

**Championed by over 200 inspirational Ambassadors, and a wealth of charities and sport and education governing bodies, The British Inspiration Trust (BRIT) continue to deliver the annual [BRIT Challenge](#) to support and improve young adult, student and staff mental health, fitness and wellbeing throughout the UK**

The British Inspiration Trust (BRIT) continue to deliver their annual inclusive feelgood fundraiser, for every UK university, college, and specialist college, with three aims;

- Support and improve young adult and student mental health, fitness & wellbeing and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness
- Deliver inspiration to young adults and students, and destigmatise mental health, with the support of BRIT Ambassadors
- Raise vital funds for local, regional and national charities

Registration is open for the [BRIT Challenge](#), taking place between **23<sup>rd</sup> January** and **23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023** and every UK university, college, specialist college and Students' Union are invited to embrace the Challenge, enter teams and encourage their students and staff, of all abilities, to participate.

As a collaborative charity, BRIT are inviting every university and college team taking part in the BRIT Challenge to choose a second charity to raise funds for, alongside BRIT, to support local, regional and national charities. Over the past three years, almost 250 university and college teams have taken on BRIT Challenges. Over 100 universities, colleges, and specialist colleges, have already registered for 2023.

BRIT are striving to unite the education, sport and charity sectors and a wealth of governing bodies are supporting the BRIT Challenge including Universities UK, Independent HE, Guild HE, AMOSSHE, London Higher, the Association of Colleges, Colleges Scotland, Colleges Wales, NAMSS and Natspec.

Olympians, Paralympians, Sports Personalities, Adventurers and Explorers continue to join the BRIT Ambassador family and support young adult and student mental health. BRIT Ambassadors promote the BRIT Challenge at a university and/or college of their choice, encourage student participation, share their lived experience to destigmatise mental health and champion equality, diversity and inclusion. BRIT is being supported by a whole host of inspirational figures including Dame Kelly Holmes and Sir Steve Redgrave.

The BRIT Challenge is inclusive and enables students and staff of all abilities to take part and work as a team to cover a target distance (for example 23,000 or 2,023 miles/kilometres) by either hand-cycling, cycling, wheelchair pushing, swimming, walking, jogging, running, rowing, or paddling (canoeing, kayaking, or paddle-boarding). Students and staff are engaging in many other ways including 23 acts of kindness in the community, 23 minutes of exercise or wellbeing activity a day for 23 days (including art, drawing, dance, yoga and meditation) or inviting 2,023 students and staff to take part at their university of college.

With a theme of "23", university and college teams have the flexibility to decide when they take on the BRIT Challenge, how they take on the BRIT Challenge and who they raise funds for, alongside BRIT; they are also coming up with great ways of involving their communities and setting fundraising targets.

At a time when young adult, student, and staff, mental health has been further impacted by the pandemic, the BRIT Challenge is fast becoming an inspiring annual UK-wide event supported by the education, sport, and charity sectors.

[www.BritishInspirationTrust.org.uk](http://www.BritishInspirationTrust.org.uk)

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[Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) @BRIT\_Challenge

## QUOTES OF SUPPORT

*“It has been my pleasure to support BRIT for many years as they have strived to support young adult mental health throughout the UK, raise vital funds and deliver inclusive opportunities for young adults to improve their mental health and fitness.*

*Supporting young adult mental health has never been so important and I applaud BRIT for delivering the annual BRIT Challenge and their visionary approach to collaborate with education and sport governing bodies and organisations.*

*This Call to Action goes out to all current and former Olympic and Paralympic Athletes and Sports Personalities; I urge athletes from every sport to join the BRIT Ambassador family. By uniting, we can ensure that every UK university, college and specialist college has a champion to inspire as many of their students and staff as possible to take part in the BRIT Challenge, destigmatise mental health and promote inclusivity.”*

**Sir Steve Redgrave CBE**

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*“The BRIT ethos is to be a collaborative charity. As many charities have felt the impact of COVID-19 on their fundraising efforts, I hope the annual inclusive BRIT Challenge inspires UK universities, colleges, specialist colleges and Students’ Unions to enter teams and choose a second charity to raise funds for, alongside BRIT, to support local, regional, and national charities.*

*We have adopted a collectively powerful approach to supporting young adult, student, and staff mental health by forging special relationships and partnerships with national governing bodies in the education and sport sectors and many national charities. Thank you so much to everyone who has supported BRIT, enabled us to grow as a charity and continue to have a positive impact on the lives of young adults, students, and staff, throughout the UK. It has been an absolute pleasure to visit and engage with universities and colleges by touring the UK, region by region, over the past 6 months and be hosted by over 250 institutions.*

*I am also sincerely grateful to the 200 Olympians, Paralympians, Sports Personalities, Adventurers and Explorers, who have joined our BRIT Ambassador family. They have united in promoting the BRIT Challenge, supporting universities and colleges of their choice, encouraging students of all abilities to take part, destigmatising mental health and championing equality, diversity, and inclusion. Our aim is to treble the size of our BRIT Ambassador family so that every university and college has a BRIT Ambassador who will visit during their BRIT Challenge, share their lived experience, talk about resilience, and encourage student and staff participation.*

**Phil Packer**

Founder and Non-Paid Chief Executive

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*“The delivery of the annual BRIT Challenge is close to my heart having lost my closest friend to suicide and having seen the challenges faced by people of all ages struggling with poor mental health. All of us will be affected by emotional wellbeing challenges at some point in our lives. I encourage athletes from every sport to unite and join the BRIT Ambassador family. By visiting a university or college of their choice during February and sharing their lived experience, BRIT Ambassadors will inspire teams to participate, champion inclusivity, help destigmatise mental health and it is also a super opportunity to share what our sports have to offer with students.*

*It’s great to see that the BRIT Challenge is inclusive so that students and staff of all abilities are able participate in many different ways. I wish every university, college and specialist college team the very best of luck with their distance and fundraising efforts. I hope the BRIT Challenge will also help make conversations about our mental health easier and that young people realise they are not alone.”*

**Helene Raynsford**

Paralympic Gold medallist

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*“With a deep understanding of mental health challenges in my own life, and through the work of the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust, I know that there are vast number of young adults and students who are living with mental health challenges. I have known BRIT’s Founder, Phil, for many years now and his vision to support young adult mental health resonates with me both personally and professionally.*

*It has been a pleasure to support BRIT over the past 10 years, as they have strived to help improve young adult mental health and fitness throughout the UK. I am delighted that the annual BRIT Challenge has been designed to be inclusive so that students and staff of all abilities can take part in many different ways. The BRIT Challenge is a great opportunity for universities, colleges, Students’ Unions, and students to enter teams, raise vital funds for local, regional, and national charities, and embrace an annual feelgood fundraiser that promotes mental wellbeing and inclusivity.*

**Colonel Dame Kelly Holmes MBE (mil)**

Double Olympic gold medallist

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*“BRIT exists to support and improve young adult mental health, as well as to unite the education, sport and charity sectors. I know Students’ Unions and students have amazing energy, enthusiasm and determination when it comes to raising funds for great causes, and it is infectious which is why I love supporting BRIT year on year.*

*The annual BRIT Challenge is a feel-good fundraiser that enables students to choose a second charity to raise funds for, alongside BRIT, and take part wherever they are; on campus or at home, in whatever way they choose. It’s a great way to improve mental health and fitness, to raise vital funds and to HAVE FUN!*

*I hope every UK university, college and specialist college will embrace the BRIT Challenge, making it a firm fixture in their annual Calendar of Events. If every institution enters just one team or several teams, the potential impact the BRIT Challenge could have on both improving and destigmatising mental health throughout the UK is mind blowing.”*

**Naomi Riches MBE**

Paralympic Gold Medallist

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## Notes to Editors

- To ensure BRIT remains relevant and understands the impact of mental health difficulties faced by young adults throughout the UK, universities, colleges, schools, and charities have hosted well over 700 visits to meet their students and staff. Over 250 visits and meetings took place during 2022 in preparation for the start of the BRIT Challenge on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023.
- BRIT are a collaborative charity and hope that the annual BRIT Challenge will become a firm fixture in the Higher and Further Education Calendar of Events in order to improve student and staff mental health and fitness, all whilst raising vital funds for charities throughout the UK.
- BRIT is supported by leading experts in young adult mental health, chief executives of national charities, education and sport governing bodies and universities and colleges throughout the UK. The Chairs of the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association are also championing the annual BRIT Challenge and BRIT's aspiration to grow the BRIT Ambassador family so every UK university and college has a BRIT Ambassador who will visit during their BRIT Challenge.
- To increase team involvement, destigmatise mental health and champion equality, diversity and disability inclusion, BRIT has implemented [Regional Steering Groups](#). Student and Staff representatives from every university and college in each region will be invited to join their respective BRIT Steering Group for a 1-year tenure, Chaired by a university and Co-Chaired by a college for a 3-year tenure, and grow a network to share best practice and use the BRIT Challenge as a catalyst to champion positive mental health and wellbeing throughout the year.
- BRIT is striving to unite the education, sport and charity sectors and continues to partner, or build special relationships, with a wealth of education and sport governing bodies including The Committee of University Chairs (CUC), Universities UK (UUK), Independent HE, Guild HE, AMOSSHE, London Higher, the Association of Colleges (AoC), ColegauCymru/Colleges Wales, Colleges Scotland Scottish Student Sport, NAMSS and Natspec.
- BRIT has received overwhelming support from universities, colleges and Students' Unions and their collectively powerful approach of forging special relationships with education and sport governing bodies continues in order to ensure over five million Higher Education and Further Education students, and staff, have the opportunity to participate in the annual BRIT Challenge.

**ENDS**