



YO! to sponsor Lia Ditton in record attempt to be the first woman to successfully row solo non-stop across the Pacific Ocean

- Solo row to take approximately four to six months, leaving from Japan and finishing in San Francisco
- To date, only two men have successfully rowed solo across the Pacific Ocean

London, 15 September 2016 – YO! the innovation hub founded by Simon Woodroffe OBE has announced today that it will be supporting Lia Ditton in her attempt to become the first woman to row solo and non-stop across the Pacific Ocean.

Departing from Choshi in Japan, a peninsula 130km due east of Tokyo, in May 2017, Lia will row some 5,500 nautical miles across the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco in California. It's expected to take her between 120 and 180 days to complete her journey. To date, there have been 16 unsuccessful attempts and only three successful North Pacific solo crossings,¹ all of which have been by men. Lia's journey will make her the third solo rower and the first woman to row solo across the Pacific Ocean.

Lia is well-placed for a successful journey having sailed 150,000 nautical miles – the equivalent of 8 laps of the globe – crossed the Pacific 3 times, the Indian Ocean twice and the Atlantic 9 times, of which 3 times she raced across alone. Lia is also the 53rd woman to row the Atlantic and the 64th woman to row any ocean.

In the run up to her journey, Lia is undertaking intense physical training and offshore rows off the coast of San Francisco in preparation. The journey itself will be very strenuous and it is predicted that Lia will burn over 4000 calories a day; in order to maintain strength, she will pack 720 dehydrated meals (6 months' worth of food) into her 21ft long boat.

Lia Ditton said: "It's fantastic to have the support from Simon and YO! as I set out on my journey. It puts me one step closer to being able to achieve my goal of rowing solo across the Pacific Ocean. I hope that in the process I raise awareness and inspire a generation of women to be active, get outdoors and dream BIG!"

Simon Woodroffe, Founder of YO! commented: "Lia is an inspirational woman. Her journey will motivate women all around the world and demonstrate that you can achieve your dreams, even the wacky ones, if you are dedicated and work hard. When I founded YO! and later expanded into affordable luxury accommodation with YOTEL and YO! Home, we had to overcome many obstacles – I know Lia will work to overcome any challenges she faces to meet her goal."

Woodroffe continued: "It will be a difficult journey – some say harder than climbing Mount Everest – but we are working closely with Lia to ensure she is prepared. We are helping her update her rowboat with the latest technology and the necessary safety equipment to make sure she has the support needed to succeed."

To follow and support Lia, visit www.yorow.org.

Interesting facts about Lia Ditton and the journey:

- Total distance rowing solo: 5,000-6000 nautical miles
- Total travel time: 120 – 180 days
- Total expected weight loss: 30lbs (13.6kg)
- Closest human: 90 miles overhead in the International Space Station

Notes to editors

¹ A further three solo rowers have been successful, but across the South Pacific Ocean; Peter Bird who rowed from North America to Australia in 1983; Jim Shekhdar who rowed from South America to Australia in 2001; and John Beeden who rowed from North America to Australia in 2015.

YOTEL will also be supporting this endeavour by helping to promote the row via its PR, marketing and communications channels.

About YO!

YO! Company is Simon Woodroffe's innovation hub and founder of YO! Sushi, YOTEL and YO! Home. YO! Sushi opened 20 years ago and the company now has 100 outlets in 10 countries with 10 more opening each year including 5 recently opened in the USA with more to come. YOTEL was launched in 2008 and has 12 hotels and 4000 rooms either opened or under development now, including a downtown hotel in San Francisco opening in the Summer of 2017. YO! Home is scheduled to launch in New Islington, Manchester in the Spring of 2017. Other YO!s that came and went – YO! Below bars, YO! Japan clothing, YO! How publishing. In the pipeline YOTOPIA floating islands, YO! Ship airships, The YO! Zone spas. To find out more, visits www.yo.co.uk.

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[Press release to be supplement with the following:](#)

- *YO! ROW graphics*
- *Picture of Lia*
- *Picture of the boat*
- *Picture of the route*