



**Street Child World Cup
2026
Application Handbook**

Dear friends,

Welcome to the Street Child World Cup 2026 – a World Cup of Hope. A World Cup of Joy. A World Cup of Identity.

Get ready to embark on a journey where your passion will be intensified, and your dedication to creating a fairer world for street children reaffirmed. A journey where the resilience and aspirations of street-connected children from around the globe inspire true transformation. As testament by one of the team leaders from the Street Child World Cup in Qatar 2022:

"To see kids that were in a shell full of fears and insecurities come out of that shell and be free and comfortable of being who they truly are, without being scared or ashamed. I could hear the voice of some of my players who never speak up for themselves, let alone for others."

The upcoming Street Child World Cup 2026 in the USA marks a key milestone in our journey, and we're delighted you want to be part of it. Over the last fifteen years, Street Child United has evolved significantly, becoming more agile, knowledgeable and influential. Whilst our core commitment remains serving street-connected young people and amplifying their voices, we strive to create a legacy that will change the lives of the young people we serve so they can fulfil their dreams, the way every child deserves.

Central to our achievements is you, collaborating with the most effective NGOs in this field, aligning our efforts to best support them, we can make change happen. With that said, I am excited that those involved will be part of our greatest impact to date – securing one million and one legal identities for street children globally. This campaign is a true game changer, and whilst ambitious, I know that with our combined passion, dedication, and belief, this shared goal will happen.

Thank you in advance for your application and for your shared commitment to changing the lives for street children worldwide.

Remember, You Are Somebody, and your contributions matter.



John Wroe, Co-founder and CEO



1.

ABOUT STREET CHILD UNITED

Street Child United uses the power of sport, children's voices and the arts to change the way the world negatively sees and treats street-connected children, so they can be protected, respected and supported to build a life away from the streets.

Ahead of the world's biggest sporting competitions, we organise international sports events for street-connected children. Our flagship initiative is the Street Child World Cup (SCWC), an international football tournament, festival of arts and participatory congress for street-connected children from around the world, which takes place ahead of each FIFA World Cup in a major city of the host country. Please, see more on www.stretchchildunited.org

2.

ABOUT THE STREET CHILD WORLD CUP

The SCWC USA 2026 will take place ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup in North America. This event will unite young people in street situations from around the world to play in their own international football tournament to raise awareness and tackle the widespread stigma and negative treatment they face. On the pitch, 24 national teams (half boys and half girls), will represent their countries. Off the pitch, the young people will make their voices heard and advocate recommendations to help improve the lives of street children worldwide.



3.

HOW WE WORK WITH TEAMS

Each national team is formed by an organisation working on the frontline to provide services and/or support to young people in street situations. These organisations are our partners and together we form a global community committed to improving the lives of street children. Our partner organisations and the children and young people they support are the experts. We work with them to provide a global platform for their voices to be heard around the world.



The flags represent countries SCU has worked that participated at the SCWC 2022



4.

KEY INFORMATION

WHERE:

USA - City to be confirmed

WHEN:

05/2026

DURATION:

10 Days - subject to change

TEAMS:

24 Teams (12 boys and 12 girls) - - subject to change

PARTICIPANTS:

10 Players (7 players and 3 subs)

AGES:

14-17 at the time of the SCWC 2026

SUPPORT STAFF:

3 Support Staff (1 being team leader)

AGES:

Delegates must be a minimum of 18 years of age



5.

STREET CHILD WORLD CUP THREE PILLARS

The Street Child World Cup is not only a football tournament. The event is built on three pillars:



FOOTBALL



ART



ADVOCACY



5.1

PILLAR 1 - FOOTBALL

Game Format

- 7 a side made up of 10 squad members.
- The tournaments mirror the format of the FIFA World Cup, with group stages held over consecutive days followed by knock-out rounds held on Finals Day.
- Age: 14-17 years old at the time of the tournament.
- Separate girls' and boys' tournaments.

5.2

PILLAR 2 - CHILD RIGHTS CONFERENCE

Congress and General Assembly

Alongside the football event, we will hold a participatory conference focusing on street-connected children's rights. The young people will be invited to address the specific issues they face and make recommendations to their governments to help improve the lives of all street children around the world.

The Congress will culminate in a General Assembly where the young people will call the world to action in front of officials, supporters and media at a prominent venue in the USA; providing a platform for the voices of those who have gone unheard for so long.

Case studies:

- Street Child United has always secured the support of global organisations to promote and support its work. The UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth provided this content ahead of the Street Child Games in Rio 2016 - [watch here](#)
- In Qatar 2022 Team Colombia was provided by Goleadoras - an organisation that places a strong focus on the emotional and physical development of its young people. The girls who travelled to Qatar were young people who had demonstrated they had the power to change their environment, be positive role models for other girls and adolescents, and that they could promote the changes that Condoto (its local municipality) requires from a gender perspective. One of the girls spoke about her experience and the changes she had found in herself.
- Team India (Karunalaya) used the exposure it achieved by taking part in Qatar 2022 to secure a meeting with the Honourable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu State. Its participation featured in this television report on Tamil News 18 - [watch here](#)



5.3

PILLAR 3 - ARTS

The Arts inspire creativity, give hope, empower individuals, bring new perspectives on processes, and offer unconventional results that stimulate innovation. We use the arts to help young people be creative, make friends, overcome language barriers, share cultural experiences and as an opportunity for self expression.

The young people will take part in spectacular opening and closing ceremonies and will join in a daily programme of arts. They will also learn more about the host country by taking part in activities with local communities, like music and art, and visiting historical and cultural landmarks.



6. PARTICIPANTS & DELEGATES

The organisations applying are responsible for the overall duty of care of the young people involved before, during and after participation in the SCWC USA 2026.

6.1 PARTICIPANTS / PLAYERS

This responsibility includes the selection of the children and young people who will take part. We ask that those you select:

- Have been in your direct care or living with a foster family for at least 12 months;
- Have experienced homelessness, have experienced street-connected life, and/or have been at risk of the streets or homelessness;*
- Are strong role models for street-connected children, both on and off the pitch;
- Have never competed as a professional athlete, or at a professional sports level;
- Are aged 14 – 17 at the time of the SCWC;
- Get involved to make decisions in the selection process of the final team.

**Definition based on the UNCRC General Comment on Children in Street Situations*

6.2 DELEGATES

Each team is supported by three Delegates (staff), one of them being the Team Leader; all responsible for the welfare of the participants. The Team Leader is the point of contact between SCU and the participant organisation.

We ask that the delegates you select:

- Have been in direct contact with the young people participating;
- Are aged 18 or over at the time of the SCWC;
- At least one of the same gender as the team you are applying to bring, i.e. one woman and two men or one man and two women.
- Are able to motivate the children;
- Are able to translate between English and the language that the young people speak (preferably all but, at least, the Team Leader must speak English and your native language fluently).
- Are able to travel with the children throughout the entire journey as well as look after them for the entire event (including staying at the same accommodation as the children).



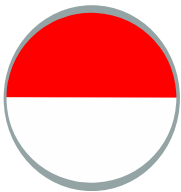
6.3

TEAM STORIES

Off the pitch at SCU's major events there is a focus on advocacy and personal development. The importance of education is a key part of that, and has a lasting impact on participants. The following reports were received from teams.



Burundi: "Our children who participated in Doha and Chennai have been involved in big events organised by New Generation to children sharing their testimonies and their experience during their participation. The recent one was on the 17th of March where they spoke in front of 6000 people."



Indonesia: Seven of the participants became volunteers of the psychosocial support program in Cianjur, West Java (every two weeks for 4 months) for the surviving children of the earthquake. They delivered games sessions for the kids in the refugee camp and helped to organise children's festivals.



Sri Lanka: Their lives have been completely transformed. We are planning a mini version of the cricket next February in Sri Lanka.



Zimbabwe: One has successfully gone back to school after being able to attain a birth certificate whilst another is now fully employed in the Ministry of Sports in Zimbabwe. Our work and involvement with girls and sport has increased significantly and we are now being invited into schools to do sports and life skills trainings particularly around the link between menstrual health and hygiene and sports, child rights and participation of girls in sports



7. INCLUSIVITY COMMITMENT

We would like to emphasise the SCWC is more than a football tournament. It is important that each participant is able to represent and speak on behalf of street-connected children in Congress activities and arts activities over and above their sporting ability on the football pitch. Furthermore, SCU is committed to inclusivity, therefore all participants (7 Players and 3 subs) must play in the different phases of the tournament (group stages and knockout games) if they are physically and psychologically able to play.



8. FURTHER GUIDANCE

During the Summit (see Section 14 for a complete overview of the Summit) SCU will provide a guidance for participants' selection on how to choose your participants based on personal skills rather than sporting ability. The essence of SCWC is about relationships, and we look forward to discussing your application and the information above in the coming months. We recognise that street child/youth homelessness organisations are different from each other. If you are not sure whether the young people you work with fit the above categories, please contact us to discuss.

9. OPPORTUNITIES

We will offer further opportunities before, during and after the SCWC - USA 2026. These may include:

- Access to a global community of organisations committed to protecting, supporting and advocating for the rights of street children;
- Networking events and activities;
- Sharing learning and good practice;
- Training kits to prepare the children and young people for their participation in SCWC USA2026;
- PR Activations;
- Press, media, film and TV opportunities;
- Potential project visits by SCU staff, press and media, celebrities and SCU Ambassadors



10.**TIMELINE**

May 24 - July 24	Expression of interest
Aug 24	Pre-selection
Aug 24 - Oct 24	Project plan
Nov 24	Visits, meetings, and interviews
Dec 24	Final assessment
Jan 25	Partnership agreement and teams pack 1
Feb 25 onwards	Monitoring and evaluation of participation
April 25	First participation fee deposit
April 25	Teams pack 2
May 25	SCU Global Summit USA 2025
Jan 25 - June 25	Selecting participants and obtaining birth certificates
June 25 onwards	Training & preparation for participation
Aug 25	Confirming staff members
Sep 25	Obtaining passports
Dec 25	Sending participants' individual profiles
Dec 25	Sending consent forms: media, code of conduct, congress
Oct 25 - Jan 26	Visa applications
Jan 26	Second participation fee deposit
Feb 26	Book flights and secure medical insurance
March 26	Teams pack 3
May 26	STREET CHILD WORLD CUP 2026



11.

SPONSORSHIP & FUNDRAISING

SCU asks for a participation fee from each team taking part in our events. For SCWC – USA 2026, this fee is £10,000 sterling per team (includes 10 players and 3 support staff). Teams must cover the cost of any bank charges incurred when transferring the fee. One of the most common ways that teams have funded their participation at the SCWC has been through securing team sponsor(s).

Whilst fundraising and sponsorship are primarily the responsibility of your organisation, we recognise that the resources of different organisations vary considerably, and we are committed to ensuring that organisations of all sizes are represented at the SCWC – USA 2026. Therefore, if the turnover of your organisation is less than £500,000/year sterling, we will ask you to pay a participation fee of just £1,000.00 sterling (includes 10 players and 3 support staff). Teams must cover the cost of any bank charges incurred when transferring the fee.

In exchange for sponsoring the team, the donor will be able to promote their brand on the football kit worn during the Street Child World Cup – USA 2026. SCU will advise on the number of logo position(s) available.

Please note SCU reserves the right to return funding or withdraw from a funding relationship if a donor is discovered to contravene our guidelines and principles. As well as the participation fee, each organisation will also have to cover:

- Flights to and from USA for at least one project leader to attend the Street Child United Global Summit 2025;
- The flight costs for the participants to and from USA in 2026 (10 children plus 3 support staff);
- IDs, passports and visas for the team;
- Travel and comprehensive medical insurance for the duration of the trip.



12.

WHAT SCU WILL DELIVER

Whilst organisations must make the payments as outlined above, SCU covers the following in-country - accommodation, internal transport (including airport pick ups), hire of sports facilities, tournament management, branded playing shirts and team shorts, Congress preparation materials, Congress activities, arts activities, volunteers, food and catering, event management, media and PR activities, event insurance (not medical insurance for the participants) and more.

13.

MEDIA

We use the media to create a global platform for street-connected children. Mass media coverage presents an incredible opportunity to reach society at all levels with positive stories about street-connected children, whilst highlighting the specific challenges they face. We actively engage the media to report on all the teams participating at the SCWC. We encourage you to consider how you will use the media in your country to support your participation. Please note that all participants (young people and support staff) must be willing to give their permission for their image to be used in media coverage. Media waiver forms will be sent to your organisation in advance of arrival in the USA.

Significant media coverage is generated by the events both globally by SCU and locally by the teams, themselves.



13.1

MEDIA - EVENTS

In SCWC 2018:

- More than 250 pieces of media coverage across the world
- More than 300 posts in SCU's social media: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- 14 videos published on [SCU Youtube channel](#)
- Hundreds of thousands of people engaged with the SCWC through social media. Including more than 130,000 people watching a live stream of the finals on Goal's Facebook page
- 12 partner organisations reported they had more relationships with the media or are strengthening existing relationships: Media organisations have proactively contacted them for comment or advice on street-connected children.

Street Child Cricket World Cup 2019

- Covered by: CNN, Sky Sports, Telegraph, Forbes India, Big Issue and Thomson Reuters.
- The Indian Express covered Team India's success and also in the Express News Service.
- Television coverage was also generated on Thanthi TV a 24 hour Tamil satellite news channel based in Chennai.

Street Child World Cup 2022

- 513 piece of content were generated
- Reach = 3.82 Billion
- Media value = US\$2.3 million
- On X (Twitter) 457 million impressions reached an audience of 120 million.

13.2

MEDIA - TEAMS

Team Brazil:

- Malala Yousafzai, Nobel prize laureate, visited the Safe Space and met the SCWC participants. 13/06/2018
- [Teenager from Penha, 2018 Street Child World Cup Champion, Shares Impressions from Moscow, RioOnWatch. 07/2018](#)
- [From growing up in a Rio favela to becoming a football coach - Jessica won the 2014 Street Child World Cup with Brazil and now wants to help other girls achieve their dreams.](#)

Team England:

- [Different goals: what street kids want from the other World Cup. The Guardian.](#)
- [Jasmin Akter, Team England Girls, selected for BBC 100 Women 2019](#)



14.

STREET CHILD WORLD CUP SUMMIT

The Street Child United Summit is the kick-off of the SCWC one year ahead of the event. The Summit brings together the leaders of SCWC project partners working on the frontline supporting street children worldwide. The SCWC Summit will be held in the USA (city to be confirmed) uniting our global network and providing a unique opportunity for leaders, street child practitioners and experts to discuss challenges and solutions from their work. All potential project partners must commit to sending at least one member of Support Staff who will act as a representative of their organisation. Project partners are responsible for all costs relating to travel (e.g. flights, visas, travel and medical insurance) and SCU will cover the in-country costs (e.g. accommodation, food, facilities). Being part of the Summit is a vital part of taking part in the SCWC and is, therefore, mandatory. The Summit will also enable project partners to prepare for participating in the SCWC event, ensuring they maximise the opportunity and improve the lives of street children in their country. The objectives of the summit are to:

- Inform Support Staff about the SCWC - USA 2026 and finalise agreement and expectations on both sides (planning updates will be shared and venue visits will take place where possible)
- Build the SCWC - USA 2026 network. Meet other global professionals working with street children to share ideas and increase knowledge and tools to support street children;
- Ensure that the SCWC - USA 2026 project partners are united in working with a child-centred approach, and are committed and equipped to manage their participants' expectations and ensure that the young people are safe.



15. STREET CHILD WORLD CUP PROCESS

At the project plan stage (for programmes that are chosen to progress) we will also ask you to provide the following due diligence documents:

- Proof of organisation registration (e.g. registered charity number or documentation);
- Anti-fraud and bribery policy;
- Charitable accounts for the last two years;
- Safeguarding/Child Protection policy.

After approval of your organisation's participation you will need to provide the following key documents and permissions:

- Full identification documents for each participant (including support staff), including birth certificates (where applicable), relevant identification documents, passports;
- Visas for each participant (including support staff) for entry in the USA;
- Relevant permissions to take each participant out of your country;
- Media permission for each participant (to be recorded, photographed, filmed).

16. ORGANISATIONS WE WORK WITH

Each team that takes part in SCWC - USA 2026 is managed by an organisation working on the frontline to provide services and/or support to street-connected children.

These organisations are our partners and we form a global network working together to improve the lives of all street children.

We work with a range of organisations, including charitable, non-governmental (NGOs), community and sports, who work to support street-connected children.

We work with organisations from anywhere in the world.



17.

TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

This 'Expression of interest' will be assessed by Street Child United and the SCWC Committee. In August 2024, SCU will communicate whether you have been selected as a potential SCWC partner.

At this stage you will be asked to complete the Project Plan form with more detailed information about your organisation and your plans regarding fundraising, communication, safeguarding and your intentions for the event and after the event. We will also ask you to provide the required due diligence documents.

We will then either visit you in-country or arrange an interview for us to meet each other in order to help define your project plan.

**For any questions regarding your application
please contact us:
applications@streetchildunited.org**



“I know from personal experience just what power sport can have to inspire and change young people’s lives whatever their background or nationality. This is what the Street Child World Cup is all about and I give it my full support.

- David Beckham

applications@streetchildunited.org

