**NEWS RELEASE**

**31.07.20, for immediate release**

**Launch of #itsgreatoutthere micro-grants to help non-profit organisations get Europe active outdoors**

The It’s Great Out There Coalition has announced details of a new round of #itsgreatoutthere grants, designed to fund projects by non-profit organisations that take new people into the outdoors. The coalition’s existing grants scheme has been adapted in the context of the major impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the non-profit sector. In the latest round, with support from the European Outdoor Group, 10 ‘micro-grants’ of €1,000 each will be awarded to the most compelling proposals. Applications are now open at <https://www.itsgreatoutthere.com/grants> and the deadline for submissions is Sunday 16 August.

Launched in 2017, the #itsgreatoutthere grants programme supports community based projects, which have primarily been developed to take new participants into the outdoors, and have in particular encouraged younger and more diverse audiences to get active. Any non-profit organisation can apply for an #itsgreatoutthere grant and since they were introduced, they have supported 19 projects with grants of varying sizes, directly benefiting nearly 5,500 people.

As the population of Europe emerges from COVID-19 related restrictions, evidence is strong that citizens now have an increased appetite to head into the outdoors. The round of 10 #itsgreatoutthere micro-grants is designed to deliver vital support to more small-scale non-profit initiatives that will help new participants to get active, and do so in a safe and responsible way.

Margo de Lange, It’s Great Out There Coalition policy officer explains: ““Our most recent study on participation in outdoor activity has shown that in recent months people everywhere have gained a greater appreciation of the outdoors and an increased desire to explore the natural world once restrictions have lifted. We now have a golden opportunity to help more people to enjoy outdoor activities, but there are significant challenges that come with that.

“Citizens from all backgrounds who are planning to explore the natural world for the first time need help and advice to do that safely and responsibly, but some of the non-profit organisations that traditionally provide that assistance have been badly hit by the pandemic. In short, the resources available for this kind of work have been significantly reduced. We’re very grateful for the support of our members and the European Outdoor Group, which means that we are able to launch this #itsgreatoutthere micro-grants scheme. I urge non-profits around Europe that may meet our criteria to consider applying. We want to help you to get more people active in the outdoors, in the right way.”

Applications for #itsgreatoutthere grants can be submitted between now and midnight on Sunday 16 August. The It’s Great Out There Coalition will choose the 10 best proposals and each will be awarded **€1,000**to help deliver their project. The coalition will also help put successful applicants in contact with some of its members and other partners from the outdoor industry that may be able to assist with the supply of products or other support in kind, such as professional mountain guiding.

The full criteria for #itsgreatoutthere micro-grants and application form can be found at [www.itsgreatoutthere.com/grants](http://www.itsgreatoutthere.com/grants). Questions for the coalition team can be sent to info@itsgreatoutthere.com.

**ends**

**For additional media information about #itsgreatoutthere, please contact Chris Lines on +44 (0)7971 868329,** **chris@rightlines.info** **or** [**www.twitter.com/chrisjlines**](http://www.twitter.com/chrisjlines)**.**

**NOTE TO EDITORS**

The It’s Great Out There Coalition is an International Non Profit Association (INPA), registered in Brussels, and set up and launched by the European Outdoor Group (EOG). Run by an executive team and non-executive board, the coalition is leading a pan-European consumer facing campaign to inspire more people to get active in the outdoors. The It’s Great Out There Coalition is funded by membership fees from some of the biggest outdoor businesses in Europe.

Full members are: AS Adventure, AKU, Black Yak, Berghaus, Columbia, ISPO, Jack Wolfskin, KEEN, Low Alpine, Mammut, McTrek, Merrell, Nordisk, OutDoor by ISPO, Pertex, Primaloft, Rab, Regatta, Reima, Salomon, Schuster, Sport2000, Ternua, The North Face, Vango. Associate members are: Bundesverband der Deutschen Sportartikel-Industrie e.V. (BSI), European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA), Free to be Kids, International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO), National Sport Leaders Network of North Macedonia, Outdoor Against Cancer, Outdoor Industries Association (OIA), Outdoor Sports Valley (OSV), Riders for Refugees, Scandinavian Outdoor Group (SOG), Silkeborg Kommune, The Outward Bound Trust, UK Active, Utrecht University and Women in Adventure.

Businesses and other organisations that operate in the outdoor sector are encouraged to join the coalition as members or supporters. For more information about terms and costs, contact info@itsgreatoutthere.com. In addition, the It’s Great Out There Coalition offers a range of sponsorship options for companies. For more details, contact policy officer Margo de Lange on margo.delange@itsgreatoutthere.com.

Any non-profit organisation can apply for an #itsgreatoutthere grant of between €1,000 and €5,000. The grants will be awarded to initiatives that focus on grass roots projects, which have primarily been developed to take new participants into the outdoors. The It’s Great Out There Coalition encourages potential applicants to team up with partners from the outdoor industry such as brands, retailers and activity providers, especially those who are already members of the coalition. Grants can be awarded to support projects that reach citizens of all ages and from any background. One priority is to support ideas that will help young people access the outdoors for the first time, particularly those who are based in the inner cities or live in circumstances that mean that getting access to the hills and mountains is difficult. More detail are available [here](https://www.itsgreatoutthere.com/grants/).

The It’s Great Out There Coalition is also working closely with European Commission in Brussels (with the European Outdoor Group), helping to represent the outdoor sector to policymakers and seeking to secure European funding for key community-led projects designed to inspire more European citizens to get active.

To find out more about the It’s Great Out There Coalition and #itsgreatoutthere campaign, visit [www.itsgreatoutthere.com](http://www.itsgreatoutthere.com).