



TOMORROW BELONGS TO THOSE WHO ARE ACTIVE TODAY

THE WORLD'S FIRST GLOBAL ACTIVE CITIES ARE EXPECTED TO BE CERTIFIED SOON. THE AWARDS WILL BE THE RESULT OF A STRONG COMMITMENT BY PILOT CITIES TO HELP RESIDENTS BECOME ACTIVE AND IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH AND LIFE OPPORTUNITIES. DURING THE YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES, PROFESSIONALS AND ACADEMICS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO A SUMMIT TO LEARN ABOUT THE LEGACY OF BUENOS AIRES 2018 – CIUDAD ACTIVA – AND THE GLOBAL ACTIVE CITY APPROACH

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“City and local governors and mayors, local community leaders, civil society and grassroots organisations should partner to lead city-scale and whole-of-community approaches to promoting physical activity, health and well-being, including supporting the sharing of experiences and creation of national/ regional networks.” The World Health Organisation

Why doesn't everyone take part in sport and physical activity? The health benefits are obvious, and increasingly backed by science – exercise has recently been proven to help prevent 12 types of cancer, while also protecting against illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol and depression.

Yet one in four of the world's adults and four in five adolescents fail to meet the international guidelines on minimum activity levels – namely 150 minutes of moderate activity a week for adults, and 60 minutes a day for adolescents.

Cities joining the Active Well-being Initiative (AWI) network realise that the reasons people do not exercise are varied and complex. People living in urban settings frequently lack opportunities to take part in sport because of personal issues like disabilities, illnesses and family responsibilities, or due to social problems such as poverty, crime levels, or a lack of accessible places to exercise and infrastructure to support active travel.

AWI Partner Cities work to improve their urban environments, create solid alliances between organisations and communities to dig deeply into local issues, and research and tackle specific barriers to doing sport.

Buenos Aires, which has been involved with the AWI since its inception, is one of its biggest success stories. During the 2018 Youth Olympic Games (YOG) – which will be held between 6 and 18 October – Buenos Aires will host a two-day celebration of its Global Active City programme. ➤

23%

of adults and **81%** of 11 to 17-year-olds worldwide do not meet World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations on physical activity for health

USD 54bn

The estimated annual global healthcare costs of physical inactivity

57%

of these costs are incurred by the public sector; lost productivity absorbs a further **USD 14 billion**

15%

WHO aims to reduce physical inactivity among adults and adolescents by **15%** between 2018 and 2030*



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CIUDAD ACTIVA SUMMIT

During the hosting of the YOG, Buenos Aires will present its Olympic legacy at the Ciudad Activa Summit from 9-10 October at Usina del Arte. The summit will include a variety of activities and sessions, presented in different formats, such as academic lectures, workshops, movement activities, good practices, and case studies. It is targeted at sports and health professionals, international organisations, sports federations, NGOs, socially-conscious businesses, urban planners, public officials, researchers, students and residents.

More than 50 internationally and nationally renowned experts will share their knowledge during the sessions at the event, which will be structured into nine topics. Admission is free of charge, register in advance at buenosaires.gob.ar/baciudadactiva or email baciudadactiva@buenosaires.gob.ar



Following a Global Active City approach hasn't just changed the way things are run in Buenos Aires; it has transformed residents' lives. Ciudad Activa is the city's Olympic legacy gift to its people – sustainable sports facilities and physical activity projects that are accessible to everyone, and often aimed at neglected communities, which have not always been given opportunities to take part in sport. *Olympic Review* spoke to Diego Santilli, Vice-Mayor of Buenos Aires, to find out how and why the Argentinian capital set out to become a Global Active City.

Q. How did Buenos Aires start the Ciudad Activa programme?

A. Buenos Aires joined the Global Active City movement three years ago, as we were planning to host the 2018 YOG. We saw this event as an opportunity to build a lasting legacy that benefits all of us, spreading the philosophy and the values of the Olympics, and generating an active and healthy environment for our residents. At the same time, it was very important for the city to reverse the impact of sedentary lifestyles on public health. NCDs (non-communicable diseases), such as cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes and cancer, represent the main causes of death in the big cities of the world and we, in our city, are not unaware of this problem. Today, it is a priority to prevent obesity in adults and children, as well as to promote physical activity.

Q. What are the biggest challenges facing Buenos Aires and how do you expect Ciudad Activa to help overcome them?

A. In addition to fighting NCDs, it is important to work with residents and civil society or voluntary organisations, which have a key role in the community. As well as health and sports, this approach can be used to improve nutrition, education, urban planning and active travel, among others.

CIUDAD ACTIVA PROJECTS



“Estaciones Saludables”

These 40 “healthy stations” bring health checks and information to locations already visited by local people, rather than expecting them to seek out professional advice. Some are in parks and other places where people do physical activity, with lockers to drop off their belongings. Nurses carry out free health checks, measuring weight, blood glucose and blood pressure, and nutritionists offer advice. Since 2013, 1.15 million people have used the stations, with an average of 3.8 visits per person. “They allowed me to stop and take my blood pressure, get weighed, and talk to the nutritionist who was here,” said regular user Elena Dupuis. “The truth is they seem fantastic to me.”



La Liga del Potrero Femenina

This is a new football league for girls and young women aged 13 to 18, with 300 regular players. It was launched in April 2018 in partnership with the NGO Fundación Boca Social, belonging to Club Atlético Boca Juniors, and aims to involve women from informal settlements and neighbourhoods in sports. Using football as a catalyst, this project supports players with their educational, social, personal and family needs. Dalila Abril Jairo, aged 13, said: “They teach us to respect the teachers, and I like how they treat me. It's great to participate in La Liga del Potrero.” The league has also won praise from Argentinian football star and UN Ambassador Lionel Messi, for helping to achieve the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development.





It is about creating long-term cultural changes, aimed at improving all our lives. Today's challenges require healthy bodies and active minds. The 21st century demands a more dynamic and energetic society, to think about how to solve the problems of the future. Cities that have healthy and energetic people focus on the sustainable development of their communities and create new possibilities to have better lives.

Q. What are the objectives of Buenos Aires as a Global Active City?

A. Our vision is that each resident in every corner of Buenos Aires has the opportunity to enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. Our objectives are to: fight against obesity and chronic diseases; ensure residents take part in physical activities and sports, regardless of their ages, physical conditions and socio-economic situations; improve eating habits; and make the public space a healthy environment.

Q. What benefits does the programme bring?

A. For some time we have been working to promote residents' health on different fronts. For example, five years ago we implemented "Estaciones Saludables" – healthy stations, where more than four million consultations have been carried out. We reinforced first-level healthcare with 45 primary healthcare centres; we expanded the physical activity offer; we upgraded sports infrastructure;

'CITIES THAT HAVE HEALTHY AND ENERGETIC PEOPLE CREATE NEW POSSIBILITIES TO HAVE BETTER LIVES'
DIEGO SANTILLI

and we improved school menus so children are better fed with healthier food. We managed to coordinate all these projects with a global initiative and unite our efforts towards one goal: to improve the lives of all residents of the city. In the future, we will have to sustain the quality of our public policies, since the city will undergo regular audits to maintain its Global Active City status. In addition, the approach enabled us to formalise alliances with key stakeholder organisations and highlight the importance of preventative health and residents' well-being.

Q. How has Ciudad Activa contributed to the pre-legacy and legacy of the YOG Buenos Aires 2018?

A. We are using the opportunity of hosting the Games to accelerate and reinforce existing programmes, and kick-start new projects. In addition, Buenos Aires 2018 is an opportunity to get closer to young people and the community in general. An example of this is the thousands of children who have taken part in educational activities

Above

The Buenos Aires marathon is just one way for locals to get active

Opposite

The city and its residents are reaping the rewards of the Global Active City programme

and summer camps, the tour of the Olympic flag and flame around schools and local sports clubs, activities to encourage the practice of sports, and talks that promote the Olympic values of friendship, respect and excellence.

Q. How has the Active Well-being Initiative (AWI) helped?

A. Joining the AWI has helped us to work across sectors, forming alliances with key stakeholders in a way that fosters coordinated action, avoiding the segmentation-by-area that is usually a recurrent problem in public administration.

Q. Why do you want Buenos Aires to be a Global Active City?

A. While it is an honour to be one of the first cities in the world to be certified with an internationally-recognised standard, the most important point is to promote and empower young people, families and communities to make beneficial decisions in terms of lifestyles and habits. Keeping us healthy is fundamental, because it allows us to study and work in better conditions and alleviates the economic and social costs generated by NCDs. In addition, programmes such as the Global Active City movement are an ideal way to promote major sporting events, reaching the whole of society.

Q. What message would you give to other cities that are considering joining the AWI network?

A. Being part of a network of cities is very beneficial because it promotes good practices, motivates us to open up and to share experiences, and allows us to learn from each other and through the annual audits. The AWI helps us to maintain our public policies to international standards. In addition, it helps us to strengthen the capabilities of citizens, creating cities that are more advanced and sustainable. ■

The Active Well-being Initiative was founded by Evaleo, a sustainable health organisation, and TAFISA (The Association For International Sport for All), supported by the IOC. Visit activewellbeing.org or follow @AWBInitiative

