

MONDAY
Money

TUESDAY
Build the Change

WEDNESDAY
Sport

THURSDAY
Science

FRIDAY
Culture

THE DAY
Build a better world



NEWS DETECTIVES

TODAY'S BIG STORY

Protesters' plans to bring down the Olympics

Are the games a waste of money? Protestors who think they are have urged fake volunteers to sign up and ruin the sporting world's biggest event.

You have come to watch the Olympics. Athletes at the top of their game competing for ultimate glory. Someone should be here to take your ticket soon. But no one does. There are no **volunteers**; nothing works and the games grind to a halt.

That is the plan, at least, for the French protest group Saccage 2024. They want to bring down the Summer Olympics in **Paris** next year.

One great way to do that, they think, is to have "**pseudo-volunteers**".

The group wants people to sign up to help out and then not show up.



Destruction 2024: The French group say that hosting the Olympics will wreck Paris.

THE STORY SO FAR

The modern Olympics, which began in 1896, have gone hand in hand with protests. In 1906, Frank O'Connor, an Irish athlete, kicked things off, protesting against British rule of his country.

Or show up and disrupt the events.

"Volunteering is supposed to be for the common good and that is not the case for the Olympic Games — it does not have charitable aims," said Saccage 2024 member Arthur.

The group, whose name means "Damage" in French, think that the

Olympics are bad for Paris. They will cost huge sums, harm the **environment** and make the local area more **expensive**. The only winners, they think, will be big business.

The planned protests are also part of a wider wave of anger in France. This year, France's **president** Emmanuel Macron raised the **retirement age**. Afterwards, there were **strikes** and protests.

The organisers are looking for 45,000 people to help out, so fake volunteers could do some real "damage" to the games if enough people sign up.

KEY WORDS

Volunteers: People who choose to do something without pay

Paris: The capital of France

Pseudo: Fake

Environment: The natural world around us

Expensive: Costs a lot of money

President: Leader

Retirement age: When you can stop working

Strikes: When workers refuse to work



YOU DECIDE

Are the games a waste of money?

YES. The money it costs could be spent on dozens of more useful things, like health or education.

NO. You cannot put a price on inspiration. Watching human excellence is an inspiration to the host nation.



THE DETECTIVE ZONE

SPOT THE FAKE

One of these three news stories is fake. Which one?

Usain Bolt thanks Mario Kart for his gold medals

Chinese gymnast says gold medal is peeling

Factory that makes Olympic medals shut by strikes

Paris is only the second city to host the modern Olympics three times, which is the other city?



- A) Athens
- B) London
- C) Tokyo
- D) Los Angeles

CITY BID

Do you think the Olympics should be held in your city? In this challenge, you will make the case for the 2028 games to be held in your town!

Step one:
Think about what the Olympics will need — sports arenas, hotels and good restaurants and roads? Does your city need to build more of these things?

Step two:
Make a poster explaining why your city should be host. If you will build new facilities, say what they are!

Talking point

Is an athlete who stands up for what they believe in a better role model than one who focuses on winning?

Amaze someone

In 1996, members of the Olympic committee had been bribed to let Salt Lake City, Utah, a desert town, host the winter Olympics.

The 2020 Olympics were actually held in 2021 due to Covid-19.

THE EXTRA PAGE

Games fakers aim to ruin Olympics

An anti-Olympics collective is aiming to disrupt next year's Paris Games by recruiting fake volunteers. Saccage 2024, which translates as "Destruction 2024", has already generated a buzz on social media with its "pseudo-volunteer" plan.

"Volunteering is supposed to be for the common good and that is not the case for the Olympic Games — it does not have charitable aims," said Saccage 2024 member Arthur, who declined to give his family name.

The 25-year-old environmental activist who lives in Saint-Denis, where the bulk of the Games will be organised, plans to withdraw at the last minute or try to disrupt the Games from within if he is selected to be a volunteer. Saccage and other critics of the Paris Olympics say the event will harm the environment and benefit big businesses and elites, rather than locals.

Paris 2024 organisers did not immediately respond to a request for comment but have said in the past that they would organise "popular and spectacular Games" that will bring in millions of visitors.

Olympics organisers are looking to recruit 45,000 volunteers. They have said that volunteering — also widely used in past Games — is an opportunity to participate in the Olympics.



Non! France is experiencing a wave of protests against new pension laws.

The deadline for applications is 3 May. Paris 2024 have said they would take the time to ensure the "sincerity" of candidates and that volunteers would have a background check. Volunteers receive uniforms, free travel and meal vouchers.

The Games are more than a year away and there is no certainty activists will be able to generate the numbers needed to disrupt events. However, the plan reflects a widespread discontent in France, with huge protests over a law increasing the pension age and hashtags linking opposition to the reform and the Olympics.

Saccage said it saw a rise in interest after President Emmanuel Macron rammed through the pensions law without a final vote in parliament.

Jan, a library worker in his 50s, said he came across the idea on Twitter. He had been striking and protesting against the pensions law, and said the fake volunteer plan was a "fun and constructive" way to continue the protests and, at the same time, oppose the Games and their impact.

This would not be the first time the Olympic Games have been used by activists to further their causes, said Jules Boykoff, a political scientist at Oregon University. "Money spent on the Olympics is not spent on basic needs such as housing, education, healthcare and pensions," he said. ■

This is an edited version of a story from © The Guardian [23/04/2023]

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Answers to the puzzles

Modern Olympics question
B) London

Spot the fake
Factory that makes Olympic medals shut by strikes