CHARITY CHALLENGE

TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

ICELANDIC LAVA TREK ICELAND

Wed 28 Jun - Sun 02 Jul 2023

In aid of your choice of charity

28 Jun - 02 Jul 2023

5 DAYS | ICELAND | TOUGH

Home to some of Europe's most incredible landscapes, the Iceland Lava Trek takes in thundering waterfalls, steaming lava fields, plunging fjords and spouting geysers. Crossing the phenomenal Landmannalaugar, the route is through one of the most actively volcanic and alien landscapes in Iceland, provding awe-inspiring views at every step.

The duration may be short, but the days are long and the terrain is very challenging, with steep climbs and rough descents. In addition, you'll also be in charge of setting up and breaking down camp, making this a truly tough challenge. But don't fear - on completing your challenge you have the chance rest aching limbs in the famous Blue Lagoon.

- Trek 58kms through one of the planet's most volcanic regions
- Weave through vast steaming lava fields
- Walk against a background of multi-coloured rocks
- Camp in some of Europe's most spectacular and unusual terrain
- Bathe aching limbs in the Blue Lagoon

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Wed 28 Jun*

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International departure from London

It's a short flight to Keflavik and then a four-hour transfer to your starting point. Drive through lunar-style landscapes, passing by Hekla – Iceland's most famous active volcano. Your campsite is at Landmannalaugar, in the heart of southern Iceland's thermal area. After dinner is the opportunity to bathe in the hot springs, perfect for a good nights' sleep. (D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 2 *Thu 29 Jun*

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Landmannalaugar to Álftavatn (approx. 10–11hrs)

It's a tough day, navigating through snow and mud which moves and slips underneath your feet. Near your highest point of 3,600ft you'll pass Storihver, a large hot spring. After a deserved lunch, walk through glistening black opsidium rock fields with views over valleys, glaciers and snowfields.

Follow the Jokultungur Ridge, descend over the scree and cross one final river before reaching the Álftavatn Valley and setting up camp. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 3 *Fri 30 Jun*

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Álftavatn to Emstrur (approx. 7-8hrs)

Leave the incredible rhyolite landscape and head into the glacial areas and fast running streams of the Myradalsjokull Icecap. Here is probably the most intrepid part of the trip, wading through ice-cold streams in Bláfjallakvisi.

Heading down to the oasis at Hvangngil, the trek then follows through desert-like passes to your home for the night, the Emstrur Hut. You will be camping next to a stream here. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 4 *Sat 01 Jul*

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Emstrur and Thorsmörk, then transport to Reykjavik (approx. 6-7hrs)

Your final days trekking offers amazing views of the Markarfljót gorge and the bridged Ljorsa fissure, as well as river crossings.

Your awe-inspiring 58km trek climaxes with a steep drop into Thorsmörk, surrounded by giant glaciers and raging rivers. After some time to reflect on your achievement and take the obligatory photos, head back to Iceland's

capital Reykjavík where the celebrations can begin in style. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 5 *Sun 02 Jul*

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Reykjavik, the Blue Lagoon and return to UK

Enjoy exploring Iceland's capital Reykjavik, the world's most northerly capital, with a visit to the mineral rich, geothermal pool at the Blue Lagoon before departing back to London. (B)

NB

B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

Should you suffer from vertigo, it is worth considering that on most mountain treks there will be occasional exposure to sheer drops. Therefore you should discuss the particular itinerary of your choice with a member of our team.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER	MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP	FLEXI
-	-	-
Pay a registration fee of £395.00 when you book *Then a balance of £1553.00* *(10 weeks before your challenge)* *Raise as much as you can for your charity.*	*Registration fee of £395.00 when you book* *Raise a minimum of £3170.00 for your charity.*	*Registration fee of £395.00 when you book* *Then £395.00 towards challenge costs* *(10 weeks before your challenge)* *Raise a minimum of £2365.00 for your charity.*

You will be invoiced for the air tax and fuel element contribution for your international flights, capped at £100.00, which is due 10 weeks before departure.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Sponsorship forms
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, visa information, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Warm up exercise routines
- Fitness training notes
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Fundraising advice
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule

On your challenge

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- A contribution towards funding the reduction of carbon emissions through Climate Care's portfolio of award winning projects
- A donation to a community project in one of the countries in which we operate
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Internal transfers (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Equipment as per the challenge activity
- UK-based 24-hour emergency support line
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- International flights to and from the UK, in economy class (see air tax exclusion below)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Any covid tests required for entry to any countries or places of interest on your challenge itinerary
- Visa (if required)
- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)

On your challenge

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- Contribution towards air taxes and fuel element (please see the section below on "Air Tax and Fuel Element Contribution")
- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines	You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 05/04/2023), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 30/07/2023). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.
Air tax and fuel element contribution	The air taxes, and fuel element, that make up part of the flight costs can fluctuate significantly before a challenge takes place. As such, we exclude part of these taxes from the initial cost of the challenge and we will invoice you for it 10 weeks before departure. This applies to all participants on all payment options. For the challenge you are booked on this payment will be capped at £100 and we will absorb any amount above that. Please be sure to factor this cost into your budgeting for the challenge.
Typical group size	The typical group size is 15 - 30 participants

Small group supplement	The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 15 participants. We can run this trip with 11-14 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £95. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.
Optional extras	Extensions at end of trip* Single room supplements* Business class upgrades* Travel insurance (*subject to availability)
Travel insurance	Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at https://www.campbellirvine.com/charitychallenge.

Level of Difficulty

The Icelandic Lava Trek is graded as “tough”. This is a challenge that will test you both physically and mentally. It is for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind, but perhaps haven’t taken on a strenuous challenge event previously and are hoping to put themselves out of their comfort zone!

You can tell your supporters that on your Icelandic Lava Trek you will be:

- Trekking for around 7-10 hours per day.
- Covering approximately 60km across 3 days of hiking, with the longest day being 24 km.
- Battling the elements in the highlands of Iceland, as you may experience rain that lasts all day, blazing sunshine or snow and fog on top of the mountains
- Taking on lots of steep hill climbs, particularly on the first day.
- Putting up your own tent each night and dismantling it in the morning. You will also be helping to wash up after each meal, and making your sandwiches in the morning, in a more interactive camping experience!

Typical day

You will wake early in time to have breakfast and to make a packed lunch for the day ahead. Hiking will start around 8.30am. The number of hours spent hiking will depend on the weather conditions (which are extremely unpredictable) and the size and ability of the group. There will be plenty of refreshment stops, as well as visits to places of natural beauty and interest along the way. The first day is particularly tough, and most groups do not arrive in camp until late. In the evening you will arrive at camp and will be required to help set up your camp (erecting tents), before having dinner.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount.
In terms of your Icelandic Lava Trek, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The trails that you are on are not all accessible by vehicle, and as such emergency evacuation to a hospital may take upwards of 8 hours, depending on the location
- The volcanoes in Iceland are volatile! Volcanic activity could be a possibility, which means that, in the worst case scenario, immediate evacuation may be necessary
- This trip involves river crossings, which in some cases could be up to (but not over) the knee. Although we don't plan on anyone going swimming (except in the Blue Lagoon!)
- You will pass small geothermal springs that are completely uncovered and part of the route. You should ensure that you don't go too close as the temperatures are over 100 degrees. The leader will brief you on this, but the bubbling water and steam should warn you!

Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such

as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow Airport to Keflavik usually with Iceland Air. The flight will take approx 3 hours. Your flight tickets will be e-mailed to you before departure. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

Visa

UK Citizens do not require a visa to visit Iceland. You will however need your passport and it must be valid for at least six months from the end of your challenge. You may also be asked for proof of return in the form of your flight ticket.

Insurance

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenges is our main concern which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy that will cover you for the adventurous nature of your challenge. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found by clicking here.

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

Vaccinations & Medicines

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel Health Pro page:
https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/104/iceland

Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to

discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad

Climate & Terrain

Climate
The climate in Iceland is very erratic. Winter ends in mid-June, and even up until mid-July there may still be some snow up on the mountains. It is not uncommon for one day of the trek to have glorious sunshine and highs of up to 15-17 degrees, and the next to be rainy and overcast. You should definitely come prepared for all weathers, and above all bring good quality raingear.

Terrain
This trek has a variety of challenging terrain for you to trek through from rough roads, dirt tracks, river crossings, steep hills and rugged lava fields.

Training

A good level of fitness is definitely required! Anyone who leads an active and healthy lifestyle should be able to complete the challenge, as long as they train regularly over a period of three months leading up to it. Although this is a short European trek, don't be mistaken into thinking it is not challenging! The days are long, the terrain difficult, and you will be expected to get involved in setting up camp in the evenings. You can also look to join one of our training weekends.

Training tips for the Icelandic Lava Trek:

- Try to get out and do a practice walk in some of the mountains of the UK to familiarise yourself with walking on rugged terrain.
- Do at least one walk of approximately 24km.
- Carry a full daypack while training.

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more here

Luggage allowance and valuables

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum – details on what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your rucksack or holdall (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 15kgs in weight. During the challenge, your bags will be transported by 4x4 vehicle. You will not have to carry your main bags.

Whilst we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times.

Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support guides and staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

Group Size

Each group is intended to be a minimum of 15 people in order to run and a maximum of approximately 30 people due to the wilderness environment in which the challenge takes place. We can run this trip with groups of 11-14 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £95. This is payable by your charity if you book under the minimum sponsorship or flexi options, and by yourself if you are a self-funder. If a small group supplement is necessary, we will notify you 12 weeks before departure.

Clothing and equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For your challenge, we recommend technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts, as well as good quality waterproof jackets and trousers. We cannot stress enough how erratic the weather is in Iceland,

and good waterproofs are essential. It's also a good idea to have a liner for your rucksack, or even a plastic bag to go around it while trekking. This will help to protect your belongings. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners Outdoor Hire, Cotswold Outdoor and Cycle Surgery.

Accommodation & Toilets

Accommodation
During the challenge, your accommodation will be in two-man tents and on the last night in hostel or guesthouse accommodation (twin rooms). At camp sites you will be expected to pitch in and set up your tents as part of your challenge. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Toilets
You will have clean toilets and good washing facilities on all campsites. At Landmannalaugar, Álftavatn and Emstrur, there are toilets and token-operated showers (about ISK500 for 5 minutes). The campsites take card payments for the showers but always better to take some coins just incase that fails. Toilet paper is provided, but you may want to bring your own supply to use during the day.

Food & Drink

The food will be basic but very filling and nutritious. Breakfast will consist of porridge, cereal and tea/coffee. Lunch will be a 'make your own' packed lunch of sandwiches, fruit and cereal bars that you will carry with you. Dinner will be soup followed by meat/fish and pasta/rice, and a dessert. Coffee, tea and soup will be supplied throughout and plenty of drinking water will be available to keep you hydrated. You might want to bring some extra snacks, such as energy bars, nutrigrains, dried fruits etc. There is nowhere to buy food or alcohol at any point during the trek, so please come prepared if you would like anything over and above the food provided! Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Money

Currency: Icelandic Krona. For up to date currency exchange, go to www.xe.com.

Credit cards: Most major Credit Cards are widely accepted in Iceland, although Mastercard and Visa are most common. American Express cards are not widely accepted. You will not be able to use your cards at all during the trek until you arrive at Reykjavik, so ensure that you have enough cash available.

Spending money: You will not need to carry a large amount of money during this trip. We recommend that you change your pounds into Krona in England before you go, and that you carry a sufficient amount of cash with you during the trek, as the banks/exchange offices may also be closed by the time you return to Reykjavik.

Tips: Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. GBP£5 / 3000 Krona per participant per trekking day and this should be given to the challenge leader at the end of the challenge who will distribute it amongst the local support team.

Phone and WiFi

WiFi is prevalent in Reykjavik, and when you are in the hotel at the end of your challenge you will have access to this. However, during the trip you will be in remote campsites away from any internet. Phone signal is also sporadic, but you should be able to get some, although it will come in and out of range. There is no opportunity to recharge any electrical equipment during the trek, but if you want to bring a solar charger these work quite well to charge phones. There will be a refreshment stop on the way to Landmannalaugar where you can buy batteries/films etc but this will be the last chance before the trek begins. We recommend you stock up on anything you need before leaving England.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large difference in people's walking ability. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. If we find somebody is unable to walk at all, then we can transport him or her from one location to the next with the help of our staff. Throughout the challenge back-up support will be close by. We will try to maintain radio contact with the main camp and may also carry a satellite telephone for emergencies.

Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

We do not professionally vet your medical details. Please assess for yourself whether you are fit and able to take on the challenge. Please review the detailed Trip Notes and itinerary to get a better idea of what is involved. Please speak to your doctor or specialist if you have any concerns about taking part. If you suffer from a severe allergy, you are required to contact us to discuss any requirements. If you think that there are things we can do to make the challenge more accessible/comfortable for you, it is your responsibility to let us know, and we will then let you know if we can accommodate your request. Whilst we will do our best to put in place appropriate measures we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Medical Support

First Aid qualified staff will be provided with the medical details that you give on your booking form but please note that they are on the challenge to support with medical matters related to the challenge environment and terrain itself, i.e. heat/cold, high altitude and so on. They will deal with any incidents and accidents (cuts, sprains, breaks and so on). They are not intended to continue any ongoing specialist medical care that you receive in the UK for pre-exiting medical conditions, and should not be assumed to have any professional experience of your specific medical condition.

If you have any specific needs around pre-existing medical conditions, you should discuss with your family doctor or specialist in advance and can discuss any advice given by them with the challenge leader or doctor.

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Iceland was one of the most incredible experiences I have enjoyed. A trekking landscape of complete contrasts, from snow fields and glacial rivers to rolling hills and lava plateaus. A fantastic journey with resilient and kind people. Totally worthwhile.

Jen Southern

“

Trekking in Iceland has been a highlight of my life so far. I loved every minute of this breath-taking experience.

Naomi Gordon

“

I just want to say what the Iceland challenge did for me as a person, I really want to thank you all for that. I have the medal and certificate on my wall and when I think I cannot do something I look at it and see that I can.

Theresa Moorin

CHARITY CHALLENGE

Any more questions?

Contact us:

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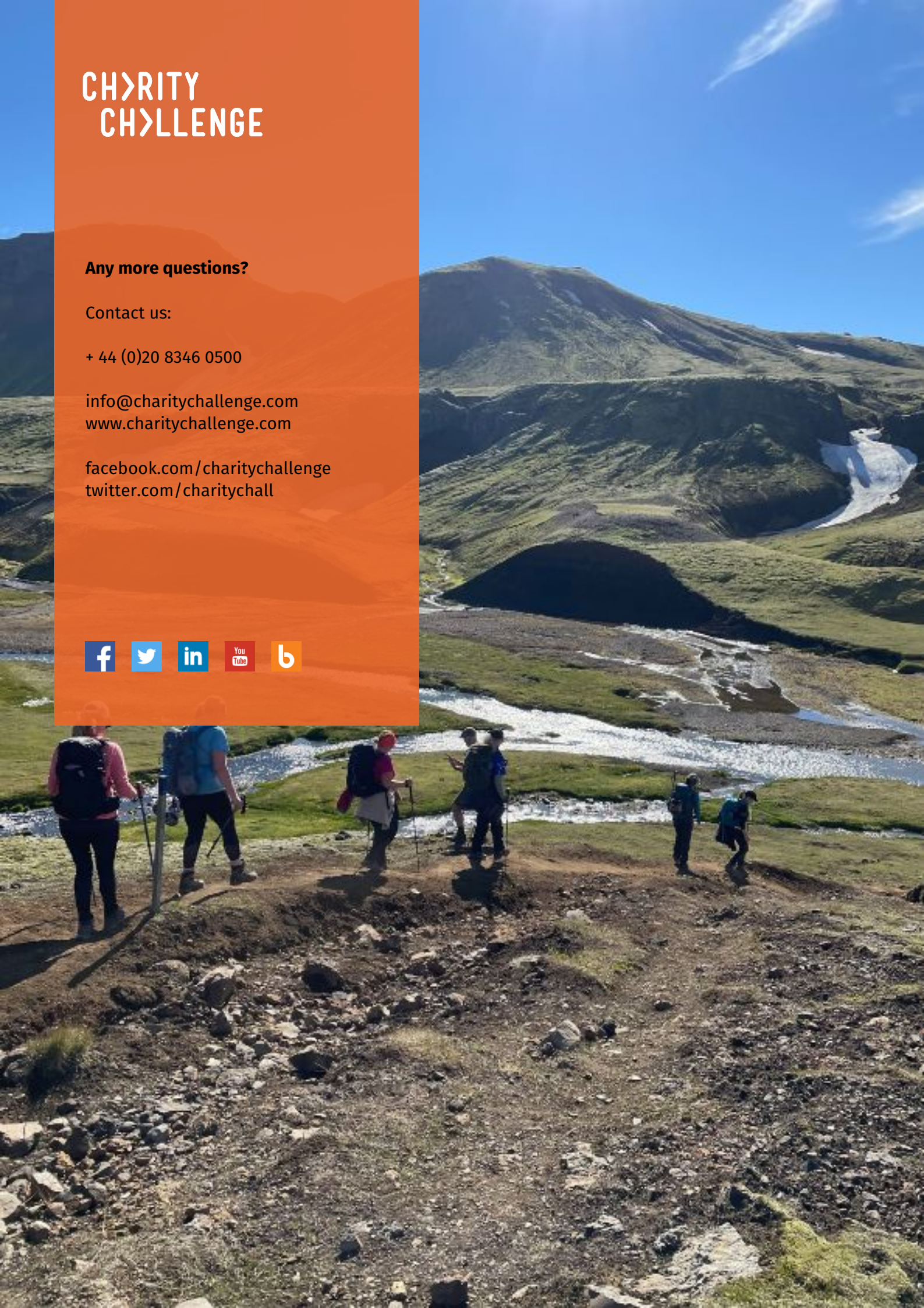
info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

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