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PRESS RELEASE

## Abdi Salam Ali and Kidane Solomon are new Generali Running Talents

**The best runners in the THSN Refugee Team receive Generali Running Talent status and benefit from intensive support. This is how Generali Switzerland helps exceptional talent from the refugee running group progress to a professional running career. As well as Dominic Lokinyomo Lobalu, who has been benefiting from this support programme since 2021, Abdi Salam Ali and Kidane Solomon have also joined the Generali Running Talent ranks this year. The Swiss marathon record holder, Tadesse Abraham, mentors the runners.**

Tadesse Abraham has been heavily committed to people with a migrant background since 2020, together with The Human Safety Net Switzerland (THSN). The Generali Switzerland foundation has set up a running group to help refugees integrate into society through sport. The THSN Refugee Team trains several times a week in Zurich and Geneva and is aimed at amateurs, professional athletes and aspiring running coaches.

### **Generali Running Talent as a forge for talent**

The past few months have revealed the hidden potential of the members of the THSN Refugee Team. Its runners have dominated numerous races throughout Switzerland. Generali Switzerland has therefore decided to extend its support to a select number of additional talented individuals. As well as financial support, the programme also includes workshops on topics such as dealing with the media and social media presence. The talents also accompany their mentor, Tadesse Abraham, to a training camp in the Engadin valley, where they receive first-hand tips.

Dominic Lokinyomo Lobalu made his début in 2021. The 22-year-old long-distance runner has already attracted attention across Switzerland. Last year, he benefited from intensive support as a Generali Running Talent. At the Swiss Championship, he came first in the 10,000-metre track running event with a time of 28 minutes 32 seconds. Dominic Lobalu was also first to cross the line in the 2020 Swiss Half Marathon in Belp, with a time of just 1 hour 3 minutes 52 seconds – a personal best. This year, he wants to achieve a time of under 1 hour 2 minutes. He competed head-to-head with his training partner, Tadesse Abraham, in the 2021 Silvesterläufe. While Dominic Lobalu finished the Zurich Silvesterlauf in first place, 0.1 seconds ahead of Tadesse Abraham, he had to be satisfied with third place directly behind him in the Silvesterlauf in Sitten (Course de Noël).

### **Abdi Salam Ali: “I want to prove myself in international competitions”**

At the age of 14, Abdi Salam Ali fled Somalia and arrived in Switzerland in 2016. As an unaccompanied minor, he was looked after by the Zurich asylum agency (AOZ). He quickly learned German and attended the state secondary school in Zollikon. He then moved to the Uster school of sports and art, before beginning an apprenticeship in operations management. The 19-year-old is a member of Uster athletics club, where he is coached by Marco Rancan. Abdi Salam Ali has been assisting the THSN Refugee Team in Zurich as a co-coach since 2021. This allows him to share his knowledge and passion for running with other people with a migrant background.

Despite his young age, he has already enjoyed numerous sporting successes. The 10-kilometre race at the Swiss Championships in Lugano, 5000m at the Junior Swiss Championships in Nottwil and 17.9-kilometre run at the Greifenseelauf – Abdi Salam Ali topped the podium for all these races in 2021. So, it comes as no surprise that he is highly ambitious. “My aim is to take part in a few races abroad so I can measure myself against the international competition. One day, I would like to represent Switzerland in the Olympics, like Tadesse Abraham,” says Abdi Salam Ali.

### **Kidane Solomon: “My dream is to make a living from running”**

31-year-old Kidane Solomon is from Eritrea. He arrived in Switzerland in 2014 as a political asylum seeker and has lived in Geneva ever since. He began regular running training in 2017. In September 2020, he attracted attention after coming third in the Frankfurt Half Marathon with a time of 1 hour 4 minutes 15 seconds. Following this success, Kidane Solomon joined the THSN Refugee Team. Since then, targeted coaching by Tadesse Abraham and Olivier Baldacchino has allowed him to constantly improve his performance.

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Kidane Solomon won the 10-kilometre race at the 2021 Geneva Marathon with a time of 30 minutes 7 seconds. At the 2021 Swiss Championships in Uster, he completed the 10,000m track running event in a time of 30 minutes 46.85 seconds. In October 2020, he achieved his previous personal best of 1 hour 4 minutes 4 seconds at the Swiss Half Marathon in Belp. Kidane Solomon won silver at the 2021 Greifenseelauf, with a time of 58 minutes 37 seconds, directly behind Abdi Salam Ali. He competed against a number of elite runners at the 2021 Murtenlauf, finishing in sixth place. His next goal is already clear. "My dream is to make a living from running. To achieve this, my next goal is to run my first marathon in under 2 hours 10 minutes," says Kidane Solomon.

Click here for more information about:

- [Generali Running Talents](#)
- [THSN Refugee Team](#)
- [The Human Safety Net Switzerland](#)

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