

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Outride Receives REI Cooperative Action Fund Grant to Study Impacts of Cycling in Nature on Mental Well-Being

Morgan Hill, CA — Outride, a leading nonprofit empowering all people to experience the benefits of cycling, was recently selected as a recipient of the REI Cooperative Action Fund grant. The grant, aimed at amplifying research that demonstrates nature’s critical role in individual and community health, will bolster Outride's collaborative efforts to investigate how varying levels of access to natural environments during school cycling programs impact participants' mental well-being.

The project, led by Dr. Esther Walker and Lauren Schuck of Outride’s research and evaluation team, alongside Dr. Sean Wilson of Loma Linda University School of Medicine, Dr. Seth Wiafe of Loma Linda University School of Public Health, and Dr. Cian Brown of the University of Oklahoma, aims to understand the relationship between access to nature, cycling, and youth mental health.

“With our youth population seeing increasing rates of poor mental health and lack of time spent outside, we aim to understand nature and cycling’s role in boosting mood and improving mental health,” said Schuck, emphasizing the significance of the project.

The grant underscores the shared goal of the organizations to disseminate findings around the topic of access to the outdoors through presentations, social media, infographics, and public events. Through this work, the group aims to “inform policies that transform public spaces to foster increased engagement and enhance overall well-being,” added Dr. Brown.

Beyond academic initiatives, the research team also holds personal connections to the project. “As a lifelong cyclist and youth cycling coach, I’m eager to explore how cycling can enhance well-being, particularly among adolescents,” Dr. Wilson said.

To learn more about Outride and the REI Cooperative Action Fund, visit outridebike.org and www.reifund.org. For more information on Outride’s research initiatives, please contact research@outridebike.org.

About Outride:

Outride is a nonprofit organization that provides research, cycling programs, and funding to empower all people to experience the social, emotional, and cognitive benefits of cycling. Outride has a direct focus on expanding opportunities to access the benefits of cycling, partnering with programs that intentionally work to provide the social, emotional, and cognitive health benefits of cycling to underrepresented demographic groups.

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About the REI Cooperative Action Fund:

The REI Cooperative Action Fund brings together the collective strength of the outdoor community to support organizations that advance inclusivity, access, and belonging outdoors. The Fund announces new investments each spring and fall to provide unrestricted funding to nonprofit partners across three specific areas: connecting people outside, creating space outside, and centering health outside.

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