, conflict resolution, trauma relief and sport for development.

Why the Sport Together Fund?

As of May 2024, a staggering 120 million were forced to leave their homes and communities. People leave because of conflict, human rights violations, and being targeted simply because of who they are, what they do or believe – for example, for their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or political opinions, or due to consequences of climate change and natural disasters in their

region or country. Forced displacement is a worldwide phenomenon and affects people of all ages and all walks of life.

Terms like “migrant”, “refugee”, “displaced” and “asylum-seeker” denote a temporary, often legal, situation of people facing displacement and resettlement. These terms are all used to describe people who are on the move, who have left their countries and have crossed borders. These terms do not reflect an individual’s whole identity, nor do they capture the diversity of skills, knowledge, perspectives and resources that individuals have to offer to society.

People who are displaced and seeking asylum in a new location face multiple political, economic, social and personal challenges, including but not limited to housing, safety, employment and trauma. These challenges compound the difficult and distressing experiences faced by individuals on their journey to resettlement. An individual’s experience of displacement and resettlement varies greatly and is dependent on factors like available resources, access to support services and host community attitudes. Personal characteristics like age, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, educational background, sexual orientation and religion also affect an individual’s resettlement experience in their new location. For this reason, it is essential to intentionally design and tailor programs, interventions and services to be inclusive and supportive of the different realities of people.

Sport and physical activity can be beneficial for people experiencing displacement and resettlement. It can improve physical and emotional wellbeing and can also serve as a platform to connect people with important services and social networks.

The most impactful sport and physical activity programs are designed with intention so that they:

- Are inclusive for everyone, irrespective of personal characteristics
- Are accessible for everyone, irrespective of geography and availability of resources
- Offer safe and fun spaces and experiences that encourage social interactions and friendships with people from diverse backgrounds
- Provide opportunities for learning, upskilling, and leadership
- Generate healthy outcomes for the body and mind
- Are led by people from refugee and displacement backgrounds
- Include touchpoints to access wider support services

The Sport Together Fund, guided by the Fund Priorities and Fund Principles, supports wide-ranging sport-based leadership and grassroots initiatives that bring about the above social impact.

Fund Priorities (What We Fund)

- **Intentional design** (purposeful design of sport to be inclusive, supported by research-based best practices).
- **Grassroots** (uplifts local sports initiatives, volunteer groups, associations, NGOs where refugees are most likely to access sport and physical activity)
- **Intersectional** (prioritization of systemically marginalized groups, including unaccompanied minors, people with disabilities, people from the LGBTQ+ community, girls and women and older adults)
- **Refugee leadership** (training and professional development, bestow responsibility and opportunity to refugees)

- **Diversity** (interaction between refugees and host communities and celebration of social interactions between individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds)
- **Do no harm** (identification and mitigation of risks and the unintended consequences that might cause harm, while ensuring safety of all participants)
- **Sustainability and community building** (meaningful initiatives that help people build their lives in their new location beyond participating in the sport-based activity)

Fund Principles (How We Fund)

- **Uncomplicated** (simple, time-efficient processes around grant-making)
- **Accessible** (especially for smaller associations, volunteer-groups, clubs and non-profits)
- **Flexible** (to reflect the changes in needs and landscape of entities operating in this field)
- **Empathetic** (to grantees, acknowledging the challenging situations facing refugees and understanding if projects do not go as planned)
- **Expert-advised** (Expert Advisory Group and consultants with lived experiences as refugees and / or working with communities of refugees and displaced people)
- **Collective learning** (facilitation of exchange among grantee organizations and with the wider sport and refugee ecosystem)

Expert Advisory Group

The Sport Together Fund is guided by an Expert Advisory Group comprising activists, practitioners, athletes and researchers many of whom have their own lived experiences as refugees, in addition to years of professional experience in the areas of refugee and migration support, social inclusion through sport, human rights law, conflict resolution, trauma relief and sport for development.

For more information, please contact programs@beyondsport.org.