

Financial services firm's commitment to community impact celebrated with award



A leading financial services company has won an award for its long-term collaboration with a sporting charity helping young people in East London.

UBS has been working with Sport Inspired for 15 years, providing funding and volunteer support for projects aimed encouraging more young people in Hackney to get active.

The partnership has helped thousands of young Londoners and earlier this week UBS was presented with the Business Contribution Award at the London Sport Awards.

The annual awards, which are supported by the City of London Corporation, celebrate the outstanding work being done throughout the city to help people play sport and enjoy all the social, physical, and mental wellbeing benefits which regular activity provides.

The Business Contribution Award, in association with the City of London Corporation, recognises the valuable role businesses in the capital play in providing sponsorship, support, and resources to organisations, schools, and grassroots clubs - and the judges all agreed UBS stood out for its long-term commitment to young people in East London.

UBS and Sport Inspired have been working together since 2008, with a focus predominantly on Hackney, where many of UBS' 6,000 UK staff are based, and neighbouring communities in East London. Together they work with local schools, running sports festivals where pupils can try a range of different sports, before setting up and running free clubs within schools to encourage children inspired by the festivals to keep active on an on-going basis.

As well as providing funding, UBS also encourages staff to volunteer with the programme – with every employee given two days a year to help make a difference in their local community. Many chose to do so via the Sport Inspired partnership, with each festival seeing between 50 and 80 UBS employees lending their time and expertise. Others enjoy the experience so much they go on to fundraise for Sport Inspired.

Sarah Craner, who oversees the partnership for UBS, said: “Those UPS volunteers are really helping. This isn't about the Olympics or finding the next Harry Kane; this is about encouraging all children to get involved in something different and trying to find a sport that they love.”

With activity levels among young people falling significantly during the pandemic – and in some cases not yet recovering to pre-pandemic levels, Sarah believes the need for schemes like this has arguably never been greater.

UBS was able to provide emergency funding during and after covid to help set up pilot activities in schools and to help teachers enhance existing PE and school sport delivery.

And it is that long-term and sustained commitment from UBS which particularly impressed the London Sport Awards judging panel, who noted how many of the young people who try sport because of this partnership are helped continue to play it long after their first festival.

But what does it mean to UBS? Sarah explained: “To be recognised as delivering something that has a genuinely positive impact on society, that's fantastic.

“If we can raise the profile of Sport Inspired, that ultimately has even more of a benefit.”