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University of Birmingham joins IAAF World Indoor Championships Birmingham 2018



The University of Birmingham has signed up as the latest national supplier for the IAAF World Indoor Championships Birmingham 2018, which will be held at Arena Birmingham from the 1 to 4 March. The University will support the volunteer programme for the Championships, which is the biggest indoor sports event to be staged in the city for 15 years.

More than 500 volunteers, who'll be known as 'Gems' - to highlight the city's Jewellery Quarter and because they are so valuable to the event - are being recruited to help out during the Championships, and the University will support this programme.

With a clear understanding of the value that volunteering at major sports events brings to its students, the University has a successful history of recruiting, developing and supporting volunteers, particularly for international preparation camps and major events in the city. University of Birmingham students have comprised the main volunteer workforce for two Jamaica Track & Field camps, and the Birmingham International Marathon and Great Birmingham Run.

Championships Director, Joan Durose, said: 'We are delighted to have the biggest university in the city on board as a supplier. Our volunteers are crucial to the success of the Championships and it is great to have the expertise of the University to call on to help us provide a first-class training programme for our Gems.'

The University of Birmingham is one of the UK's leading research-led universities. It became the first university to offer a sports-based degree in 1946, and is currently ranked number five globally for sports science research. Nationally and internationally, it is a destination of choice for talented student athletes, who receive specialist support from the University's Performance Centre to enable them to achieve their potential in study and sport.

One such athlete is Sarah McDonald, one of three University of Birmingham students and graduates selected for the England athletics team for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, who recently won a team gold medal at the European Cross Country Championships. Another sport scholar, Jonny Davies, won silver and bronze medals at the World University Games in Taipei last year.

Zena Wooldridge OBE, University of Birmingham's Director of Sport, said:

'It's a privilege to be a part of another global sporting event happening in Birmingham. In a university where athletics is part of our heritage, and volunteering is an increasingly important part of our student experience, our support for the Gems programme is a natural synergy. It's an exciting opportunity for our own volunteer team to contribute to the success of the IAAF World Indoor Championships, whilst supporting some of our students to gain a unique and memorable volunteering experience from this event coming to Birmingham.'

The IAAF World Indoor Championships Birmingham 2018 is jointly organised by Birmingham City Council and British Athletics on behalf of the IAAF (the International Association of Athletics Federations).

More information about the Championships, including the full timetable and information about tickets can be found at www.wicbirmingham2018.com

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Note to editors:

- University of Birmingham's support for the IAAF World Indoor Championships Birmingham 2018 was brokered and contracted by the rights marketing team at The Sports Consultancy. The Sports Consultancy is working with Birmingham City Council to secure National Partners and Suppliers.
- University of Birmingham's track and field will be the home training facility for the University of Birmingham Athletics and Cross Country Club which includes international athletes such as British 1500m Indoor Champion, Sarah McDonald.
- University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness opened in May 2017, it features Birmingham's first 50m pool, six glass back squash courts, 200+ station gym, five activity studios, an indoor sports arena, 10m climbing wall and more.
- The University's new squash and hockey facilities are proposed venues for Birmingham's 2022 Commonwealth Games bid; and this year will host the British Transplant Games and World University Squash Championships.
- The University of Birmingham is currently ranked in the top 8 universities for sport in the UK.
- The University of Birmingham is ranked amongst the world's top 100 institutions, its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than 5,000 international students from over 150 countries.
- Photo credit: Alan Spink

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