



**For Immediate Release  
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## **Citi Becomes Founding Partner of New PARA SPORT Program Deepening Its Commitment to the Disability Community Globally**

**New York** – Today, Citi announced that it is the founding partner of PARA SPORT, the International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) new grassroots-to-high performance program that aims to change the narrative around people with disabilities and provide Para athletes and their member organizations with a platform to drive societal progress.

In addition to championing the PARA SPORT program and supporting its launch, Citi will help grow specific Para sports through International Federations. The first sport to benefit will be Para ice hockey, with a focus on advancing gender equity in the sport.

Citi is partnering with World Para Ice Hockey to develop the Women's World Challenge, a new four-team round-robin international competition for women's Para ice hockey. The first Women's World Challenge will take place from August 26-28 at the Cornerstone Community Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin, USA. This is a powerful step in establishing a pathway for the first women's World Championships.

Becoming the founding partner of the new PARA SPORT program is an evolution of Citi's long-time commitment to changing perceptions of people with disabilities. The journey began in 2012 supporting Para athletes in the U.S. and grew to Citi's first global and mission-led partnership with the IPC from 2018 to 2021.

"Initiatives like PARA SPORT and the Women's World Challenge have a remarkable power to drive societal change," said Ed Skyler, Citi's Head of Global Public Affairs. "This new chapter in Citi's support of Para sport is enabling us to turn our focus to the athletes and sport development programs, broadening the impact we can make on the community-level, and ultimately, helping to foster inclusion around the world. Our firm is incredibly proud of our partnership and remains steadfast in our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion."

The addition of the Women's World Challenge supports World Para Ice Hockey's strategic plan to help attract new athletes to the sport and establish a long-term strategy for sustainable, entertaining events.

"I don't think it's an underestimation to say that this is the most exciting time in the history of Para ice hockey. Over the last year, there have been some positive advances in the female game with countries offering taster sessions for women and trying to build a community, which is exactly the ethos of Para sport," said Michelle Laflamme, World Para Ice Hockey Manager. "The Citi partnership promises to turbocharge female engagement in Para ice hockey, as we will be able to offer repeated sanctioned events in women's Para ice hockey for the first time. That's not only exciting about the potential pathway, but it also sends a strong message to our members that we are dedicated to the development of women's Para ice hockey."

The PARA SPORT program has three core elements:

Awareness – Helping people with disabilities engage more actively in sport by raising awareness of Para sport opportunities and the benefits of the programs for them and their families.

Community – Creating inclusion through sport, which is often about the people we meet, the memories made along the way, and a togetherness felt by both individuals and their families.

Freedom – Giving people an opportunity to challenge themselves and help increase their confidence. Those involved in Para sport have a profound sense of freedom, empowerment, and a strong sense of personal identity.

A new video series called 'It Starts with Sport', which communicates the new narrative, will highlight leading Para athletes and how they first started their Para sport journey. Learn more at [www.para.sport](http://www.para.sport)

#### **About Citi:**

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#### **Media Contacts:**

Corporate Affairs  
Citi Japan  
03-6776-5112