

Press release

A year to the day of its opening, Lausanne 2020 presents its mascot: Yodli!

Lausanne, 9th January 2019 – In exactly 365 days, the 3rd Winter Youth Olympic Games will be declared open. Lausanne 2020 has chosen to celebrate this symbolic date with the launch of its brand-new mascot, Yodli, designed by the students of the *École Romande d'Arts et Communication (ERACOM)*, the local Arts and Communication School.

In one year to the day, the Olympic flame will be lit in the heart of Lausanne, making the Olympic Capital a fully-fledged Olympic City. Several hundred spectators will gather in the Flon district, in the heart of the city, to celebrate this symbolic moment around the OMEGA countdown clock, in a festive and musical atmosphere. Concerts of Swiss snowboarder (halfpipe) and musician Pat Burgener, 5th at the Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang last February, as well as students from the Haute Ecole de Musique de Lausanne, will ensure a great occasion.

Lausanne 2020 has used the occasion to promote the first of its many collaborations with the city's schools and academic institutions. Yodli, the official mascot of the Games, made its first public appearance, having been unveiled last night at the Malley ice rink before the Swiss Ice Hockey Championship match between Lausanne Hockey Club and Hockey Club Davos from the Grisons region. Significantly, this fixture symbolised the true national dimension of the 2020 Youth Olympic Games, which will take place in both of these regions, as well as the Canton of Valais and neighbouring France.

140 students from ERACOM, the local arts and communication school, worked for more than a year on the development of the mascot. Yodli, the mascot's name, is a cross between three animals engrained in the Swiss culture: the cow, the goat and the St-Bernard dog. *"The creation of Yodli was extremely interesting for a school like ours because of its multidisciplinary requirements"*, said Adrien Jenni, Director of ERACOM. *"Our graphic design, interactive media design and clothing design departments have all worked together and continue to do so for the character's 3D animation."*

Virginie Faivre, the new President of the Organising Committee, said: *"The empowerment of young people through the organisation and delivery of the event is a central element of Lausanne 2020. Ian Logan and his entire team are doing great work in this area. I am delighted to continue to highlight the multitude of similar projects currently underway throughout 2019."*

Grégoire Junod, Mayor of the City of Lausanne, said: *"It is with profound emotion that we see Lausanne 2020 come to life before our eyes. Hundreds of young people in and around our city are currently working on different elements of the event. Yodli was born from the very imagination of those for whom these Games are intended. It is a perfect starting point, with one year to go until the opening ceremony."*

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Philippe Leuba, Minister of Economy, Innovation and Sport of the Canton of Vaud, also commented: *"Lausanne 2020 is really starting to take root in the Canton's sporting, economic and academic fabric. This was our objective from the outset: to create an Olympic event that would match our unique cantonal expertise in education and innovation. As for the sport itself, several dozen test events will take place throughout the winter at all the venues planned for the competitions in 2020, enabling us to acquire and strengthen local skills in this area. This magnificent project for the Canton is truly taking shape."*

Danka Bartekova (SLO), Olympic Athlete and President of the IOC's Lausanne 2020 Coordination Commission, said she is delighted to see how young people were involved in the project: *"The very concept of the Youth Olympic Games is to accelerate the acquisition of skills among young people through sport and its professions. This event has the capacity to empower young people. It can inspire them to create, develop and innovate, around the strong values of Olympism, namely respect, friendship and excellence. We are very pleased to see that the entire Lausanne 2020 team, under the direction of its director Ian Logan, has integrated this concept extremely well. We are already excited to experience this wonderful project."* she said.

Ian Logan, CEO of the Organising Committee, added: *"We are delighted to be able to celebrate this symbolic date with our friends from Grisons, Valais and neighbouring France. From its base in Vaud, Lausanne 2020 transcends cantonal and even national borders. This enthusiasm will continue to grow throughout the year, and we look forward to it all."*

The Lausanne 2020 Youth Games will take place from 9 to 22 January 2020 with 1,800 athletes (15-18 years old) from more than 80 countries. The competitions will take place in the Cantons of Vaud (Lausanne, Leysin, Les Diablerets, Villars), Valais (Champéry), Grisons (St. Moritz), and neighbouring France (Prémanon-Les Tuffes).

Resources:

Images of the presentation of Yodli the mascot and the "1 year to go" celebrations:

- Lausanne 2020 Flickr account: www.flickr.com/photos/lausanne2020/albums

3D Animation of Yodli:

- www.youtube.com/lausanne2020

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