

# Vision Sports Ireland & The Galway Cycle **2019**



**Vision Sports Ireland helps to facilitate access into sport and leisure for thousands of blind and vision impaired people. The organisation provides opportunities including tandem cycling, tennis, athletics, golf, swimming, judo, triathlon and football.**

Vision Sports is unique in that it is the only organisation in Ireland solely dedicated to promoting sport and leisure for vision impaired children and adults.

It is also the only charity in Ireland with a Rio 2016 Gold medallist on its Board – Jason Smyth – the fastest Paralympian on the Planet – is Director of Sport Strategy at Vision Sports Ireland.

Blind and vision impaired children and youth must jump over many barriers to participate in sport including attitudinal, cost of adapted equipment, access to gyms, swimming pools and other sports facilities, cost of transport (most rely on public transport) as well as supporting guides/pilots.



*“Finding Vision Sports means I no longer have to stand and watch my classmates play sport, I join them” – Annie (10) Tipperary.*



*“Once I lost my sight 3 years ago, I gave up active sport. Last month, at the pilot Vision Sports Inclusion Games it took to adapted tennis. I have played tennis every week since” – Eve (16) Louth.*

Of 8,000 registered blind and vision impaired young people in Ireland just 900 (15%) are understood to participate in sport (national average for this age group is 32%). The Vision Sports Youth Inclusion Games aims to increase levels by close on 166% to an overall 2,400 participants in three years (an amazing 40% overall participation level).

As an appalling 28.2% of blind/vision impaired people are on the unemployment register. Sport and leisure will build the confidence and open opportunities in so many aspects in life, not least in jobs market for so many young blind/vision impaired people.

Previous participants in Vision Sports activities have spoken about the gains they have received from participation

*“My classmates just did not understand how difficult it was for me to play sport. Once they joined me at the Vision Sports Inclusion Games, they got it. Now we make the adaptations I need, and we all play sport together” – John (12) Dublin.*



**Vision Sports is delighted to be selected as the chosen charity to benefit from Galway Cycle 2019.**



The proceeds from this year's event will fund the development of a multi-sport Youth Inclusion Games offering opportunities for 1500 blind and vision impaired young people over three years, to be rolled out on a regional basis.

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