

Runday 2019

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Introduction

Runday provides FREE, weekly timed runs for all, they are easy to join and participate in and organised by volunteers for their local community.

Overview – Runday

Runday is a valuable example of a hugely successful, inclusive physical activity initiative/provider.

Runday provides FREE, weekly timed runs for all, they are easy to join and participate-in and organised by volunteers for their local community.

Runday provides opportunities for people to regularly participate (through running, walking and volunteering) in a non-competitive and non-threatening environment, supports community cohesion and development and promotes a range of health related benefits.

Runday's aim is to change lives through regular, community-led events with a focus on participation in physical activity. Our mission is therefore to get 1 million people regularly running or walking 5km.

History

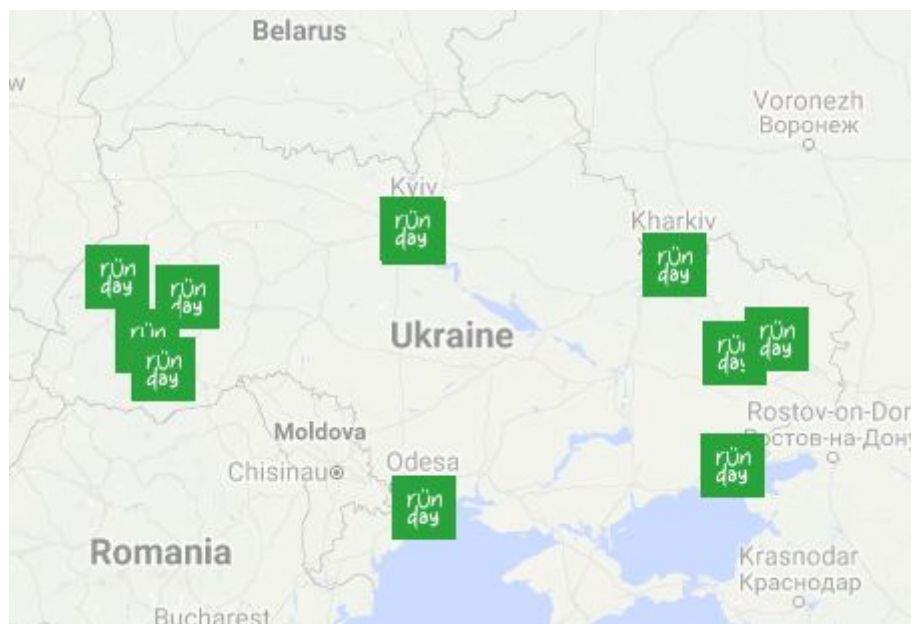
The first Runday started in Kyiv in June 2016. There are now 11 Runday events across Ukraine every Saturday morning.

In total there are now 6,249 people who have registered with Runday in Ukraine. As of May 2019, there are 2,763 who have participated in a Runday event in Ukraine. While 351 people who have volunteered at a Runday event.

Since Runday began, we have organised 921 runs and there are significant opportunities to increase this as Runday becomes more well-known and supported across the country as the recent collaboration with UNDP shows.

Locations

The map below shows the locations of Runday in Ukraine and we anticipate that Runday will continue to grow extensively across Ukraine with more people participating and many new events being set-up across local communities over many years to come.



Runday event locations across Ukraine

Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

The success of Runday is down to many factors outlined in more detail later, however a key component of this is the collaboration and support from collective stakeholders.

We see great opportunity through local community / volunteer led events such as Runday to further engage people across Ukraine to participate in physical activity on a regular basis.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to galvanising and sustaining participation in physical activity and effecting lasting lifestyle changes. Doing so requires coordinated action by a range of stakeholders, at all levels, from the national to the local targeted at areas of most need.

Recommendation: A National Sports Policy could specify both high level goals and actions to improve a) the provision of activities, facilities and spaces and their staffing; and b) the marketing/promotion of sustainable physical activity and of the related behavioural changes (social marketing) to change the perception of/negative relationship with physical activity and sport.

These actions should aim to stimulate demand and achieve effective, appropriate and market-oriented supply, by overcoming the multitude of known barriers to participation and tapping into motivational triggers.

One of the challenges for some local communities looking to establish a Runday event can be available recreational areas in which to establish a Runday event.

Runday has proven very effective at engaging women and older people in particular to participate in sport/physical activity on a regular basis.

On average circa 40% of participants at Runday are women and Runday has proven suitable at generating engagement and participation with women in particular and we believe further support and research into this area is warranted.

Runday is also proving a positive entry point for people to start participating / or coming back to sport.

Runday can also be a key stepping stone for people who have become active or have refound their love for sport through Runday and who then wish to expand their sporting horizons by joining their local athletics; running marathons or pursuing other sporting and fitness goals.

Thorough and regular consultation is needed with participants/users and non-participants/non-users on the activities offered (what, when, where and how they are

undertaken), and on the customer experience of these activities.

Recommendation: Opportunities that encourage continued participation over 'once off' initiatives should be actively encouraged. For example, Couch to 5k has an in-built end point when participants complete the 5k and this could be nuanced to create a 'Couch to Runday' approach where completion represents a graduation into a new weekly habit that is free and available nationwide.

Recommendation: Funding should be allocated to enable organisations to better measure the impact / monetise the gains of their activities on society and on government. For example, collaborative projects could be undertaken between physical activity providers and research institutions to quantify the health impacts of their work, especially in terms of cost savings through the prevention of disease and ill-health.

Recommendation: Funding should be directed to those organisations that don't just achieve (potentially short-term) increases in participation, but also engender wider, long-term sustainable lifestyle change. These may not be traditional physical activity providers in the narrow, traditional sense, but organisations that encourage other forms of activity (e.g. active travel, gardening and active volunteering).

Runday believe that responding to local demand (and/or undertaking targeted actions to stimulate that demand), rather than top-down driven activation is essential to ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of interventions and activities.

This philosophy and approach lies at the heart of Runday's activities.

Factors facilitating sustained participation:

Runday is successful in facilitating sustained participation, including by previously inactive people, because of the following:

1. The unique and innovative operational structure

- Runday responds to local demand - rather than engaging in top-down, supply-driven activation.
- The community requests an event, rather than it being imposed upon them.
- This approach ensures community needs and ownership, and increases the success and sustainability of events.
- Events are simple to organise and are held for the community by the community.
- Events are supported by a clear set of principles that are applied globally.

- Runday encourages collaboration between local community groups and organisations, e.g. schools, sports clubs, health care providers, local councils, local sports partnerships and other event organisers.

2. Demand side:

Runday helps break down barriers to participation and taps into motivational triggers, as follows:

- no cost: free to the end user
- no need to pre-book or be selected
- events are local and easy to access
- events take place regularly (weekly) at the same time
- habit forming
- events are open to all, inclusive and friendly
- not a race, although runners do test themselves against a time/others
- no dress code
- no race numbers (retains informality)
- no need for expensive equipment
- encourages family/parental involvement
- encourages volunteering opportunities for those who do not wish to participate or wish to participate & volunteer occasionally.
- focus on fun, enjoyment and friendship
- feeling of being part of a group/community/tribe
- participation promotes health, fitness and well-being creates strong bonds within the community
- philanthropy through volunteering
- timed and so offers the opportunity to track progress
- incentives for participation (t-shirts are rewarded for milestone runs)
- Runday name and branding and social marketing aims to support the inclusive, non-competitive, open nature of the events.

3. Supply side

Runday breaks down barriers to activity provision:

- Minimal regulatory barriers for event teams to organise and run the events
- Does not require specialist personnel (with limited training requirements for volunteers)
- Does not require the purchase of specialist equipment by event organisers – No need to regularly process membership fees
- No need to create a new facility: encourages multi-use of facilities –e.g. fitness in local parks
- Provides on-going support to event teams, through Runday and a network of really skilled, experienced, passionate **volunteer Ambassadors**.

Volunteering

Volunteering and support for volunteers needs to be promoted and valued, as an essential element of physical activity provision and, often, as physical activity in its own right.

Recommendation: It is vital that physical activity, including outdoor recreation, is embedded across the breadth and full range of government strategies including those to combat obesity and diabetes.

There is a significant role for volunteering in this regard. Volunteering is still being presented in a negative light i.e. “giving up your time” whereas the act of volunteering can be extremely beneficial mentally and physically. The sense of purpose and contribution an individual receives by doing something good in/for their community would be significant and potentially useful in addressing mental health issues.

Encouraging active volunteering by older people will be an important way of engaging them in physical activity, and providing a sense of fulfilment and well-being.

Recommendation: Use existing social structures to reach older people, in particular those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, in order to encourage them to engage in physical activity.

Such structures will depend on the social and cultural context, but could include community centres, social clubs and other groups which Runday supports.