



Markel Magnolia Cup empowering women with The King's Trust International's Project Lehar

- The King's Trust International's Project Lehar announced as Markel Magnolia Cup charity for 2025.
- Project Lehar focuses on empowering young women and girls in India by teaching them development skills and training to forge their own paths.
- The Markel Magnolia Cup takes place on Thursday 31 July, during Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar.

Empowering women is part of the Markel Magnolia Cup's DNA, and Goodwood is delighted to confirm that The King's Trust International's Project Lehar is the charity partner for this year's race at Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar.

Project Lehar is The King's Trust International initiative focused on empowering adolescent girls through vocational training, skills development and promoting gender equality within their communities.

Operating in the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Project Lehar addresses the significant challenges many girls face, including social and gender barriers that often lead to school dropouts. In India, there is a stark gender disparity: only 39 million women are employed compared with 361 million men.

Project Lehar aims to break this cycle by equipping young women and girls with the skills and opportunities to pursue new paths to prosperity, ultimately creating a lasting impact within their communities.

One example of how this initiative has helped women is the story of Arti, who was the 2024 Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award winner and completed the Project Lehar programme in 2023. After taking part in Project Lehar, Arti has become one of the first pink rickshaw drivers in Uttar Pradesh, providing safe transport for other women, and inspiring girls in her village to believe that they too can forge their own path.

The money raised by this year's Markel Magnolia Cup will go to this important cause, enabling and supporting young women to attain economic empowerment.

Maximising the energy of Ladies' Day at Qatar Goodwood Festival, the Markel Magnolia Cup brings together a group of inspirational and successful women, none of whom are licenced or professional jockeys. Preparation for the Magnolia Cup takes months, with the riders following an intense training and riding regime in order to be ready to race down the Glorious Goodwood straight.

Goodwood Estate Charity and Community Co-ordinator, Sarah Mayhead, said: "We are thrilled to be raising money for The King's Trust International, and specifically Project Lehar with the Markel Magnolia Cup this year. This year's riders are already incredibly invested in the cause and are looking to

raise as much money as possible to empower women across the globe to have independence, gain knowledge and opportunities to prosper.”

The King’s Trust International Director of Delivery and Impact, Jo Parsons, said: “We are absolutely delighted to be named the Magnolia Cup Charity for 2025, especially as we celebrate our tenth anniversary. Over the past decade, The King’s Trust International has been supporting young people in developing core skills and building sustainable careers, creating transformative impacts for both themselves and their communities. We are so grateful for this partnership, which will enable us to continue supporting young women in India through Project Lehar, helping them achieve their ambitions, build valuable life skills, and find meaningful work.”

Markel Insurance CEO, Simon Wilson, said: “As a specialist insurer operating across the world, at Markel we believe that business can be a power for good. That’s why, for us, the Markel Magnolia Cup is a standout event and one of the many ways we support our communities and wider society. We’re thrilled that this year’s race will benefit Project Lehar and their vital work in empowering women and girls with the right tools to succeed.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

The Markel Magnolia Cup will take place at the Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar on Thursday 31 July.

Tickets

Tickets, dining and hospitality are now on sale for Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar. Visit [Goodwood.com](https://www.goodwood.com) or call 01243 755055 to find out more.

Contact

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For all other press enquiries please contact: Media@Goodwood.com

Imagery and news from Goodwood are available from our [Press & Media site](#).

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Accreditation

Media accreditation for the opening events at Goodwood Racecourse is now open. Make your application [here](#).

About the Markel Magnolia Cup presented by Markel

On Thursday 31 July, 12 dedicated amateur jockeys will race in the Markel Magnolia Cup at Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar, following months of intensive training. In 2019, the race captured the eyes of the world when Khadijah Mellah galloped to glory up Goodwood’s home straight. Mellah was 18 when she won in spectacular style just months after sitting on a horse for the first time. Previous jockeys have included doctors, Olympians, CEOs, journalists, students, models, and presenters, among them Edie Campbell, Sara Cox, Rosie Tapner, and Vogue Williams. Last year’s winner was Australian-based TV presenter, Lizzie Jelfs.

About the Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar

The Qatar Goodwood Festival presented by Visit Qatar is one of the undisputed highlights of the British flat racing season. Affectionately known as ‘Glorious Goodwood,’ the world-famous five-day festival is a sporting and social occasion like no other, unrivalled style, superb racing, and hospitality experiences to savour mean it’s not to be missed. The 2025 event takes place from Tuesday 29 July to Saturday 2 August. The week is headed by three Group 1 races, including the £500,000 Al Shaqab Goodwood Cup, the £1 million Qatar Sussex Stakes, and the £600,000 Qatar Nassau Stakes.

About Markel

We are Markel, a leading global specialty insurer with a truly people-first approach. As the insurance operations within Markel Group Inc. (NYSE: MKL), we operate the Markel Specialty, Markel International, and Markel Global Reinsurance divisions, as well as State National, our portfolio protection and program services operations, and Nephila, our insurance-linked securities operations. Our broad array of capabilities and expertise allow us to create intelligent solutions for the most complex risk management needs. However, it is our people—and the deep, valued relationships they develop with colleagues, brokers and clients—that differentiates us worldwide.

About The King’s Trust International

King’s Trust International, formerly Prince’s Trust International, has been supporting young people worldwide since 2015. Founded by H.M. King Charles to address the global youth unemployment crisis, it builds on nearly five decades of experience in the UK. The organisation’s mission is to empower young people to learn, earn, and thrive by providing opportunities to develop skills and confidence for success, delivering tangible employment outcomes. The Festival of Speed presented by Mastercard and Goodwood Revival will also be supporting the incredible work of The King’s Trust International as part of its tenth Anniversary Campaign in 2025.

As it approaches its 10-year anniversary, King’s Trust International remains committed to amplifying the voices of young people on the global stage and putting their needs at the core of its work. Its programmes and interventions are present in 20 countries across the Commonwealth and beyond, including Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Europe.

About Project Lehar

Project Lehar is a King’s Trust International initiative focused on empowering adolescent girls through vocational training, skills development, and promoting gender equality within their communities. The project takes a holistic approach, offering a series of complementary learning modules that help girls enhance their earning potential, build self-confidence, and plan for a brighter future.