UTMB® World Series launches Ukraine appeal with GivenGain

Wednesday 18 May, 2022

GivenGain – the global online fundraising platform – is linking up with the world's leading trail running circuit, UTMB® World Series, to give runners around the globe the chance to support the humanitarian relief efforts in Ukraine while they run.

14 international UTMB® World Series events will now offer charity entries to participants who pledge to raise funds for charity, including at the Series flagship race UTMB® Mont-Blanc in Chamonix, France. Charity bibs are also available for sold-out races, giving runners a unique second chance to get into some of the world's most competitive trail running events,

As part of their race, runners can amplify their impact by tapping into their personal networks through peer-to-peer fundraising.

"At UTMB® World Series, we believe that sport is a force for good," said Marie Sammons, Sport and Regeneration Director at the UTMB Group, in a statement released on their website. "The UTMB brand connects people all over the world through shared values of solidarity, inclusion, and fairness. Considering the ongoing situation in Ukraine caused by the unprovoked Russian invasion, the UTMB® World Series and the events under the UTMB brand are committed to supporting our friends in Ukraine during this period."

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights conservatively estimate that more than 3,300 civilians have been killed in the Russian invasion. More than 12 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes.

Enabling global giving

GivenGain's relationship with UTMB Group began when it was picked to offer online fundraising to entrants of the TransLantau Hybrid 2021, a Hong Kong-based virtual event that encouraged runners to take on the TransLantau course solo at a time when in-person events were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fundraising participants used GivenGain's borderless online platform to connect with donors in 17 different countries and raised more than HK$80,000 for charity, a stunning success at a time when non-profit services were severely hampered by restrictions on their and supporters' activities.

TransLantau race organisers found that by enabling online fundraising, they could build new links with local non-profits and attract new participants. "GivenGain was a great opportunity for us to connect with charities and local fundraisers," said TransLantau race co-director Sabrina De Nadai. In 2022, the UTMB® World Series has welcomed TransLantau by UTMB® to the global circuit, and so partnering with GivenGain was a natural choice for the Ukraine appeal.

As an international platform dedicated to enabling global philanthropy, GivenGain allows fundraisers and donors anywhere in the world to donate securely to charities in any country, in any currency.

Charities working on the ground in Ukraine are in desperate need of hard currency donations for vital food, water and medical supplies, and GivenGain gives donors around the world a way to support them – with the assurance that only genuine, properly registered charities can fundraise through the platform. Key charities in the relief effort including the ICRC and UNHCR have been using GivenGain's robust international payment system to raise much-needed funds since the start of the crisis.

Running for Ukraine

Runners can secure a charity bib by signing up to fundraise for the UNHCR or ICRC through a participating UTMB® World Series event and pledging to raise a minimum amount set by the event. Charity bib runners in most UTMB® World Series races must commit to raising €100 for charity, while those running the Eiger Ultra Trail by UTMB®, Lavaredo Ultra Trail by UTMB®, or the European World Series major Val D'Aran by UTMB® must raise €1,000. Getting a charity bib for the sport's pinnacle event, UTMB® Mont-Blanc, requires a €2,000 commitment. Once their project is set up, they receive a registration link from UTMB Group to sign up for their chosen event and pay their entry fee.

Peer-to-peer fundraising gives runners a powerful way to use their races for good and support causes

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they care about. By starting an online fundraising page and sharing it with their networks, they can make a much bigger impact than an individual donor. The average fundraiser on GivenGain raises €1,250 for their chosen charity, but runners taking part in high-profile events often collect much more.

Starting a fundraising project on GivenGain takes just a few clicks, and fundraisers can immediately begin sharing their projects with friends and family via e-mail, social media or an automatically generated QR code that supporters can scan to receive a donation link.

“We’re very excited to work with a great event series like UTMB® World Series, and to empower fundraisers to support such an important cause,” says Clara Miret Carbonell, Regional Manager: Europe and Latin America at GivenGain. “Not only do fundraisers get an incredible one-off opportunity to get into some of the world’s top trail running events, but they have a chance to make a real difference for people in Ukraine.”

To start your fundraising project and claim your charity bib, visit the Charity Bibs section on the UTMB® World Series webpage.

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