

**For Immediate Release
Thursday 28 March**

**Glasgow based charity 'Inclusive Skating' Needs Your Vote
to scoop £50,000 of National Lottery Funding**

Get your skates on folks! A Glasgow based, UK charity which aims to introduce people to the wonders of ice skating no matter their life challenges is seeking £50,000 of National Lottery funding as part of this year's People's Projects – and needs your help.

Inclusive Skating, which helps transform the lives of people with disabilities and their families and carers by introducing them to the sport made famous by Dancing On Ice's Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, is one of five groups in STV West in the running for a share of a pot of £3 million up for grabs across the UK.

To scoop the cash, Inclusive Skating needs the public to go on-line and vote for the Skate for All project in the STV West category when voting opens at 9am on Monday 1 April at www.peopleproject.org.uk. You can find out more about the project at <https://www.thepeoplesprojects.org.uk/projects/view/skate-for-all>.

Since 2005, the People's Project - a partnership between the national Lottery Community Fund, the National Lottery and STV - has given the public a say in who gets a grant of up to £50k to improve people's lives and help their communities to thrive.

Inclusive Skating is seeking this grant to help people, including children who are often excluded from simple activities like skating, find out how they can take it up and join in workshops as well as competitions organised by the charity.

They want to use the People's Project cash to set up an online learning platform to post training videos, run by specialist coaches, to help people learn how to skate. They also want to train new specialist coaches to help promote the sport across the UK. The on-line teaching videos can be used by skating clubs across the country, who might want to open their doors to "inclusive skating."

Already Inclusive Skating has transformed lives. Grant Baxter, 22, from Glasgow, has dystonic cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair and takes part with his younger sister Lucy, 19. They were spotted last year at a public skating session at Braehead by Inclusive Skating founder Margarita Sweeney-Baird who

encouraged them to join. One year on, they will be competing in the British Inclusive Skating Championships as a duet.

He said: "I attend Inclusive Skating every weekend where I am with a great group of other skaters, coaches and families. I mostly enjoy meeting new people and the excitement of being part of a team. Also my personal position means that I am inactive as I am in a wheelchair, but I greatly enjoy the freedom of the ice. I love practising my moves and routines and afterwards I feel a sense of achievement. The support from everyone around me is crucial and greatly appreciated. If I didn't have it around me I wouldn't be able to get on to the ice."

Margarita said: "This is a really exciting opportunity for us to raise awareness and support for our work and, with your help, secure further funding. Our project will give our inclusive skaters a voice through videos and podcasts. It will mean so many people who thought they would never be able to savour the exhilarating experience of ice skating can actually do so. We hope people will get behind us and go on-line to vote."

Joe Ferns, UK Funding Director at The National Lottery Community Fund, said: As the largest funder of community activity in the UK, we are proud to support groups that are led by the vision, determination and drive of local people to strengthen communities. In previous years we have seen a wide range of successful projects, from a café supporting young carers to animal-assisted therapy for people living with dementia and the development of a bee-friendly orchard. The People's Projects is a chance for you to have your say on how National Lottery funding can help your community to thrive."

Voting begins at 9am on Monday 1 April 2019 and closes two weeks later at noon on Monday 15 April. People can vote once per region and will need a telephone number or email address to vote. All votes must be verified. If you choose to verify your vote via email, please click the link sent to you in the email to confirm your vote. To support Inclusive Skating in the STV West Category and for Terms & Conditions please visit www.thepeoplesprojects.org.uk.

For more information contact Philip Gates or Elaine Fee on 0141 406 3663

Notes to Editors

Inclusive Skating was registered as a charity in September 2011. It was founded by Margarita Sweeney-Baird as part of her work to create a new competition and event system for skaters with challenges.

www.inclusiveskating.org

The charity was registered as Impaired Skating with several alternative names to allow the skaters themselves to choose the name for their organisation. Following feedback, the Inclusive Skating name was chosen in 2013. Inclusive Skating relies almost entirely upon charitable donations and volunteer support. It does not receive any public funding and donations go directly towards helping disabled ice skaters and their families and carers.

The People's Projects funds projects that improve the lives of people and communities across the UK. This year 57 awards of up to £50,000 are up for grabs across the UK – three awards in each ITV region. Each week the National Lottery generates, on average, £30 million for National Lottery-funded projects. In total £39 billion has now been raised and more than 535,000 individual grants have been made across the UK, an average of over 190 lottery grants in every UK postcode district, the biggest programme of civic and social regeneration since the 19th century.

The National Lottery has so far given away over £69 billion in prizes and created more than 5,100 millionaires or multi-millionaires since its launch in 1994.