

International Committee

Minutes of the Meetings 20-24 February 2023
Szeged, Hungary

Present:

Benjamin Burton	President	ab@maths.uq.edu.au	Australia	2021-2024
Yugo Kartono Isal	Host 2022	yugo@cs.ui.ac.id	Indonesia	2018-2023
László Jobbágy	Host 2023	laszlo.jobbagy@gmail.com	Hungary	2022-2024
Eslam Wageed	Host 2024	eslamwagefed@gmail.com	Egypt	2020-2025
Jhonatan Castro	Host 2025	jhtan@jhtan.com	Bolivia	2022-2026
Catherine Espinoza	Elected	catespinozar@gmail.com	Chile	2021-2023
Mile Jovanov	Elected	mile.jovanov@gmail.com	Macedonia	2019-2023
Eduard Kalinichenko	Elected	eduardische@gmail.com	Latvia	2022-2025
Sun Teck Tan	Elected	tanst@comp.nus.edu.sg	Singapore	2022-2025
Araz Yusubov	Elected	ayusubov@ada.edu.az	Azerbaijan	2021-2024
Eljakim Schrijvers	Treasurer	eschrijvers@eljakim.nl	The Netherlands	
J.P. Pretti	Secretary	jpretti@uwaterloo.ca	Canada	

Welcome

Ben gave a brief welcome to Jhonatan (online) and the others on location in Szeged.

Apologies

Every member of IC participated in the 2023 winter meetings.

Confirmation of Minutes

The 2022 GA minutes, and IC minutes for meetings at IOI 2023 and afterwards were approved. Ben will continue to work on producing minutes for 2021 and the IC Winter 2022 meetings.

Report by President

Ben said most items he is keen to discuss will appear later in the agenda, but he wanted to highlight three issues at this time. One serious concern is the need to find a 2026 host. Secondly, Ben provided a very brief update on the IOI Allies program. Finally, he noted that the three committees meeting this week include a grand total of only one woman. He would like to explore proactive ways to address this significant problem.

Report by Secretary

J.P. gave a brief update on activity in the Office of the IOI and general secretarial responsibilities. He outlined his plan for distributing and publishing IC and GA minutes in accordance with the regulations. Points of Contact have been collected for all but one country. Bolivia is now formally a Future Host. DSA nominations have been received and will be discussed at a later meeting.

An outline of applications and expressions of interest from potential new countries was provided. More details are included in the Secretary Report. What follows reflects the discussion on these.

- The IC agreed that it is premature to discuss inquiries from Albania, Pakistan, Monaco, and Costa Rica.
- Libya applied hoping to be an Invited Observer in 2023. Hungary indicated they have the capacity for this. Eduard asked if they provided task statements. Eslam, who has been working with the organization says they did not, but they have a solid plan. The IC voted unanimously to accept Libya as a new member country. There was some discussion about the related regulations, and it was eventually agreed that it is appropriate to allow participation as an Invited Observer in 2023 as requested.

- Eslam noted that he has had conversations with Oman and Qatar. They are not yet ready to apply but are interested in attending IOI 2023. Everyone was comfortable with them attending as paying guests and said that in general, this is a good opportunity to learn about the event. Eljakim said the system can easily handle this. Eslam mused about considering them a “guest country” instead of “guest individuals”. Concern was expressed because they have not been officially vetted. However, giving them access to the GA can be done via either the IC or hosts. In conclusion, J.P. asked Eslam to tell these countries that they should still reach out to him as Secretary to receive the same consistent information about membership criteria and the application process.
- Sun Teck raised Cambodia. He feels they are also not ready, but he may suggest they also consider being a paid guest.

J.P. will soon circulate a draft application form for new prospective countries.

IOI 2022 Final Report

Yugo handed Ben an official paper copy of the IOI 2022 Final Report. Following a question from Ben about a digital copy, Yugo said Brian will send it to J.P. who will store it with other past final reports.

The group helped answer a few questions from László about total budget figures and how to prioritize when allocating funds.

Current Host Report: Updates on IOI 2023

The formal IOI 2023 report was shown at the opening ceremonies on Tuesday. László added a short update on the political background. The government’s Digital Success Program was shut down and other government reorganization has occurred. In particular, the support for IOI will now come from a different ministry. He feels most of the changes are now complete, money contracts are signed, and any lingering issues should be resolved relatively easily. A key player in this ministry is from Szeged and will be the head patron of the event.

László then took questions and comments. He noted that anything he is unable to answer on the spot will be addressed in a follow-up message after the winter meetings.

Eslam recommended that an attempt be made to hold a very notable closing ceremony given that the plan is to have a relatively short and official opening ceremony.

Yugo raised the IOI song and wanted to ensure the hosts have access to it.

Eduard noted that reports from past IOIs, and financial figures, in particular, can be very valuable. He wondered why the budget for Hungary is as high as it is and wondered if a comparison to past figures has occurred. László noted that inflation is one issue. Another key factor is that government procurement procedures must be followed which always results in higher prices. Finally, the money is coming from the government which means there are high related fees and taxes.

Sun Teck asked about some of the hardware costs given that Acer is supplying servers. László indicated that there are other networking costs (switches etc.) and more will be purchased than necessary because the University of Szeged will keep the equipment afterwards.

Sun Teck also asked about the transfer to Szeged from the airport. László said nobody will wait more than one hour. There will be a separate conference/waiting room for IOI people where they can congregate before their shuttle bus is ready to leave. Some of these details were discussed. There will also be options for people arriving in Vienna or Belgrade. Cathy noted that these options need to be made very clear.

Cathy said she has a concern about how close to capacity some of the hotels appear to be. One specific problem, for example, are leaders with family members coming as guests. László provided extra information he couldn’t easily share during the hotel visits. In particular, the other group using the Novotel during IOI 2023 will be adjusting their reservation thereby giving us more room.

Cathy is also a bit worried that the guides won’t be staying in the same hotel as the contestants. László notes that their hotel is almost next door and will be used almost entirely for sleeping. Cathy emphasized that there need to be enough people around during the night in case something arises. Further discussion on this ensued.

Mile noted that some hosts try to match language abilities between guides and delegations. He also noted the

importance of ensuring the guides are well-informed. Ben emphasized this again. Sometimes, in the past, guides have appeared to be hesitant to say they don't know the answer to a question and thus relayed misinformation. This should be avoided. Araz also noted that guides are often the key ambassadors for the country which adds extra motivation to ensure they are well trained and informed.

László was asked to provide the schedule for the week so that IC can look and comment.

Eljakim brought up the importance of logistics around meals especially for the contestants. This should not cause them stress on any day but especially not contest days.

J.P. raised the issue of Wi-Fi needs especially for the GA room. László said this has been considered.

Ben asked who they plan to have as GA Chair. László said they are continuing to look for someone willing to take on this role. Ben noted that it is not purely ceremonial. A GA Chair needs to understand English well and have the skills to run challenging meetings. Someone familiar with the nature of competitions or outreach would be a huge asset.

Ben also reminded László about distributing the Code of Conduct and information about what to do if you witness or experience harassment.

Eslam wanted to ensure that the usual strict check-in and check-out times need to be managed because many people will arrive early and leave late. László says we have the entire Forras hotel booked so this won't be an issue. In a response to questions from Eslam and Eljakim, this will also mean activities will be set up throughout the hotel and leaders may be able to access the pool on departure day should they be leaving late.

Eduard raised concern about the text currently on the event website regarding the use of photos and video for publicity. He would like to make it clear that this comes from the hosts and, more importantly, feels consent should be obtained. László said they believe it will be GDPR-compliant. Hearing some of this clarification, Eduard feels the text online does not match how it will be used and feels the wording should be amended.

Cathy asked for further clarification about how COVID cases will be handled. Discussion ensued.

László shared the IOI 2023 schedule. Feedback was provided related to

- wording
- the need for leaders to communicate with contestants after GA 1, GA 2 and the Practice Session
- accommodating leaders who will attend the conference
- the requirement to reach leaders to translate questions during the contest
- time ISC needs to review appeals before the corresponding GA meeting
- the frequency with which GA meetings run late
- the fact that some guests help with translations

Lingering Pandemic Impact

Ben asked our Hungarian hosts about their thinking on the pandemic and its possible continued impact on the IOI. László said the plan is to host a fully onsite event without any intention to hold a hybrid event.

Hungarian government restrictions are among the most liberal in Europe, so the plan is to institute stricter than required protocols.

Cathy asked how instances of a COVID case will be handled especially given some concerns about how close to capacity the hotels seem to be. László said a relevant medical national agency has protocols for this (testing and isolation) and the hosts are in constant discussions about measures given the current and evolving situation. Other hotels may be used for isolation.

Report on IOI 2024

Eslam reported on Egypt's preparations which have been underway for some time in part because of the delay in hosting caused by the global pandemic. Organizers are finalizing the logo and a website (www.ioi2024.eg) has been launched.

The 2024 winter meetings will be held from February 11 to February 15. The IOI itself will be from September 1 to September 8. Cathy asked if the dates could be made public. Eslam said they need to wait for formal approval.

Contestants and volunteers will stay in Alexandria Youth City. Leaders and committees will be accommodated at hotels on the campus of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport.

Excursions will include a short day excursion in Alexandria and a full day excursion to the Egyptian Grand Museum and the Pyramids and Sphinx in Giza.

Locations have been selected for meetings and a tent is being tested as the location of the contest itself. Alternative solutions will be considered if the tent is deemed unsuitable.

Eslam raised possible political issues that may prevent some countries from participating. It might not be possible to invite some countries. Even if invited, they will likely be unable to obtain visas. J.P. asked for further clarity because it is best to inform these countries of the potential diplomatic issues sooner rather than later. Eslam believes it will be possible to extend an invitation, but he recommends they participate online. Ben noted that IC cannot make this decision alone. ITC certainly needs to be consulted and the opinion of the GA should be gauged. There are regulations on remote participation and these need to be considered carefully. For example, Mile noted that invitations must be extended to all member countries (possibly via the IC).

There was then a generic discussion about the distinction between remote participation and online participation as it occurred during the hybrid IOI 2022. For example, will all participating countries be acknowledged on the official IOI 2023 website and/or the official IOI websites? Eslam does not believe the latter is a concern and is unsure about the former. Yugo shared his experience saying that there are things the host cannot control, and any diplomatic situation can change unexpectedly at any time.

Eslam promised to seek more definitive information on what they can and cannot do, and to reach out to the affected countries.

Cathy asked about how a tent as a contest hall will work with respect to cables, bathrooms, etc. Ben emphasized the desire to ensure drinking water and bathrooms are up to the highest standards. Eslam emphasized that this will be the case.

Jhonatan asked about the procurement of computers. Eslam said his understanding is that sponsors will provide them. Eljakim said Indonesia was the last event for which a sponsor agreement was in place with regards to supplying machines, but they have agreed to extend this for Hungary and IOI 2023. Discussions need to occur for 2024 and beyond.

Report on IOI 2025

Jhonatan said there is no big news to announce since August 2022 and reminded the IC of their plans. He did note that they are considering switching venues for the contest and/or opening and closing ceremonies.

Eduard asked about the capacity of the contestant hotel because he noticed it appeared high. He wanted to know why the plan is to house leaders in a separate location. The advantages (proximity for discussion and monitoring) and disadvantages (quarantine and security of the GA) of this were discussed. Ben summarized to say there is no rule on the matter but in his opinion, separation is good if and only if leaders can easily access their students.

Eslam warned that a five-star hotel may be risky because of how teenagers might treat the property.

Eduard asked about the cable car travel noting that some students may be afraid of heights. In particular, he wondered if they were all optional as opposed to a required form of transportation (especially to get to the contest). Jhonatan took note.

IOI 2026 and other Future IOIs

The issue of finding a host for IOI 2026 (and 2027) was discussed. Possible candidates were discussed based on recent informal communications. It was decided that Ben will put together an email plea to the community clearly expressing the need for a host.

The group brainstormed on other creative solutions.

Eslam raised the issue of registration fees. Raising them may help hosts and result in more hosts. Eljakim agrees and says this is the case for other Olympiads. Araz said he feels like this has come up before and we should make becoming a host as easy as possible.

Cathy said we need a deadline so that we know when to consider more extreme measures. Ben suggested that we consider alternatives if we don't have any bids as of August. Eduard suggested Ben emphasize the severity of the issue by explicitly citing possible unorthodox solutions.

Awards, Certificates and Recognition

After discussion and debate, the IC voted unanimously to award three Distinguished Service Awards.

To help with consistency and clarity, J.P. will create a nomination form. Araz asked that it indicate links to online evidence of a nominee's contributions.

To nail down the number of trophies required, Eduard suggested using time to break ties at the top of the contestant scoreboard. No objections were raised, and it was noted that this should be included in the officially posted rules. Ben did note that ISC should make the final decision on this.

Eslam reminded everyone about the increase in price for trophies, but it was agreed to stick with the current provider given that we may now have a limit on the number of trophies required.

Eduard reviewed the plan for long-term service awards. The only change he is suggesting is that we not limit the awards to those in attendance because we have the capacity to recognize everyone with 7, 15 and 25 years of service. There were some logistical discussions around timing and attendance by LSA recipients who otherwise would not participate in IOI 2023. (The host is not required to accommodate this.)

Budget and Finances

Eljakim said we are well within our budget and have money to spend. Expenditures are very low. He addressed a few minor points related to expenses and revenue and thanked Sun Teck for his great help in attempting to secure global sponsors. More meetings are scheduled to discuss potential future support.

Funded Projects

Mile said that the call for projects was made but no proposals have been received.

Following a question from Ben, J.P. said that follow up on the TPS project has occurred.

Regulation Changes

Eduard briefly outlined the proposed regulation changes on Wednesday which were the discussed on Thursday.

Actualising IOI Report situation (S5.12)

Minor wording suggestions were accepted but no objections were raised.

Modifying terms in Remote Competition eligibility (S6.14)

Eslam wondered if we could make this more general. There were mild concerns about a malicious host or the possibility of too much pressure being put on a host. Eduard explained that the inclusion of IC can address this (i.e. the Host Country can inform IC if pressured and there is a regulation empowering the IC to invite all member countries).

Removing anonymity of IC votes (A3.7, N3.7)

Mile asked how individual votes would be communicated to the GA. Eduard replied to say the current wording is deliberately vague because there are multiple ways it could happen (e.g. placed in pigeonholes or accessed through the electronic voting system). Mile consequently said he then worries that this could all become public.

Eslam asked for clarification and asked what the overall objective is. Mile and Eduard explained that transparency is important. Eslam argued that how you vote is less important than what you say. Lots of

debate ensued.

Cathy stated that context matters so she asked about including these details in the minutes. Eduard noted that thought needs to go into this because the minutes themselves are public.

As time was running out, everyone agreed to meet again virtually for a follow-up meeting to discuss the remaining regulation changes. Then, before adjourning, Eduard spoke briefly about the last set of changes on using the Schulze method for votes with three or more options (A3.2, N3.2.1, A3.5, A3.7).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion – Ben Burton

On Wednesday, Ben raised two issues. First, as an update on an initiative from last year, the training for Allies is ready but there are not enough volunteers.

Next, Ben said he would like to address gender diversity specifically on IOI committees. Despite past efforts to recruit qualified women to run for committee positions, there have been remarkably few candidates. Instead, Ben wants a bigger “kick” to create a critical mass of women on IOI committees. The issue and possible solutions have been discussed informally. The suggestion is to start with IC and proposes that we do elections so that if there are candidates of different genders standing, then we take the top two candidates of different genders. If all candidates are of the same gender, then the top two will be taken. In the long term this would mean there should be at least three women on IC which is still nowhere near 50% but a noticeable improvement. It has the added benefit of not putting all the onus on one (or no) women to represent this portion of the IOI community. It would also recognize that not all women have the same opinions.

The issue of gender diversity on IC was discussed at length on Thursday beginning with the following concrete proposal from Ben.

If there are candidate(s) of a minority gender [1] and at least two positions available [2], then at least one of the candidates elected should be of a minority gender.

[1] A “minority gender” is a gender held by strictly less than half of those remaining IC members who are not finishing their terms.

[2] The President is counted as an IC position.

Ben notes that a core issue around managing issues of EDI is “nothing about us without us”. This is an attempt to address this. Note that historically, the most women ever on IC was three (where one did not have a vote). Now we have one.

Eduard asked for more information with regards to next steps. That is, is the idea that we propose a regulation to the GA or suggest this to GA as a starting point? Ben would like to propose a regulation change at GA during IOI 2023.

Araz asked for confirmation that “a different gender” describes multiple genders. Ben said it does. Araz also asked for clarification with regards to the years where a president is elected. Ben answered by example. If a man win’s the presidency, the other IC position would go to a woman or non-binary person (if one is running).

Eljakim said it is a good idea to do this. He worries about the wording and implementation but feels these can be fixed. He is concerned that the presidential year issue could be something the GA has more concerns about. He wonders if this should be a separate motion. Eljakim would also like to address the underrepresentation of some continents on IC.

László said he also thinks the idea is okay but agrees that the wording could use some work.

Mile voiced a contrary opinion. He notes that all the continents are on the IC without a rule enforcing this. Also, our community only consists of about 10% women, and this roughly matches the proportion on IC. In that sense, he feels IC does reflect the GA and this proposal would mean it does not represent the GA. If we are looking for creative ways to have more non-minority genders on the IC, we should first find ways to get more leaders from non-minority genders. We should also aim for more female contestants, for example. He says we are “starting in the middle”. We have never had a female president. Maybe we should start by alternating male and female presidents. He says his concerns arise partly because he has seen models with similar goals that have not been successful. Finally, he thinks we should start by going through the GA. This

is what happened with honourable mentions, and something similar should happen with this issue.

Cathy countered by saying that representing the GA is not the point. Instead, it is important to have different points of view and perspectives. The point is also to aim to make the IOI more attractive to girls. For example, she says she may not have noticed that there are not enough vegetarian options when touring hotels this week because she isn't a vegetarian. Having sufficient women on the IC could be similar. This said, she feels we need a solid case to explain to the GA why this is important. The rationale needs to be clear and well-formulated.

Sun Teck spoke to say he is all for having more women in IC. A problem is that this issue is being raised in a moment with only one woman on IC so some could argue it isn't needed. This goes to the point Cathy raised that we need to explain this carefully and fully. He notes that, of course, more female contestants would lead to more female leaders which would lead to more IC leaders. This also underscores the need to make a strong case.

Eduard thinks he agrees that the gender imbalance is a problem at IOI in many ways. He is usually cautious about addressing a problem like this in an artificial way. For example, he feels EGOI is a better way to address the misrepresentation for contestants than a quota on contestants. This said, in this case, he feels IC is very different. The entire point is to have IOI issues in mind and to work with hosts. That is, representation is a fundamental requirement of an effective IC. For this reason, he strongly believes some sort of action is needed. He has similar remarks/concerns about wording and implementation. Another concern is that he isn't sure if the focus should be on gender specifically or diversity more generally. To address Mile's concern, there is value in having leadership figures to perhaps move the composition of GA. For the argument about direct comparison (i.e., a female with lower votes "wins"), using the Schulze method allows us to partially avoid this direct comparison.

Yugo feels this a problem common in many areas. The engineering field is a possible example. He doesn't like this being done top-down. It should happen in a bottom-up manner. He feels we need to start by persuading women in the GA to run. In Indonesia, he feels there are messages that try to encourage and state openness for women. However, despite this, there is still disproportionality.

Araz began his turn to speak by responding to Yugo to say that the proposal probably comes with frustration that there hasn't been change despite the past efforts to address it. He agrees with Eduard's comment that IC needs diversity. He wonders if all IC should undergo diversity training. The issue is bigger than this. Training will not solve the problem, but it would be a positive step. Araz noted that if there is only one female candidate, they will effectively win. Ben then noted that this general situation is already the case now and has occurred previously when at most n people ran for n available positions. Araz also mused about the other dimensions of diversity raised by Eljakim. In summary, Araz said he feels positive about this change, but it is challenging, we should expect the details to change, it could open a Pandora's box, and it will not solve the wider issue.

Eslam recalled that Cathy received a lot of votes in the 2022 elections and Valentina was also on the IC in the past. He concluded that good women have been elected to IC. He then also raised the concern that if there is only one female candidate, they will win automatically. He wants to work with women and have them on the committee, but he doesn't want it to be just anyone. He feels we should let it be as is and let the GA choose. Eslam also asked for clarification on what minority-gender means. This was explained. He doesn't like the possibility of a man declaring they are not a man so that they will be elected. It should be left to individuals' skills and convincing the GA of our needs. The GA shouldn't be effectively forced in one direction.

Eduard points out that if we have only one female candidate, they will not necessarily be elected. This is related to the "none of the above" feature of the Schulz method. Mile says he thinks is unlikely to be true in practice given the results of past votes.

Jhonatan understands that this problem exists, but he doesn't think a policy of this nature is the best approach. Instead, we need to make conditions more friendly to women.

J.P. said this has always been an issue and nothing is happening to address it. This proposal is one small step that won't solve everything, but, in the end, we need to determine if this would make IC better. To him, it clearly would.

Ben says that IC should not reflect what the community is. It should reflect what we want it to be. Having just one woman on the IC is unfair and less effective. It is asking too much of one person. Different women

have different views. Diversity within the women is also crucial. With respect to focusing on gender versus other dimensions, Ben notes that this is an issue we have wrestled with for a long time, it is a big issue and we have had harassment issues in the past. He also commented on the quality of the people running. Yes, we could have a weak candidate, but the IC already has experience with this being the case. We need to do something.

László says in theory he is strongly against quotas. That is, choosing someone because of their gender.

Mile says he has heard different opinions and creative proposals so we should put this to GA.

Cathy wanted to respond to Eslam. He said if a woman is good enough, she will eventually get there. She points out that this feels like a woman should be exceptional and this same bar is set for men. Right now, she wonders if the IC votes are more driven by popularity and who is well known. To go back to what Eduard said, what skills are most important to IC is their diversity of opinion. What if the IC was almost exclusively European? To sum up, she asked everyone to notice the difference between what we are asking of men and women. Cathy reiterated that we keep saying there is a problem, but things are not changing. This is a small place where we can see some action.

Sun Teck said people we keep talking about how unfriendly the IOI is to women and we need to pinpoint how this can help. In this sense he likes the idea of a candidate bringing up elements of diversity that they would bring to the IC. In this sense he agrees with Eslam that a woman can/should be elected because of their skills/attributes. He repeated that we need to clearly identify the problem. He notes that we are not forcing anything on the GA but instead presenting an idea to it.

Eduard noted that he thinks he was elected because of his work with IOI statistics and yet this has nothing to do with his value as an IC member. Also, had this rule been in place last year, he would have been the person not elected. Even knowing this, he supports the proposal.

Yugo thinks we should make GA aware of the issue and discuss it there.

Araz warned that sometimes we subconsciously try to solve problems that we can't solve. This problem is bigger than the IC or IOI. He has two concrete proposals: (1) diversity training for IC, and (2) a committee to advocate for women.

Eslam responded to Eduard to say that "none of the above" option is okay for opinions or options but not appropriate for elections. Technical elements of voting were then discussed and explained.

Jhonatan said that maybe this is not something for IC to address. Perhaps it should be left to national committees and delegations.

After everyone was given the opportunity to speak at least twice, Ben called for a vote on adopting a proposal of this nature and presenting it to the GA as a proposal to discuss and vote on at IOI 2023. There was some quick discussion about the technicalities of the vote. There were 5 votes in favour and 5 votes against.

Everyone agreed that this tied vote means IC has not determined that it has a position and will not be putting forward a motion as a committee. GA can certainly discuss the issue and this motion or other related motions can still be proposed at IOI 2023.

Voting Rules and Procedures – Ben Burton

Ben gave some background on the Schulze method, our experience with it and reasons to move forward with it. He also notes that we now have the software to make its use more practical. In response to a question from Eduard, there was then some discussion about reliance on software and networks. Everyone seemed comfortable with our ability to implement the method, and a vote was taken to proceed with its use with formalities to come as part of regulation changes. This motion passed with 9 votes in favour and 0 votes against.

Updates from ISC

Michal Forišek discussed the recent main activities of ISC. Problem proposals have been collected. The number of these is sufficient and returned to pre-pandemic levels. ISC will announce negligible changes to the syllabus. As expected, most of ISC's time during the winter meetings was spent discussing the proposed

problems. They are now close to approving a problem set that both ISC and HSC are happy with. Other miscellaneous agenda items are mostly centered on processes (e.g., proofreading, working with hosts, etc.).

Ben asked if we are at risk of needing many trophies. Michal responded to say that the official position of ISC and his own opinion is that finding an absolute winner is not critical. ISC's focus is on medal boundaries. This said, his gut feeling is that a tie is unlikely in 2023. Martin (ITC) supported this saying that many of the mechanisms used to ensure lack of ties tend to introduce randomness that we don't necessarily want (e.g., fractional scoring). Michal agreed.

Eduard said he strongly agrees that ISC should not spend resources on avoiding ties at the top but asks if it is possible to separate the trophy from more formal rankings and statistics. For example, could we use time to break ties simply to issue only one trophy. Michal said he personally feels this is okay provided everyone is made aware of this in advance.

Eslam inquired about the chances of there being zero scores. Michal said this is a key factor used when choosing a problem set. There was a sense that this year's proposals were not as accessible overall, so time has spent on the problems this week to minimize the number of zero scores.

Updates from ITC

Martin Mareš provided updates from ITC. Unlike recent years, servers will be local and onsite instead of in the cloud. The exact specification of competition machines is not yet known but the request is for hardware like that used in 2022. Plans are in place for a hybrid competition just in case. Overall, ITC is very happy with the developments and status of things and feel the hosts are handling things well.

Eslam asked for clarification on the use of local servers. Martin said that if there are any online participants, they will connect to the onsite servers.

Ben said he spoke to ITC today and they can handle a small number of online participants if necessary.

Eduard said we need to come to an understanding with regards to handling requests to compete online. There was some discussion that included input from László as host. Ben summarized to say that while the global situation could change and we have learned emergencies can happen, IOI 2023 will be completely onsite. It was acknowledged that online participation adds a lot of strain on local organizers.

Martin mentioned some minor changes in plans with regards to the competition. He also discussed the use of a long-term instance of Matrix for more private matters and the use of Discord for more public matters. This led to discussion of issues with the mailing list. Mile asked about the points of contact collected at IOI 2022 and J.P. said efforts will be made to connect these to the registration system.

Ben thanked ITC for their willingness to implement our use of the Schultze method.

Other Business

One country asked a question about eligibility related to a year of school between traditional secondary school and university. Ben had forwarded the request to IC earlier. Eduard said he feels the regulations are clear on this and the students in question are ineligible. Ben had consulted other countries with similar systems and came to the same conclusion. A vote was taken with all ten members of IC agreeing as well.

Araz asked IC members if they want to go through diversity training. He would like it to be at least strongly recommended (and separate from the Ally program). Nobody argued against this, but Ben said he needs to investigate the licensing of the materials. Cathy wondered if our ability to use these materials exists only because of Ben's personal connections. Ben said he will also investigate this. He explained that the training consists of online videos and questions and should take between four and six hours. Some concern was expressed about IOI paying for this if the creators will not cover the cost for everyone. Ben said he will bring this back to IC if he discovers there are financial implications.