Brussels, 2 October 2025

Dear Hobby Horse Federation,

On behalf of GAIA and PETA and our combined more than 10 million members and supporters across the world, we kindly ask you to consider adding a rodeo-inspired discipline to hobby horsing.

Rodeos are linked to serious animal welfare problems. Animals are deliberately provoked into unnatural and stressful behaviour through the use of flank straps and spurs. Horses and bulls are often forced to buck violently in response to pain or pressure. This results in a high risk of injuries such as broken bones, torn muscles, or internal bleeding, and many animals suffer long-term stress and trauma. In some cases, rodeos even lead to the premature death of the animals involved.[1]

By introducing a rodeo-inspired branch of hobby horsing, your federation could demonstrate that modern sport does not need to involve exposing animals to fear, pain, or harm.

Hobby horsing already highlights skill, creativity, and inclusion, and we believe such a new discipline could further strengthen these values while attracting a new audience. Our organisations would be thrilled to celebrate the news on our social media channels with the potential to reach millions and land in top news outlets around the world.

We would be happy to discuss this idea with you.

With best regards,

Michel Vandenbosch
*President - **GAIA***

Ingrid Newkirk
*President - **PETA***

Contact : GAIA, Rue du Houblon 43, 1000 Brussels, Belgium – michel.vandenbosch@gaia.be

Footnote

1. American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) – *Welfare Implications of Rodeo Events* (2021); RSPCA Australia – *Rodeos and Animal Welfare* (2020); PETA – *Rodeo Cruelty Factsheet*.