

## International Committee

### Minutes of the 24-28 March 2025 Meetings

#### Held in Sucre, Bolivia and Online

##### *Present in person:*

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Eduard Kalinichenko	Elected	<a href="mailto:eduardische@gmail.com">eduardische@gmail.com</a>	Latvia	2022-2025
Ágnes Erdősné Németh	Elected	<a href="mailto:erdosne@inf.elte.hu">erdosne@inf.elte.hu</a>	Hungary	2024-2027
Eljakim Schrijvers	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:eljakim+ioi@gmail.com">eljakim+ioi@gmail.com</a>	The Netherlands	non-voting
J.P. Pretti	Secretary	<a href="mailto:jpretti@uwaterloo.ca">jpretti@uwaterloo.ca</a>	Canada	non-voting

##### *Present online:*

Eslam Wageed	Host 2024	<a href="mailto:eslamwageed@gmail.com">eslamwageed@gmail.com</a>	Egypt	2020-2025
Azamat Seydaliyev	Host 2026	<a href="mailto:a.seydaliyev@digital.uz">a.seydaliyev@digital.uz</a>	Uzbekistan	2024-2027
Wolfgang Pohl	Host 2027	<a href="mailto:pohl@bwinf.de">pohl@bwinf.de</a>	Germany	2024-2028
Fredrik Niemelä	Elected	<a href="mailto:fredrik@niemela.se">fredrik@niemela.se</a>	Sweden	2023-2026
Sandra Schumann	Elected	<a href="mailto:sandra.schumann@ut.ee">sandra.schumann@ut.ee</a>	Estonia	2023-2026
Benjamin Burton	Elected	<a href="mailto:ab@maths.uq.edu.au">ab@maths.uq.edu.au</a>	Australia	2024-2025

## Welcome

Sun Teck welcomed everyone to these summer meetings for IOI 2025, both those here in Bolivia and those online in Europe, Asia and Australia.

## Confirmation of Minutes

After correcting a typo, the minutes for the GA meetings held during IOI 2024 were approved unanimously. Similarly, after adding two phrases, the IC minutes for meetings held during IOI 2024, later in September, in November and then in January 2025 were also approved unanimously. (Eslam and Wolfgang were absent.)

Eduard asked Ben if he is still preparing the minutes for the winter meetings from last year in Egypt. Ben said he is finishing them now and will send them to everyone before the end of the week.

## Report by President

Sun Teck began his report by outlining problems he has perceived and would like to address. These include restoring a family atmosphere because the IC and GA are divided, focusing on only IOI related issues, returning to the usual cycle of finding future hosts four years in advance, and avoiding a repeat of the organizational issues surrounding IOI 2025.

With respect to IOI 2025, Sun Teck outlined what has happened over the last six months. He said that given warning signs, the Office of the IOI made an emergency trip to La Paz in early December 2025 where it was discovered that very little had been accomplished in the previous three years. Sun Teck said that none of the dates, city, venues or budget had been confirmed. He described how the IOI President, Secretary and Treasurer visited potential venues, guided individual groups in their planning and set

deadlines. He stated that the trip was worthwhile even though these deadlines were not met and IOI 2025 was subsequently moved to Sucre, because it gave us insight into what was happening in Bolivia. Sun Teck said IC could have caught this earlier but moved quickly through presentations during IC meetings because IC was concentrating on other topics. He emphasized that we need to take care to ask tough questions about IOI 2026, IOI 2027 and other future hosts.

Sun Teck then reported that he has met with a new sponsor involved with coding training. They wish to provide scholarships to gold medalists, fund a coach training camp, assist with securing a host for IOI 2028 and help set up an IOI Alumni website.

Next, Sun Teck described the IOI 2024 Gold Medalist camp held in Hong Kong and Shenzhen, China in January 2025. He felt was a great success and nice bonus for the gold medalists. Sun Teck emphasized that Israel attended without restrictions and enjoyed the camp and wondered why this can't happen for IOI. Finally, Sun Teck discussed possible future locations for the camp hoping people will be agreeable to fixing a location earlier in 2025 so invitations can be sent much sooner than last year.

Sun Teck then repeated his goal to remove political and diplomatic matters from IOI. He referred to the many angry responses received following the announcement about sanctioning Israel and reiterated that he feels sanctions are not achieving anything. Instead, Sun Teck said he feels that the only consequence of sanctions is that they plant seeds of hatred among contestants. He added that we are losing sponsorship because of sanctions. As an alternative, Sun Teck showed IPhO regulation S2 saying he would like to see something similar for the IOI.

In conclusion, Sun Teck noted the heavy financial burden placed on hosts and mentioned a proposal he would like discussed later involving the injection of funds from the creation of a mirror contest.

Upon asking for comments and questions, Fredrik thanked Sun Teck saying this was impressive work and there are lots of good things happening. Fredrik said he strongly agrees with getting out of the politics idea, but IC works for the GA, not the other way around, and we need to respect this.

Ben commented on Sun Teck's initial slide and request that a focus be kept on IOI-related issues. Ben said that he suspects this was a comment about avoiding discussing sanctions as well as equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). He disagreed with the fact that these are not ideas related to the IOI and reminded IC that it received lots of unsolicited emails after Russia invaded Ukraine. He said IC did not create these issues. Ben said for the IOI, EDI is largely about setting up an environment where everyone feels welcome and accepted. He noted how uncomfortable women were made to feel at IOI 2018. Ben said that we can try to deal with these issues, and when possible, shield the GA, but sometimes issues must go to GA and who can then sometimes shield contestants. Finally, in reference to restoring a family atmosphere, he said there are people who don't come to some events because they do not feel welcome and cited an example. In summary, Ben said that he thinks there are IOI issues and IC are the people to deal with them.

Sun Teck responded by saying that when one talks about being inclusive, we need to think about all the IOI. He said that when an issue is raised about a minority group, we sometimes ignore the majority group and don't consider cultural and other differences. Sun Teck said the Code of Conduct was a good step and appropriately puts responsibility for these issues on team leaders.

Eduard reminded IC that in IOI 2022 if Russia was not sanctioned, then fewer countries would have attended the next IOIs. Agreeing with Ben, Eduard said he understands the desire to place IOI in a bubble and not deal with this conflict, but at the same time there is the reality that doing nothing also has impacts. Eduard said this leaves the question of what to do without alienating lots of members. He said he is uneasy moving forward with something like the IPhO regulation given the GA's recent decisions. In summary, Eduard said he understands the direction Sun Teck wants to go, but we need to think carefully about how to proceed.

Fredrik said we are now in a situation where the number of sanctions is going to explode, and he understands the spirit of Sun Teck's intended direction. He said he feels we may all be agreeing but coming at it from different directions.

Sun Teck agreed and said he believes more sanctions will be proposed (e.g. on Iran and the United States). He said that he will not force the issue but hopes IC will agree and then go to the GA for approval. He feels the IOI is in danger, it is going to get worse, and we should think logically instead of emotionally.

Sandra spoke to make two points. First, regarding minority rights, she said there are some basic rights that everyone at IOI should have, and that the majority cannot overrule. Second, she found out that even though IPhO has a "no politics" clause in their regulations, this doesn't mean that they do not impose any sanctions. For example, Sandra noted that in 2023 there were sanctions on Russia, as decided by their equivalent of the GA based on the notion that war is not the same thing as politics. She said this illustrates that a "no politics" clause in the regulations is not a catch-all for "there will be no sanctions on countries". Regardless, she says that for the IOI, ultimately the GA decides.

Sun Teck said he is not saying we should not protect the rights of minorities, and the Code of Conduct is one such major protection. However, he claimed that at the same time, we cannot ignore the majority and their various cultures. For example, he said one country cannot host IOI because of what was happening. He said that last year, it was proposed that hosts ensure the safety of participants. He said this certainty cannot be provided and we need to make sure everyone is included, not just the minority.

Eduard asked Sun Teck what the IOI's position should be when two different nations have a difference of opinion. As an example, he described a situation one delegation says the identity of another person does not exist. He said it is a cop out to say we want to respect everyone's opinions because such a neutral position may not exist. Sun Teck responded by saying he thinks the main objection over the last few years is that regulations do not solve these problems. He feels social problems should not and cannot be solved by the IOI.

Agnes agreed with Sun Teck claiming we cannot make the world better from inside the IOI.

Eduard gave another concrete example wherein a host criminalizes a group of people and contestants reach out asking about their safety. He asked how the IOI should respond. Sun Teck said we cannot ensure anyone's safety. Eduard responded to say that this will mean people do not attend and will be excluded. Sun Teck repeated that we simply cannot give 100% assurance about anything citing an extreme example. Ben responded to say we are asking that the IOI be a welcoming place, and nobody is asking for absolute guarantees of safety. He said this is about sending the right message.

There was then disagreement about whether anyone suggested a clause about ensuring safety. Ben and Eduard remembered it differently than Sun Teck.

Sun Teck accused Ben of violating his own Code of Conduct because it says that if you are saying something that makes others uncomfortable, you should stop. Ben responded to say that if IC feels he has violated the Code of Conduct, then this should be investigated, and he will step out while it is discussed.

Fredrik said he is confused about what we are disagreeing on and that compared to five years ago, we are in a better place: improvements have occurred, we have a Code of Conduct in place that is everyone agrees with, and harassment has decreased. He said we have different interpretations of words like "guarantee". Fredrik said he wants to say he appreciates the work Ben has done and appreciates what Sun Teck is trying to say.

Eljakim said he feels like we are repeating many previous conversations. He said there is a lot of emotion in the room and people are feeling personally attacked. He said that there is other business we need to get to. He repeated that we all agree on the Code of Conduct but perhaps disagree on what is and isn't a

welcoming environment. Eljakim said we must certainly do as much as possible to make people safe but there will always be local constraints and realities. He emphasized that we all care about the IOI.

### **Report by Secretary**

J.P. pointed IC to his written report for documentation of his regular activity since IOI 2024. He highlighted the Office of the IOI trip to Bolivia in December previously mentioned by Sun Teck. J.P. noted that new member Costa Rica intends to attend IOI 2025 as an Invited Observer, and we expect Ghana, Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates to participate in IOI with contestants for the first time.

New country applications were discussed next. There was a lengthy discussion about Puerto Rico which does not fit the definition of country in the IOI regulations. There was sympathy in the IC for this application and the group agreed to continue discussing possible adjustments to its definitions (e.g. using ISO codes; looking at IMO and IPhO), but the general sentiment was that IC needed stick with the IOI regulations for now. A vote was taken with Eslam abstaining, Azamat and Wolfgang absent and all other votes against the application from Puerto Rico.

J.P. said Qatar applied but as a misunderstanding because they intend to attend IOI 2025 as a paying guest. As a formality, IC voted to unanimously deny the membership application (with Azamat and Wolfgang absent) but it supported the plan for Qatar to attend as a paying guest if the hosts have the capacity.

J.P. raised the Schulze method. Ben volunteered to implement and integrate it with ioibot or to find someone to do so. In response to a question by Ben, it was agreed that providing verification was important and Fredrik volunteered to help with this. IC also agreed to allow for equally ranked options.

J.P. wondered whether group discussions must be held this year or if instead as much simplification of the IOI 2025 schedule should occur as possible. Nobody felt strongly that they must occur, but Fredrik volunteered to organize them if others deem them necessary.

There was then some discussion about distributing how each IC member votes on each motion. There was some debate about what “alongside” meant in regulation A3.7. In the end, it was agreed to simply start putting this breakdown in the minutes moving forward and to update the regulations to make this clearer.

### **IOI 2028 and other Future IOIs**

J.P. gave an update on potential hosts for IOI 2028 and IOI 2029. There is reason to hope we will have bids to consider during IOI 2025. Ben reminded him that the normal process is to issue a call for hosts regardless and so J.P. said he will ensure this is done.

### **Sponsorship**

Eljakim and Sun Teck provided an update on past, existing and potential sponsors. They said the IOI lost some sponsors because of the new sanctions, but we have also come to funding agreements with some new companies. They said agreements with existing sponsors are not all finalized yet, but we are confident and grateful for the expected support.

### **Finances**

Eljakim noted that the budget will be discussed during IOI 2025 as is usual. Speaking about finances more generally, he highlighted the following points:

- The IOI Foundation's total assets grew from approximately 160,000 EUR in December 2023 to approximately 180,000 EUR in December 2024. Total income was 4.4% more than expected and total expenses were 38.4% less than expected.
- Outstanding fees, both positive and negative, are relatively small with just over 200 EUR owing.
- The accounting firm continues to do an excellent job for a reasonable cost of less than 1000 EUR per year.

### **Eligibility Exception Request**

An eligibility request was received for a student on a gap year which J.P. explained precedent suggests should be denied. Eduard and Fredrik agreed saying that the regulations are clear. After a bit more discussion, IC voted unanimously to deny the request. (Wolfgang was absent.)

### **Report on IOI 2027 – Germany**

Wolfgang gave a brief report on IOI 2027 apologizing for his inability to be present in Bolivia or online for the most part because he is very busy preparing for EGOI 2025. He noted that the financial situation was already confirmed at the time of the initial bid. Since then, the date has been fixed (September 12-19, 2027), a very large competition venue has been booked, and representatives have been chosen for each of IC, ISC and ITC.

Wolfgang explained that their current challenges include booking hotels so far in advance because their availability is unknown at this point, finalizing the hiring of an agency for support, and detailing the organization between HPI and BWINF although this has been very smooth so far. He said one new hotel is being built that should be ideal. Answering a later question from Sun Teck, Wolfgang said he expects it to be at least large enough to hold all the contestants.

### **Third Host Team in 2026**

J.P. introduced a request from the hosts of IOI 2026 and Azamat excused himself because of the IC conflict of interest rule. J.P. said Uzbekistan has asked to have a third team at IOI 2026. Eduard explained the status quo with respect to first and second teams to Jhonatan who asked for the details.

Fredrik said that allowing an official third team is certainly not possible, but it is not clear what specifically is intended by the request. Ben reminded everyone that he already does not love the existence of second teams and so feels we need to deny this request, but he is open to an unofficial third team in a separate location. Eduard said he likes the existence of a second team but does not see sufficient reasons to consider a third team here. Sun Teck said the idea of a mirror site might be something that helps address the hosts' goals with this request. Eslam said we should accept the request because we need to be more flexible with the host and cannot always see their point of view. Ben said he feels especially strongly about not having additional teams appear and be acknowledged on stage during ceremonies.

A vote was taken. Eslam voted in favour of the request. All other votes were against granting the request. (Wolfgang and Azamat were not present for the vote.)

### **Host Scientific/Technical Committee Certificates**

J.P. reminded everyone of the email from Ali Sharifi in which he asked that HSC and HTC members be given certificates. It was confirmed that this not a regulation issue and up to future hosts, so this is really about communicating to hosts how IC feels. Eduard said he agrees with the sentiment and would go further to have members of HSC and HTC in the registration system and thus appearing on the IOI

statistics website. Everyone was supportive of encouraging certificates for these committee members and investigating having them added to the system and website.

### **Motion from GA at IOI 2024**

J.P. reminded everyone of the following motion from last year's GA: "The GA requests that the IC present proposals for semi-official remote participation of countries that are unable to attend the IOI due to financial or logistical challenges."

Agnes said remote participation makes the planning of the onsite IOI very difficult for the host.

Eduard agreed but said we need to respond because it came from the GA. He wondered if the mirror site idea might address this. Sun Teck said it could, but it is not a fixed thing. He agreed that a hybrid IOI is asking for too much.

Ben clarified that this request was about new countries which helps in the sense that it does not affect hosts ability to predict the number of teams in person.

Fredrik spoke against the general idea because he dislikes creating a second-class citizen of new countries that only compete online. Instead, he really prefers finding funding and sponsors to help them attend in person. He said he understands that this is about inclusivity but worries that the proposed arrangement could feel exclusionary in some sense.

Eslam expressed appreciation for the desire to welcome new members but said it must be in person. He worries about what will happen to the IOI if participation in person is no longer required.

Agnes agreed arguing that IOI is a social event so being together in person is very important. Also, she fears that if funding bodies learn that remote participation is possible, they may force it.

Ben reminded everyone that IC was asked to present proposals and it does not necessarily have to like or endorse them.

Eduard agreed and explained why he may in fact not endorse any proposals along these lines. He is concerned about what avenues might be in place for new countries to transition to in person attendance. A second concern is the burden it places on future hosts. With this noted, he said one option is to require the host to do a hybrid event (which has obvious issues surrounding proctoring and integrity) and a second option of extending the mirror site idea to be online or remote and possibly not offered annually.

Fredrik noted that the interpretation of "semi-official" in this proposal greatly dictates what is proposed. He said he doesn't necessarily agree that online offerings are a huge burden and that any burden does not necessarily have to be on the host. He wondered if the IOI Foundation could provide some funding for this.

Sun Teck said he is not convinced that all burdens on the host can be avoided citing GA meeting attendance as an example.

The discussion continued with IC discussions on interpretations of "semi-official", merging options and ideas together, and the origins of the mirror site idea. In the end, Eduard and Fredrik agreed to work on formulating proposals.

### **Current Host Report: Updates on IOI 2025**

Dushinka Flores gave a report on the upcoming IOI. She was accompanied by Eliana Onis Vargas and Jhonatan Castro was also present. The key points were:

- IOI 2025 will be held in Sucre, Bolivia from July 27 to August 3, 2025.

- Contestants will stay in Villa Bolivariana which has been booked. It is 15 minutes from the city centre and essentially next door to the competition venue. That venue is Complejo Deportivo Garcilazo which is a large multifunctional arena. It has been booked and there is a seating plan for 400 contestants with space for proctoring etc.
- The plan is for leaders and committee members to stay in hotels located near the main square in the centre of the city.
- There is a plan for equipment and technical infrastructure with an estimated delivery date of May.
- The Coliseum of the San Francisco Xavier University located in the city centre will be booked for GA meetings.
- A large convention centre was the planned location for opening and closing ceremonies, but it was later noted that alternative locations in the city centre are now being considered.
- There are plans for excursions and a preliminary schedule for the week has been drafted.
- A detailed budget exists.
- Next steps are to arrange registration and invitations, provide guidance on visas and immigration, determine guest arrangements and begin organizing and training volunteers.

Sun Teck thanked the 2025 hosts and suggested we go through the presentation slide by slide asking corresponding questions along the way.

Agnes expressed concern that the Bolivariana does not have heating, and the nighttime low will be around 5 degrees Celsius. Dushinka said extra blankets will be provided and they are exploring the idea of providing portable heaters. She also said large events are often held at this location with international guests without issues.

Ben requested details on airport pick-ups because it is always chaotic. Dushinka said they will be using minibuses on a rotating service instead of large buses. Moreover, she said staff from the ministry will be at the airports in Santa Cruz and La Paz. They will help with immigration but also provide precise information about how many IOI attendees will be arriving on the short domestic flight to Sucre.

Ben followed up to ask which entry airport people should book flights to. Dushinka recommended Santa Cruz over La Paz because it has a wider range of flight options to Sucre. Some confusion ensued regarding whether participants should also book domestic flights. It was eventually determined that they should, but organizers will offer support when possible. In particular, there was some discussion about working with the national airline to ensure sufficient flight capacity. Everyone agreed that communication on the issue of flights and airport transportation will be critical and needs to occur soon.

Sun Teck asked how onsite registration will be conducted because of the varied accommodation locations. After it was made clear that leaders do not want to be separated from their contestants at the airport, it was agreed that everyone (except perhaps committee members) would proceed from the airport to the Bolivariana for registration before leaders are then transferred to their hotels.

Eljakim and Sun Teck emphasized that beds for 240, as displayed, is not enough to cover the expected number of leaders, committee members, organizers, let alone guests. Others later helped calculate a good estimate of the number of beds required. Subsequent discussions revealed that no hotel rooms have been booked, and it was agreed that Eljakim and the hosts would sit down later in the afternoon to identify available rooms and make all the necessary bookings.

Answering Eslam, Dushinka said most rooms are singles or doubles and there are a few triples, but everyone will have their own bed. She said they will probably find a new hotel for guests.

Fredrik wondered what the guest policy and fee would be. Dushinka said this has not been determined yet. J.P. suggested that they consider not spending time on arrangements for tourist guests (e.g. family members), but this would need to be communicated clearly and there must be capacity for other types of guests (e.g. translators and extra chaperones). Fredrik and Eslam strongly agreed.

Sun Teck expressed the general sentiment that IC members present in Sucre were happy with the competition venue. Eduard and Fredrik made comments about ensuring there are enough bathrooms for all genders and that care will be taken about ensuring the integrity of the contest during bathroom breaks.

Answering Fredrik, Dushinka said the technical committees are reconsidering the seating plan to ensure there is more space between participants.

Fredrik asked for assurances that the 480 computers will be truly identical. Dushinka said this requirement has been communicated very clearly.

Eduard, Ben and Eslam clarified GA meeting requirements on seating, pigeonholes and power respectively.

Dushinka confirmed for Sun Teck that a company will arrange activities for contestants during the excursions.

Eduard pointed out some concerns with the schedule including breakfast arrangements on competition days, a missing analysis session, the need for leaders to be at the venue when the competition ends, and the length of GA 7. Ben noted the unusual timing of GA 3, and clarified the role of each GA meeting.

J.P. suggested that IC send him a list of their most significant concerns about the schedule (and more) which he would then collate and forward to Dushinka et al. It was agreed that the organizers will eventually circulate a revised schedule to IC.

Agnes noted that volunteers and their training is very important despite it not being addressed yet.

## **Report on IOI 2026 – Uzbekistan**

Sun Teck welcomed Azamat to present a report on IOI 2026. His colleague Muxlisa Khudayberganova joined him for the virtual presentation. The key points were:

- An organizational framework, key organizers, partners and committee members have been identified.
- The official budget has been presented to the government.
- A roadmap has been developed which outlines plans for venues, accommodations, branding, the website, media, communication, transportation and hospitality.

As before, Sun Teck suggested questions be asked as the report is revisited in order.

Answering J.P., Azamat said the dates are August 10 to 16, 2026. Upon being reminded IOI is normally eight days long when departure day is included, Azamat updated this to August 10 to 17, 2026.

Sun asked which venues and hotels have been booked. Azamat said the contest hall is confirmed but negotiations are underway for hotels, and they will be booked in the second half of 2025. J.P. later said that this could be too late and wondered if the end of July is an achievable deadline. Muxlisa explained the challenges with this. Sun Teck, J.P. and Eljakim emphasized that this is a significant worry.

Eduard asked for a breakdown of the schedule. Azamat said one has not been developed yet.

Eduard noted that the hotel capacity seemed excessive and wondered if all three options will be used or if they are just a superset of the available options. The answer was unclear, but there was an indication that all three options may be used because there could be only two contestants per room. Azamat did confirm that everyone will get their own bed.

J.P. said the report looks great but only reflects plans so IC will need confirmations and details. He stated the expectation for July is that we have an hour-by-hour schedule, bookings, and details such as seating plans, people per room, busses, meals, etc.



In response to Sun Teck, Azamat displayed a confirmation of the contest venue confirmation and a spreadsheet for the budget which Muxlisa guessed would be given final approval in 1 or 2 months.

Ben pointed out that the contest venue booking needs to account for time to set up and tear down. He suggested ITC be consulted about this. J.P. generalized this to emphasize that the IC is available to help and answer questions.

Sun Teck noted that the organizing committees seemed to consist of a lot of high-ranking people and the scientific and technical committees consist of people living all over the world. He wondered who will be doing much of the actual work and how much time they have available to devote to the project. Azamat and Muxlisa said there is capacity to get everything done. Sun Teck and Agnes asked that details such as who to contact for specific issues be made clear as soon as possible. It was emphasized that as many key organizers should attend IOI 2025 as possible.

## **Funded Projects**

Having taken over management of funded projects, Agnes lead the discussion of three proposals.

The first proposal was a request to fund enhancement of IOI participation from one member country. Sun Teck and Fredrik felt that the purpose of these projects is not to serve a single country and would be more comfortable if the focus of the project was establishing a scalable model for engaging underserved communities. The sense was that this was more of a possible side effect than the main gist of this proposal. Ben and Sandra agreed but wondered if there was another way to provide support for this country. Consequently, given how the proposal was framed, IC voted unanimously against funding this project. (Eslam and Wolfgang were absent.)

The second proposal was about creating a framework for customizable quiz competitions. Agnes said this is an ongoing project with many benefits for more countries. Fredrik concurred with the endorsement but questioned what the funding was needed for. A discussion followed about the appropriateness of funding pay for hours of work with most people agreeing that it was reasonable to compensate people for their time. Eljakim asked that we clarify details around licensing, send money to the underlying organization instead of specific people, and that funding be contingent on the software supporting translations to languages other than English. A bit more discussion followed about how much time the project would require and how to frame it as supporting a tool for IOI “identification” versus “selection” because its value lies early in the pipeline. IC then voted unanimously to seek more information about the breakdown of hours, licensing details and the payment plan, and then vote later upon receipt of answers. (Eslam and Wolfgang were absent.)

The third proposal was a request to support the development of a web IDE which requires minimal resources on the server and avoids issues that otherwise limit suitability for teaching and contest organization purposes. Fredrik said he feels this is worthwhile but wonders if the proposers have underestimated the time required to do the work. Eduard also spoke to support the proposal noting he likes that the tool might be useful on less powerful machines like Chromebooks. He also appreciated that the proposal included an analysis of existing tools. Licensing was discussed with people wanting to avoid the IOI community needing to pay subscription fees for the tool’s use down the road. The IC then voted with 6 votes in favour of accepting the proposal subject to the application of an agreeable license and the possibility of money being sent to one organization. Jhonatan and Azamat abstained. (Eslam and Wolfgang were absent.)

Fredrik spoke to say he thinks these projects are good, but don’t benefit the community in a great way and he would rather spend money to support a new country coming to the IOI.

J.P. thanked Agnes for helping administer funded project proposals especially with so little notice.

## **Existing Sanctions**

Sun Teck said he has had discussions this week about moving forward. He said we need to see what develops in the world leading up IOI 2025. He reminded everyone about the IPhO policy. He would like to have a discussion and perhaps move to remove sanctions.

Fredrik said he has strong opinions on this and has always opposed sanctions. However, he said he has a big problem overriding the GA because we work for them and not the other way around. He doesn't think IC can fix this. Sun Teck agreed and said he will mention this at the beginning of IOI 2025 and then have discussions during GA meetings.

Ben suggested that during these discussions we avoid the terms "politics" and "political" because what is politics to one person is invasion and many deaths to another. Fredrik agreed and mused about the phrase "matters outside the IOI".

Eduard said that he is personally very conflicted. He feels the two international conflicts are somehow different and others share this opinion. One thing he wants to avoid is the prospect of a simple majority removing all existing sanctions, and then the IOI losing 10 to 15 countries, largely from Europe because they will not attend if the sanctions on Russia are lifted. He would like some sort of compromise but does not know what this might look like.

Sandra highlighted that this is a very difficult problem to solve, and the IOI is not the only Olympiad with sanctions and wrestling with these issues. She agrees that this is something the GA needs to decide and discuss (if they wish).

Fredrik said that one thing we should do is codify sanctions because the status quo is incredibly dubious.

Ben warned about the dangers of framing the removal of sanctions as a response to the loss of sponsors and later cited specific history illustrating that the concern is not purely hypothetical.

Sun Teck said he has heard everyone and will continue to think about this including Eduard's suggestion of gauging various countries opinions on wording in an attempt to avoid alienating anyone.

## **Mirror Site**

Sun Teck reintroduced the idea that some countries have many strong students who have worked hard but cannot make the small IOI team. He said some are willing to pay for an alternative unofficial form of participation that will not affect official rankings or medal distributions. Instead, Sun Teck said they would get a certificate to say they get "equivalent ranking". He wondered if this could be a source of funding for host countries and acknowledged that we need to consider monitoring and proctoring.

Eduard reminded everyone that he and Fredrik have been tasked with writing this as a more formal proposal and suggested the discussion wait until then. Sun Teck countered that it would also be good for others to contribute.

Fredrik asked if we are referring to specific physical sites and who would run these mirror sites. Sun Teck spoke about at least one group interested in doing this in China.

Fredrik followed up to say there are two ways to do this. One way is to have a strong collaboration with other trusted organizations. He said this means there is little cost, but it is very unofficial because we don't have any control. He said the upside is income and downside is possible reputational risk. Alternatively, Fredrik said second way is to make it a little more official and have it more endorsed by the IOI but then we must proctor, and it requires resources. Fredrik asked Sun Teck what the main benefit of this idea is, and the answer was about giving more students the chance to participate.

Eduard agreed with Fredrik but said if the main motivation is increased participation, then this is probably not the best approach.

## **Hotels at IOI 2025**

Eljakim provided an update on accommodation bookings for IOI 2025. He said he is currently negotiating securing rooms for 330 people all in single beds within 200m of the centre square at a cost under 100,000 US dollars. He asked if IC is okay doing this.

Fredrik expressed concern and wondered why we are doing this. Eljakim said he is in total agreement and not what we want, but the situation is dire, and we need to ensure there are accommodations for everyone at IOI this year. He also noted that sponsorship money is sufficient to cover the total amount. Fredrik said he trusts this but still does not understand why the hosts were unable to do this themselves. Eljakim said this is a very fair question and he would be unable to support doing this a second time as Treasurer of the IOI. Answering Eduard, he said he does not feel there is a reasonable risk that the money could be outright lost. IC then approved Eljakim making these arrangements, provided the funds comes out of the sponsorship money set aside for this IOI.

## **Official AI Participation**

Sun Teck said anyone can search for OpenAI IOI 2024 results. He said we are now thinking about inviting other companies to “battle” for a fee and with consideration to issues such as human intervention.

Fredrik said he likes the idea, and it is borderline possible to do it this year. Eduard agreed especially given that ISC has voiced their opinion saying it is alright if there is substantial benefit to the IOI. Fredrik noted other pros (e.g. media buzz) and cons (e.g. possible negative publicity). Then he and Eduard agreed to make up a subcommittee with the task of formulating a concrete proposal.

## **Coach Training**

Eljakim presented a proposal to train IOI coaches with the aim of diversifying medal allocation across more countries. He gave a detailed plan with the first phase involving development of a curriculum during and after a workshop in September 2025. Next, he said the second phase would consist of launching and expanding the program in July 2026 followed by a third phase of assessment. He explained that the curriculum is aimed at countries with silver medals but no gold medals. He said the content would be free for all IOI countries including those not at the associated workshops.

In response to Fredrik, Eljakim said the cost to the IOI to initiate this is zero because a sponsor is on board. Sun Teck added that the sponsor is separately giving money for gold medallists.

Eljakim clarified three things for Eduard. First, once a curriculum is established it will also be available to contestants guided by their coaches. Second, the target audience consists of many countries of varying size and wealth. Third, the objective assessment criteria will be how many countries get medals.

## **Regulation Changes**

Eduard noted that with the support of Martin Mares, he is migrating the regulations to LaTeX with the source stored in a github repository.

Eduard then noted that instead of voting on specific motions, this year there are four issues he would like IC to informally discuss to determine if work should be done to formulate them as formal regulations. Those present then brainstormed ideas on each of the following topics.

### *1. GA existing outside of IOI*

Eduard explained that this is a longstanding issue without a consensus on who should have a vote outside of IOI: members of the GA at the previous IOI, whoever has access to IOI Registration System, or perhaps some other option.

## *2. Definition of “member”*

Eduard said that our regulations don't really define members from countries' point of view. He explained that whoever manages to get accepted by IC into IOI first gets exclusive recognition by the IOI and this can cause concerns if there are power struggles within the country, or if IC needs to select one out of multiple bids for a new country and the chosen bid overpromised.

## *3. Use of the term “Country”*

Eduard noted that there are two issues here. First, there is the question of using a different term to avoid potential issues. Secondly, there is question about altering the definition.

## *4. Encoding sanctions in regulations.*

Eduard explained that Fredrik asked for this to reduce occurrences of GA overriding the regulations. Despite not supporting sanctions, Fredrik feels that if they exist then there should be associated formal mechanics (e.g. when can they be considered, what their effect is, how they can be applied and how they can be lifted).

## **Gold Medallist Camp**

Sun Teck sought approval for IC to say “yes” to the tentative plan for the IOI 2025 Gold Medallist to be hosted by Fudan University in Shanghai in September. IC voted unanimously in support (Eslam, Sandra and Wolfgang were absent.)

## **Small/New Country Idea**

J.P. presented the draft of an idea allowing for a non-member country to send up to one contestant per year to the IOI as part of an existing member's delegation. Not knowing if he supported it himself, he wondered if IC supported the general direction.

Eduard clarified for Sun Teck that the idea is not to replace any of the four members of an existing member's delegation.

Fredrik said he felt the need for something to address very small countries, but this was not the right solution. He later said he prefers to accept very small countries as new members knowing they may entirely rely on a larger country for training and selection. He said that all that is needed is some organization and branding within the small country as well as the ability to send leaders. Reading the regulations carefully, Fredrik pointed out that it is not difficult to get around the issue of the three-year lapse rule.

In response to Agnes, J.P. said the definition of “small” is not part of the proposal at this point and it could apply to other situations.

Eduard said he feels this is a good direction and we can get into details later. Ben agreed saying he has seen similar ideas before and knows it will be difficult to formulate something everyone will be happy enough, but this seems solid enough even if it is not optimal.

Eduard suggested a few tweaks to the proposal such as not incorporating rules about the strength of an additional fifth contestant. He also expressed concern about Fredriks' alternative proposal.

After more discussion, J.P. said he will try to formulate this policy as a regulation, and he also agreed to reach out to one inquiring small country to see if they might meet Fredrik's “minimum standard”.

## **Other Business**

Speaking on EDI, J.P. noted that the IOI Ally program will run again in 2025. Answering Fredrik, Ben said there will be training for new allies. Ben also emphasized the need for more diversity among the existing allies. Upon being asked, Jhonatan said he believes a printout of the Code of Conduct and description of the IOI Ally program can be given to all participants, but he needs to check with the organizing committee. Sun Teck asked to be able to review the description of the program.

Ben said the Code of Conduct has been mentioned a few times; he is glad we have it and it serves us well, but it is not the end of the story; it does set expectations, but it is also a bit reactive in its genesis. Ben said there is still work to do in terms of leading and maintaining a positive culture. He also said that he has shared demographic data with all of IC so that when he leaves the committee, tracking of diversity in several dimensions continues.

## **Surname change request**

There were no objections to a surname change request Eduard raised. In this case, a past contestant has multiple names and picked the “wrong” one when at IOI. Eduard said he has seen the passport to verify the situation.

## **Removal from IOI statistics request**

Eduard explained that for reasons of personal safety, a past IOI participant has requested that their name be removed from the IOI Statistics website. After some discussion about the implementation of this removal, six IC members voted unanimously to approve the request. Eduard abstained. (Eslam, Sandra and Wolfgang were absent.)

## **University Fair**

On behalf of Eljakim, Fredrik presented the idea of a hosting a University Fair at IOI 2025 after Contest Day 1. He said the benefits include interest for students, confirmation of the value of IOI, and funding for the IOI.

Sun Teck asked how this will be published and how Universities would be selected. Fredrik said there isn't an answer to this yet.

J.P. said he thinks it would be best to at least offer the opportunity to institutions affiliated with members of the IOI community.

Agnes said this is a great idea and she seems many benefits.

All present IC members voted in favour of proceeding with the idea provided the hosts are okay with it. (Eslam, Sandra and Wolfgang were absent.)

## **Report from ITC (received offline after meetings upon request)**

There is a short report on the deliberations of the ITC.

Most importantly: We talked with the HTC about their plans for the networking, contest hall setup, servers etc. Overall, the plans are nicely prepared. We suggested some changes to avoid known problems and there are still many minor details that need attention, but we are not aware of any major issues.

Translation system: the feedback on the changes we did last year (different translation workflow and machine translation) was very positive, so we plan to keep it for this year with a couple of improvements.

Last year, we got several requests from team leaders if they can see the submissions their contestants make during the contest. So far, we just mailed all submissions to the leaders after the contest. For the future IOIs (not this one), we are considering extending the scoreboard so that team leaders can see the submitted source code of their students online.

As the websites of old IOIs are slowly disappearing, we plan to preserve the public rank lists at (a subdomain of) ioinformatics.org.

There is an ongoing discussion with the ISC on introduction of new programming languages (most importantly Python). We plan to present a proposal to the GA and solicit opinions. Based on the feedback we get; we will consider changes in 2026 or later.

We briefly discussed possibilities for AI participation with the ISC. We see ways of allowing it without putting significant burden on the host. However, the only setup which we consider fair is that the AI companies bring their hardware to the contest site and no outside communication will be allowed.

### **Report from ISC (received offline after meetings upon request)**

During the ISC+HSC 2025 March meetings, the task preparation timeline up to the IOI 2025 competition and the task preparation procedures were discussed, as well as the IOI 2025 rules which will essentially be the same as 2024 with minor clarifications/rewording. ISC reports that all the task preparation plans are satisfactory and according to usual practice, so the scientific aspects of IOI 2025 are looking good so far. During the meeting we stressed the importance of communicating the critical rules (e.g. no backpacks / phones allowed at all in contest area) to local volunteers and team leaders, as well as having an ISC member present in the contestant entrance to the competition hall in case that any last-minute decision must be made, and to ensure rule compliance in this critical step.

During the ISC+ITC joint meeting, ITC expressed very positive feedback regarding the HTC preparations of hardware and contest hall for IOI.

Regarding the AI participation option, we considered different formats and ITC very strongly insisted on the format of such competition being that any interested "AI contestant" should bring their own hardware onsite to the IOI, so that we work on accommodating and isolating them so that they only connect to the Contest Management System network and their hardware directly makes submissions during the contest under the same conditions as contestants. Thus, we started some interesting AI participation rules discussions within ISC during the March meeting and will continue working towards defining such rules in case we have AI participation in IOI 2025, and we are only considering this onsite "bring their own hardware" participation option as advised by ITC.