Minutes of IPhO 2023

IPhO 2023 was attended by 82 countries, 394 students, 155 team leaders, and 96 observers.

July 15 short meeting: the 2:00 pm meeting started at 2:05 pm

In attendance were 145, some came in after the counting.
The medal thresholds were announced as

35.6 Gold
25.2 Silver
17.4 Bronze
13.4 Honorable Mention

Three members, Andrezj Kotlicki, Jevgenij Chmeliov, and Stefan Peterson
would serve as the panel of three for appeals of moderation. The instruction for appeals is to send an email with appeals to all three members of the panel, with copies to the local board.

The regular IB meeting was held on July 17, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 8:08 pm by President Rajdeep Singh Rawat.

Iye Yasuhiro made a few announcements.

1. About covid 19: 5 people tested positive; isolated in their room.
2. Changes to the flight schedule will not mean changes to the bus schedule; must find own way to airport.
3. Certificates are available.
4. Not enough space for all leaders in main hall.
5. Please return power adapters.
6. Lottery will be held for remaining experimental kits.

President Rajdeep outlined the agenda:

1. Team Iran presentation
2. DIscussion on proposals
3. Approval of final results

In addition to recognizing Adrian Dafanei from Romania (who was recognized in the opening session), we note that Gagik Grigoryan Armenia, Nagiv Nebiyev Azerbaijan, and Dr. Khoi from Vietnam also passed away during the past year.

Presentation from Iran: July 21-29 2024, to be held in Isfahan

Video presentation, followed by a speech from the next organizer.

President Rajdeep provided an introduction to the proposals. The proposals were circulated in advance, and are attached at the end of these minutes.

Discussion of 1.1

IPhO Foundation description was presented by President Rajdeep, as well as the feedback from the AB.

1. Christian from Denmark: concern about persons on the foundation board need to be consistent across longer than a few years, and then skip a year, and so on.
2. Stefan from Germany: approve, but concerned that we need a foundation before we try to include it in the statutes; Rajdeep responded that this might be a chicken and the egg issue, concerned that we don't want a quasi IPhO thing, and this becomes difficult for sponsors to support, since it is unclear what the IPhO foundation reports to.
3. Jan from Poland: from a legal point of view, IPhO does not exist. Yet we have existed for 55 years. This would become a major change. This is a good direction, but it is a very important decision.
4. Tengiz from USA: would like to get some view from lawyers about this. Ought to have some feedback from legal experts.
5. There was a quick check for the quorum. There were 143 leaders in the room. Accordingly, 2/3 is 96 votes, majority is 72 votes

121 in favor, 20 against, so motion 1.1 passes

Discussion of 2.1

1. Person X: 5 rows back: what about other genders, or definitions of gender in future?
2. Iran: Top female in China IPhO 1995, and she has become a phenomenal physicist.
3. Barbara from Slovenia responded: the extra award is for the best, for half of the world population. Not just the basis of gender.
4. Person Y: 5 rows back. The definition of gender, and non-binary, need to be explicit.
5. Suggestion to replace gender with the word female? Decided not to implement.
6. Person Z from back of room: Concern about countries that cannot support this motion, and how this could be exclusion.

43 in favor, 98 against. The motion fails.

Discussion of 2.2

1. Barbara from Slovenia: this rule is not requiring any team to do anything, but is rewarding a team with an additional spot if that team has already found a way to do outreach. Commented on the limited number of females, and concerned that we continue to state that there is a problem, but we aren't taking any actions. Perhaps we could do this as a social experiment, and this would be a strong message down. We should ask the girls if she wishes to come as the 6th member, if she is offended.
2. Christian from Denmark: strongly opposed, think it sends the wrong message.

3. Saudi Arabia (UAE?): should be responsibility of the country that forms the team, not the IPhO.
4. Jannick of France: last year we made a proposal of gender diversity, and it was approved, and we need to do better as team leaders. The issue will not be solved with one measure, but with many steps and many efforts. Encourage
5. Pavel from Israel: Simpson's paradox. Bringing females because they are females work.

36 in favor, 106 against. The motion fails.

Discussion of 3.1

1. Jan from Poland: 2022 extraordinary meeting occurred, need a legal basis for calling. Okay if calling the meeting is 1/2 the AB;
2. Person A (front row): what are the topics that would be acceptable?
3. Tengiz from USA: also thinks that president alone should have initiative to call this meeting.
4. China: How to define leaders and the IB in between the meetings. How to deal with hanging leaders? Suggests that the secretariat makes the decision.
5. Stefan from Germany: we can stick to the tradition of defining the IB member.

108 in favor, 25 opposed; the motion passes.

Discussion of 3.2

1. Andrezj from Canada: sad to see proposal. The initiative of this process will not come from us, the leaders, but more likely from the ministries pushing the leaders to make the motion.
2. Pavel from Israel: against, we shouldn't kick people out because of a perceived threat.
3. Ruo Ping from China: we are not responsible for what our countries have done. Opposed to motion.

30 in favor, 112 opposed. The motion fails.

Discussion of 3.3

91 in favor, 39 opposed. Requires 96 to pass, so the motion fails.

Discussion of 3.4

1. Stefan from Germany: need clarify who belongs to IB, we need something!
2. Jan from Estonia: concerned about not long enough for the vote. The vote will be 2 minutes long again.

105 in favor, 34 against. The motion passes.

President Rawat shared the results after moderation:

Gold 37

Silver 74
Bronze 103
HM 54

Best experiment Colin Fan
Best theory: Hanhong Zhao, Feodor Yevtushenko
Best overall: Bowen Yu

On the vote to approve the results of the IPhO, 134 approve, 3 oppose; motion passes.

Announcements:

1. Special thanks to Switzerland for organizing Olympiad last year; standing ovation!
2. Lionel: thanks again for the recognition; and the support!
3. Thanks again to Iye Yasuhiro and his team.

This is the voting guide for the IB meeting. We will have a single vote on 1.1; followed by two votes, one on 2.1, and one on 2.2; then finally four votes, on 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. Some of the votes are modifying multiple sections of the Statutes and Regulations; in each case, the original text is black, the proposed additional text is red, and the proposed removed text is struck out and in blue.

For all of the following, at least **2/3 of the International Board must be present**. For changes to the statutes, a supermajority of at least 2/3 of those present must vote in the affirmative; for changes to the regulations, a simple majority of those present must vote in the affirmative. If a single motion is proposing changes to both the statutes and the regulations, then the more restrictive rule for passing applies. There will be (at least) 7 votes; it is possible to make minor amendments to these proposals from the floor, and it is possible to move to split a complicated motion into several questions, or move to combine several questions into a single motion.

You are encouraged to view the current statutes and regulations to contextualize the proposed changes, as the descriptions below only include the paragraph(s) being modified.

1 Proposal for an IPhO Foundation

1.1 IPhO Foundation and Operations

As these are being submitted as a single unit, the most restrictive rule for passing applies, and thus it requires 2/3 supermajority in favor.

Amend Statute §8

The long-term work involved in organizing the Olympiads and the operation of the IPhO Foundation is coordinated by a Secretariat for the International Physics Olympiads. This Secretariat consists of the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer. They are elected by the International Board for a period of five years when the chairs become vacant.

Amend Regulations to §8 with text that will follow the section on Election of members of Secretariat

Operations of IPhO Foundation

The operations of IPhO Foundation will be handled by IPhO Secretariat. The IPhO Foundation will seek the sponsorship from various sources which will be used for partial support in organization of IPhOs, similar to what was done in IPhO2022 in Switzerland, and for other various purpose such as to support participation of Teams in need of financial resources (Registration or Travel support), promoting new team's participation, sponsorship of special session to host organizer and maintenance of IPhO Secretariat. It will be responsibility of IPhO Secretariat to provide statements of activities supported and financial status of IPhO foundation to IPhO International Board at its last meeting during IPhO each year.

Motion passes: 121 in favor, 20 against out of 143; 2/3 threshold is 96

2 Proposal to Address Gender Imbalance

2.1 Special Prizes

Amend Regulations to §6 requires simple majority in favor.

Special prizes may be awarded. The participant who obtains the highest score should receive a special prize. The participant of other gender who obtains the highest score among participants of other gender(s) should receive a special prize.

Motion fails: 43 in favor, 98 against; requires majority

2.2 Alter team size in special cases

Amend Regulations to §3 requires simple majority in favor.

Each participating country shall send a delegation, normally consisting of (ordinarily) five or (extraordinarily) six students (contestants) and two accompanying persons (delegation leaders) at most. If the national team of five students consists of students of different gender, an additional student of gender, different from gender of majority within the team, may be included to the team. The contestants shall be students of general or technical secondary schools i.e. schools which cannot be considered technical colleges. Students who have finished their school examinations in the year of the competition can be members of the team as long as they have not commenced their university studies. The age of the contestants should not exceed twenty years on June 30th of the year of the competition.

Motion fails: 36 in favor, 106 against; requires majority

3 Proposal Regarding the Role of IB and Extraordinary Meetings

3.1 How to convene extraordinary meetings

Amendment of Regulations to §7 by adding a new paragraph before the first requires simple majority in favor.

Meetings of the International Board are held during the IPhO. Additionally, extraordinary meetings of the International Board must be convened by the president or his/her nominee, if required by at least 20% of the members of the International Board or at least two members of the Advisory Committee (§8). These additional meetings should be convened within four weeks from the time they were requested and be held remotely.

During the meeting of the graders where the final and most detailed version of the grading scheme is set, 3 members of the International Board will be present. They have the right to give advice to the group of graders in order to keep the grading scheme within the tradition of the IPhOs.

Motion passes: 108 in favor, 25 opposed

3.2 Exclusion or Suspension of Participation

As these are being submitted as a single unit, the most restrictive rule for passing applies, and thus it requires 2/3 supermajority in favor.

Amendment of Statute §7 by adding a new list item in paragraph 2

a. to direct the competition and supervise that it is conducted according to the regulations;

b. to decide on the suspension or exclusion from participation in IPhO for individuals, delegations or countries;

c. to ascertain, after the arrival of the competing teams, that all their members meet the requirements of the competition in all aspects. The Board will disqualify those contestants who do not meet the stipulated conditions;

d. . . .The subsequent items will also be renumbered. . .

Amendments of Statute §2 paragraphs 1 and 2

The competition is organized by the Ministry of Education, the Physical Society or another appropriate institution of one of the participating countries on whose territory the competition is to be conducted. The organizing country is obliged to ensure equal participation of all the delegations, and to invite teams from all those countries that participated during the last three years, unless directed otherwise by the International Board (§7). Additionally, it has the right to invite other countries. The list of such new countries must be presented to Secretariat of the IPhOs (§ 8) at least six months prior to the competition. Within two months the Secretariat has the right to remove, after consultations with the Advisory Committee (§ 8), from the suggested list the teams that in opinion of Secretariat or Advisory Committee do not meet the criteria of participation in the IPhOs. The new countries not accepted by the Secretariat or Advisory Committee may, however, participate as "guest teams" but such participation does not create any commitments with respect to inviting these countries to the next competition(s).

No country ~~may~~ should have its team excluded from participation on any political reasons resulting from political tensions, lack of diplomatic relations, lack of recognition of some country by the government of the organizing country, imposed embargoes and similar reasons. When difficulties preclude formal invitation of the team representing a country, students from such a country ~~should~~ can be invited to participate as individuals.

Amendment of the Regulations to §2 paragraph 4

The host country is only obliged to invite all delegations from countries that participated in one of the last three competitions, unless directed otherwise by the International Board (§7). It may refuse

1. applications for participation from any other country
2. applications from participating countries not belonging to the delegation as defined in §3 (observers, guests).

Amendment of the Regulations to §7 by adding a new paragraph after the first

During the meeting of the graders where the final and most detailed version of the grading scheme is set, 3 members of the International Board will be present. They have the right to give advice to the group of graders in order to keep the grading scheme within the tradition of the IPhOs.

The proposal to suspend a person, delegation or country from participation in IPhO should be made at least six months before the next IPhO by members of the International Board or the Advisory Committee from at least 10 countries. The proposal should include justification and the time of suspension. The decision to suspend a country should be taken by the International Board at least four months before the next IPhO.

Motion fails: 30 in favor, 112 against

3.3 The paramount role of the IB

Amendment of Statute §7 by adding a new final paragraph requires 2/3 supermajority in favor.

Whenever the statutes do not explicitly delegate the responsibility or power for a decision to another person or body, the International Board should make the decision.

Motion fails: 91 in favor, 39 opposed. Requires 96 to pass, so the motion fails.

3.4 IB membership during the year

Amendment of Statute §7 paragraph 1 requires 2/3 supermajority in favor.

The governing body of the IPhO is the International Board, which consists of the delegation leaders from each country attending the IPhO. The term of the members of the International Board starts at the opening ceremony of each Olympiad and finishes at the opening of the following Olympiad.

105 in favor, 34 against. The motion passes