

Good practice n° 11	
Title	Gothia Special Olympics Trophy
Author/Name of the institution (organization)	Gothia Cup
Type of the good practice	Event (tournament)
Place	Gothemburg, Sweden
Start date / End date	Every year since 2011 (Gothia Cup started 1975)
Target group of learners	In Gothia Special Olympics Trophy teams that are members of the Special Olympic program are welcome. All players must have an intellectual disability and be between 16 and 29 years old. There are both male, female, and mixed teams.
Institutions involved	<p>Sponsors:</p> <p>SKF, Kronfågel, Via, Puma, Turkish Airlines, NEH, Libresse, Lisberg, Pantanamera, GB Glace, Kopparberg, DXC Technology, Länsförsäkringar, Elektrosandia, Mc Donald's</p> <p>Suppliers:</p> <p>Gothenburg, Spiideo, Paddan, hönö, Expofy, SJ, Consat, Hyrtoaletten, Corny, 3 företag, John Scott's, Toll, Skåne mjerier</p>
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer a high-quality tournament for the target group, without separation between Special Olympics athletes and others - Meeting different cultures - Offer a space where Special Olympics athletes can integrate with the rest of the athletes sharing facilities and spaces - Open the mind of the rest of the athletes by making easy to watch Special Olympics athletes competing
Description	Every year in July, fans and athletes crowd Gothenburg's streets, cheers and chants ring in the air and pitches are filled with young footballers from across the world. Among the 4,500

games across 110 fields, 30 teams of Special Olympics players are sprinting, shooting, and scoring with the same passion and pride as every other player in Gothenburg. That is the Gothia Special Olympics Trophy.

Founded in 2011 by Swedish football legend Kim Källström, the Gothia Special Olympics Trophy category has become an established favorite within the Gothia Cup, the world's largest and most international youth football tournament. Special Olympics athletes – who traveled from as far afield as Indonesia – are fully integrated into the event, sharing the same access to facilities, activities, transport, and entertainment as every one of the 1,700 youth teams in the Cup.

According to Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Football Advisor Andre Peeters, the Gothia Cup is a shining example of true integration. He says, "There is no separation between Special Olympics athletes and others – we enjoy the same facilities and opportunities. Special Olympics pitches are in prime position for spectators to stop by, support and learn about our organization, and our athletes have the chance to socialize with teams from across the world. I see both our athletes and the other players grow and become more open from the experience."

It is indeed a two-way street, with Special Olympics athletes benefiting from their experience at the tournament but also enriching the event with their participation. According to Gothia Cup General Secretary, Dennis Andersson, Special Olympics athletes provide an example of the true spirit of football for all participants, as he noted to athletes at the final award ceremony: "When you play together, you show how football should be played. You show that we are really all one world and give us the best example of how football can unite."

For over 40 years, the Gothia Cup – and its influx of young footballers and fans from across the world – has been a summer feature in Gothenburg. The Gothia Special Olympics Trophy has evolved into a key element of the event, allowing Special Olympics athletes – just like every other player – to enjoy the unforgettable experience of playing the world's largest and most international youth football tournament.

Link to the source
(if available).

<https://gothiacup.se/en/special-olympics-trophy>