

Dear Mr Cregan,

I write raising awareness and in politely seeking, Belfast City Councils' blessing, support, promotion but in particular financial assistance of approximately £10,000 for Belfast's "**Malone Tornadoes**" in helping to secure the teams full participation in only the third **International Mixed Ability World Cup Rugby Tournament (IMART)** being held this year in Cork, Ireland between the 5th June - 10th June 2022.

Below, I have provided some background and supporting videos/u-tube links around this world event, the Tornadoes development, progress and success in being the first ever mixed ability team from Belfast, indeed Northern Ireland to be represented in this World Tournament.

THE INTERNATIONAL MIXED ABILITY WORLD CUP RUGBY TOURNAMENT 2022

What is IMART? The videos and links tell the story best and here is a little introduction:

[Changing the World through Mixed Ability - YouTube](#)

Mixed Ability Rugby is part of IMAS (International Mixed Ability Sport) the driving force in championing the Mixed Ability Model used to break down barriers to participation in sport, promote social inclusion and generate long-term positive change in our communities. The tournament has raised, and will continue to raise, the aspirations of people with physical, mental and learning disabilities - or barriers irrespective of creed, colour, class or ability, bonding people from all walks of life with a mutual respect, camaraderie, and understanding of each other's strengths and frailties

The tournament has grown to attract a global audience, demonstrating it is possible to break down the traditional divide of able bodied and disabled sport, and in doing so, giving rise to a host of benefits for all involved and within the communities in which we live..

Cork will host **840 players from 28 teams across 15 nations**, including all the Home Nations, Spain, New Zealand and Argentina, a vast and diverse audience including the mainstream rugby community, minority groups, excluded countries, disability and human rights organisations.

THE BELFAST MALONE TORNADES

Who are the Malone Tornadoes and what is mixed ability rugby:

[Mixed Ability Rugby at Malone RFC - YouTube](#)

As a cross community club, team we endorse and have implement all the IMAS principles and through the Tornadoes delivering **Real Mixed Ability Rugby and Inclusion In action**.

Mixed Ability Rugby has grown organically from a lack of provision for disabled participants or those with "different or differing needs" The Malone Tornadoes (Belfast) are **the first all community Mixed Ability Rugby Team in Northern Ireland**, giving adults over the age of 18 with physical, mental or learning disabilities, the opportunity to participate in rugby football.

In the past, when children primarily those with Autism and Dome Syndrome, attending the Newfordge Tiggers reached the age of 18, they had to leave that group, but there were no other options or facilities for these young adult players (men or women) their families or guardians. The

establishment of The Malone Tornadoes meant those aged 18 and over can now continue playing, developing future life skills, contributing immeasurably to their physical well-being, self-esteem and confidence.

The Malone Tornadoes also offers past players, those who have left the game but wish to give something back or anyone who has suffered a serious life-changing injury, the opportunity to play alongside those with and without physical, mental and learning differences and perhaps for the first time, playing in the same 15-a-side rugby game abiding by World Rugby Laws.

Mixed ability emphasises regular, frequent, and sustainable activities, self-determination, full membership, in this case of a rugby (sports) club and many opportunities for social interaction.

*At the Malone Tornadoes, our members can now **play rugby, be part of a team, part of a club and treated the same as all other players and or members.***

THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY

*Through the combined commitment of our small, enthusiastic group, we have grown the team and made tremendous progress in several areas. Until now, we have funded ourselves, travelling to Cork and Dublin, playing in various games and following further successes, invited to **represent Belfast, Northern Ireland in the 2022 Rugby World Cup!***

*To be part of this International Tournament is simply fantastic and for our team members, **a once in a lifetime** experience and potentially life-changing opportunity.*

*It is also a celebration of rugby, diversity and inclusion, with the week-long event including, round robin games, educational and social events, with all teams battling for 2 Trophies: **The Winners' Cup and The Spirit of Mixed Ability Rugby Trophy.***

This amazing opportunity, however, brings significant challenges for our small administrative and management team. To date, we have never had to finance such an event or promote ourselves within or beyond Northern Ireland and secure such additional support and financial assistance.

We are aware Belfast City Council has a long-standing and deep commitment to making a difference to communities and groups across Belfast and support for the Malone Tornadoes would make such an enormous difference to the team and player participation – and in the future help to cement and further promote mixed ability sport going forward within our communities as a force for good.

*I would very much welcome any opportunity to discuss further, Belfast City Council, endorsing the World Cup, supporting “The Tornadoes” and assistance in helping the **“Tornadoes Ambassadors”** attend the competition in full, in promoting the City of Belfast and post the world cup working with Belfast City Council in raising further awareness and in promoting the club and community Mixed Ability Sport.*

SUMMARY of THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS

- *We are exploring the best social media and creation of appropriate mailing lists in maximising our exposure, promoting The Tornadoes, Belfast and this world event?.*
- *The World Cup Tournament organisers (IMART) have also shared some of their marketing and media programme (see link below)*
- *The last Tournament (2017) attracted 9 TV Stations, 17 radio broadcasts, 78 newspapers and 270 websites.*
- *Advanced audience and media commitment for the delayed 2020 event saw a doubling and indications for 2022 are greater again.*

- We have grown to approximately 40 players/facilitators and are required to select and register a squad of 30 plus cover.
- We have estimated a figure of £30,000 - £35,000 would ensure **our squad's full participation** covering for example: all build up, preparation, pre, during and post-match/tournament events including formal corporate and civic receptions, organised competing team functions, social/media events, both the opening and closing ceremonies.
- Other basic costs, include travel and logistics, all training, playing and non-playing kit, logos/embroidery, coordinated team outfits and uniforms etc.
- There is a discounted package (£350 per head for the week) available to any other family members or supporters wishing to join the squad.
- Early advice in achieving this amount has been to secure: one sponsor or establish a Gold/Silver/Bronze sponsorship package, offering one or more sponsors some form of fair exposure or exclusivity (e.g., logos on kit or pitch side branding etc.)
- Having already motivated and excited our squad, **the fall-out in not gaining sufficient sponsorship/funding would be a massive disappointment and serious mental blow for many, with potentially a token attendance with only a few selected players experiencing such a large sporting event!!**
- A video/recording "The path to the World Cup" following the "Malone Tornadoes to Cork" has also been a recurring suggestion.
- Some next actions - secure a formal meeting with Belfast City Council to discuss and hopefully establish some funding, support, promotion/marketing, finalising our timelines, confirming and registering our final squad selection.
- Communicate the same to all selected players, facilitators, guardians and families etc.
- Promote Belfast and post-World Cup the continued awareness, development and expansion of this facility across our community
- **Promote Belfast as a potential host/ venue for a future World Cup**

Links

IMAS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-ymxqACojY&authuser=0>

Belfast Malone Tornadoes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJZK-Xpe9Fk&t=35s&authuser=0>

Belfast Malone Tornadoes promotional and social media video in conjunction with Stephen Ferris and Boost:

[Stephen Ferris on Twitter: "The mixed ability rugby team- The Tornadoes @MaloneRFC were in top form recently. Thanks for having me along, and thanks to all the volunteers like Stewart and Sam who give so much back to the game. @Boost DrinksNI" / Twitter](#)

Sponsors Pack - Cork 2022



IMART Sponsors for
Teams Pack.pdf