



Mel Young

President and Co-founder, Homeless World Cup

Mel Young is recognised as one of the world's leading social entrepreneurs by the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship.

It was in Cape Town, at the end of the 2001 INSP conference, that Mel and Austrian born Harald Schmied attempted to invent an international language to enable homeless people to communicate with each other around the world. When they realized one already existed – football – the Homeless World Cup was born. The first tournament was held in Austria in 2003 with 18 nations. The annual event has grown and 64 teams will take part in the 2011 Homeless World Cup in Paris.

The Homeless World Cup is creating a level of change never before seen by social inclusion initiatives. More than 94% of participants say that it has a positive impact on their lives and over 70% make significant changes in their lives as a direct result of their involvement, such as coming off drugs and alcohol, moving in to homes, jobs, education, becoming coaches and players. It has triggered and supports grass roots football projects in over 75 nations involving over 50,000 players every year.

Previously he worked as a journalist; co-founded The Big Issue in Scotland in 1993; co-founded Senscot (Social Entrepreneurs Network Scotland); former President and Honorary President of INSP (International Network of Street Papers); also set up City Lynx magazine and New Consumer Magazine; worked on a community newspaper in Wester Hailes in Edinburgh in the 1990's.

Also a non-executive director on two boards: SportsScotland and Glasgow Life; member of the World Economic Forum Sports Agenda Council.

He is a lifelong supporter of Hibernian Football Club and is the author of Goal: the story of the Homeless World Cup.

Strong Beliefs

Great leaders keep things simple and get results

Look at those living in poverty as assets rather than problems or threats

Take risks on those living in poverty and they will shine

Themes

Story telling is much more effective than power points and spreadsheets

Sport has incredible power to create real, lasting change

Don't wait around for someone else to sort the problem:
If we all do even a tiny something then we can change the world

Are social entrepreneurs the new civic leaders of the modern world?

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