

**Irish Girl Guides press release**

Monday 26 July 2021

## **Over 1,000 girls from 10 countries prepare for Irish Girl Guides' first online international camp!**

**- Girls and young women will develop global citizenship by taking part in STEAM challenges and activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals –**

Excitement is building as 1,060 Girl Guides from 10 different countries are counting down the days to Irish Girl Guides' (IGG's) first ever online international camp, Octagon, which will take place next weekend (Saturday 31 July to Monday 2 August).

Participants will engage in sessions focused on learning more about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) and the Sustainable Development Goals. There will be plenty of outdoor challenges too, including campfire cooking.

The original plan was to hold Octagon, which is IGG's 14<sup>th</sup> international camp, at Clongowes Woods in Co Kildare. The arrival of Covid, however, led to the decision to hold it in a variety of places in a variety of ways. The theme of the camp, appropriately enough, is 'Adaptability - how we engage with the world and with each other'.

Octagon will be streamed from the host location of Dublin City University (DCU) with participants 'camping' at home or locally, connected together via a stimulating programme of varied activities. It will involve volunteers and participants working together to develop global citizens.

**Octagon Camp Chief Helen Concannon** says the activities are all well thought-out and developed, and the busy programme for the event will enable campers to learn new skills, explore new things and make new friends with other girls all over Ireland and all over the world. Some of the sessions will take place online while some activities will be completed offline.

"Members of the volunteer crew team have been busy preparing," says Ms Concannon. "Each of the 1,060 participants has by now received an individual camp kit delivered to their home in time for the big event. This includes a camp uniform, a resource booklet and items they'll need for the many activities they'll be doing during camp."

The crew members have also completed online trainings so that they can deliver the activity sessions and engage with the participants online.

Ms Concannon says, "We are hugely thankful to our supportive partners for this event and to the suppliers who have provided discounted rates in a very difficult year for fundraising. Our thanks to DCU for providing a streaming hub and to Trócaire and GOAL for running activities. The ESB Energy for Generations Fund enabled us to provide a STEM in a Box kit from [LearnIT](#) for each participant. This will allow the girls to develop their science and engineering skills by building a land yacht and trying it out with different varying factors. Younger members will have LEGO-based challenges to complete as well.

"We are excited that the Irish Girl Guides' spirit enables us to find ways to stay connected – from our homes, from our campsites and from across the world. The Department of Foreign Affairs through Irish Aid has provided funding for every participant to have an SDG Board Game and an SDG Action Kit for them to use following their training on advocacy and global citizenship skills.

“We really do believe that each person can make a difference in the world, and we want to capture what this past year has taught us about connectivity to each other. It promises to be a fun-filled weekend!”

*Irish Girl Guides welcomes new youth members from age 5+ and volunteer leaders from age 18+. No previous experience of Girl Guides is necessary. To find out more, see [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie) or telephone 01-6683898.*

ENDS

**Photo caption:**

All set for Irish Girl Guides’ first online international camp, Octagon, which will be livestreamed from the host location, Dublin City University, are from left: Cora Keogh of Portmarnock Senior Branch (Senior Branch is the IGG branch for 14-30 year olds), Mia Cooke of Lucan Guides (Guides are aged 10-14), Ella Cooke of Lucan Brownies (Brownies are aged 7-10) and Jane Foster of Kinsale Ladybirds (Ladybirds are aged 5-7)

**Contact:**

Helen Concannon, Octagon Camp Chief

Tel: 086 8206365

Email: [octagon@irishgirlguides.ie](mailto:octagon@irishgirlguides.ie)

**Notes for editors:**

Irish Girl Guides has approximately 11,000 members. Guiding started in Ireland in 1911 and operates throughout the 26 counties with 1,600 volunteer leaders providing an informal educational programme of fun and challenging activities that foster confidence and leadership skills in girls and young women, enabling them to develop to their full potential and to become responsible citizens. Girls from age 5+ can choose to earn a wide range of badges, including Community Action, Climate Action, Cultural Diversity, Disability Awareness, Drug Awareness, Engineering, Europe, Science Investigator, STEM and Global Traveller. [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie)