International Committee

Minutes of the Meetings held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria
8–15 August, 2009

Present:

Arturo Cepeda	President	acepeda@auronix.com	Mexico	2008-2011
Krassimir Manev	Host 2009	manev@fmi.uni-sofia.bg	Bulgaria	2005-2010
Troy Vasiga	Host 2010	tmjvasiga@cs.uwaterloo.ca	Canada	2006-2011
Kanchit Malaivongs	Host 2011	sphon@ipst.ac.th	Thailand	2007-2012
Benedetto di Rienzo	Host 2012	benedetto.dirienzo@itctosi.va.it	Italy	2008-2013
Valentina Dagiene	Elected	dagiene@ktl.mii.lt	Lithuania	2006-2009
Eljakim Schrijvers	Elected	eschrijvers@eljakim.nl	Netherlands	2006-2009
Metodija Janceski	Elected	meto@ii.edu.mk	Macedonia	2007-2010
Rogelio Garcia Llano	Elected	rgllano@unsam.edu.ar	Argentina	2007-2010
Fredrik Niemelä	Elected	niemela@kth.se	Sweden	2008-2011
Richard Forster	Executive Director	forster@olympiad.org.uk	Great Britain	2008-2011

Krassimir Manev was present for items 8-9, 13-15, 20-25 and 28.

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1.   Welcome

Arturo Cepeda welcomed the committee to the meeting.

2.   Apologies

Apologies were received from Mohamed Youssef.

3.   Urgent decisions regarding IOI'2009

- Requests for exemption from the registration fee were received from Kyrgyzstan and Bangladesh, both of which were approved.
  - Exemption is intended to assist poorer countries who might otherwise be prevented from attending. It was pointed out that, in some cases, funding for the registration fee might be separate to that for team travel.
  - It was agreed that, in the future, the ED should write countries who receive exemption indicating that exemption one year did not imply exemption would be automatically issued in future years.
  - The regulations (E5.9.1) specify that exemption requests are received three months prior to the IOI. This year's requests had come in far later and countries were to be encouraged to apply as early as possible.
- The GA minutes from IOI'2008 would be presented to the GA, although there was some doubt as to their completeness.
- Agendas for the IC meeting and GA meeting were approved.

4.   Confirmation of Minutes (IC meeting 19–23 March, 2009)

The minutes were approved with no corrections.

5.   Matters arising
- The committee were requested to keep the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award a surprise.
- The ED indicated that the reason no newsletter had been produced (as per item 24 on the previous minutes) was that no material had been submitted. It was suggested that a future newsletter could also contain national, regional or online information. The ED will send a request for material to the GA mailing list.

6.   Report by President

Arturo Cepeda reported on his activities since the IC meeting in March:
*   The Chilean issue, discussed in item 28, was mentioned.
*   The President of Bulgaria would be attending this year's opening ceremony. The first time a head of state had attended an IOI.
*   An invitation to the governor of Novosibirsk (Russia) to attend the IOI had been sent, to assist with a potential Russian bid for the IOI. It was clarified that this was an invitation to attend the IOI and not an invitation to host an IOI.
*   The call for hosting an IOI had been sent out and had been successful. Whilst in the future we may need targeted calls, we should not need to do this for IOI'2014.

7.   Report by Executive Director

Richard Forster reported on the activities of the ED:
*   There had been frequent communication with Australia as regards their bid for IOI'2013.
*   Costs continued to be well within budget. Around £275 for travel (including airfare) since March and no other running costs.
*   The work commitment was currently around 1 day / month.

8.   ISC Report

Michal Forisek delivered a report (attached). In addition:
*   There had been almost no feedback on the IOI Syllabus and the ISC would raise this in a GA meeting.
*   As a result of the call for tasks, 4 people who had submitted tasks of a sufficient quality to be shortlisted were invited to the IOI and paid for by the Host.
*   No feedback was sent to those who submitted tasks that were not shortlisted. This would be addressed in the future.
*   The Host had prepared 12 tasks, there were 7 external submissions (of sufficient quality), 3 external submissions held over from previous years, and 2 'backup' submissions.
*   Detailed feedback was discussed. It was acknowledged that there's no clear 'silver bullet' to the problems with incorrect test cases. It was agreed that, where errors might affect the contest, the ISC and SC should work to minimise damage.
    *   The ISC will work with the ED to find an appropriate way of putting this into the Competition Procedures and / or Regulations, in preparation for IOI'2010.
*   The committee indicated that it would welcome suggestions for ideas for spending money in the budget.
*   The issue of additional programming languages was brought up. As a technical issue, the ISC will report back to the IC after considering the issue.
*   The publishing of results prior to the Award Ceremony, as currently prohibited by S6.11, was raised. There is no current consensus in the ISC, but it does agree that it would make the event more spectator friendly.
    *   It was agreed to have a discussion on the issue in the GA and take a poll.
    *   It was agreed that S7.4, permitting experimental regulations, will be used if it is desired to take this route for IOI'2010. The GA must be informed in good time.
*   A spectator friendly visual task is intended for IOI'2010.

9.   ITWG Report

Martin Mares delivered a report (attached). In addition:
*   The software library is a personal project and will continue if the ITWG position (up for election this year) changes.
*   The online system, which had existed in Korea and Athens for the submission of translations was raised. It was agreed that such a system was a good idea. One benefit was the ease of collecting the translation for scrutiny (S6.3) and archival purposes.

10. *Olympiads in Informatics* Report

Valentina Dagiene gave a report on the conference:
- 200 copies of the proceedings had been printed. This included an expected 75 countries, 29 authors, committees and additional copies for libraries.
    - Additional copies are sometimes requested, and it was suggested that people might be able to order (and pay for) such copies. There logistical difficulties of dealing with small orders was mentioned.
    - The possibility of printing in the 'host' country was discussed. It was agreed that Valentina's institute does a good job, and that it would be advantageous to keep a single repository across multiple years.
    - It was agreed that 400 copies of the proceedings would be produced next year.
    - Copies of the papers currently appear on the conference website. It was agreed that there should also be a single PDF containing the entire proceedings, so that interested parties could easily print complete copies of the proceedings.
- Work is progressing on getting listed in scientific databases.
    - It was agreed to trust the editorial board to decide on whether we should be producing proceedings or a journal.
- The editorial board has been extended. This has helped improve the quality, with this year's papers typically having 3 or 4 reviewers.
- 22 abstracts were submitted, from which 20 papers were submitted and 14 accepted.
- It was agreed that the call for papers should be as early as possible.
- It was suggested that the a list of national and regional olympiads could be included. Whilst it was not agreed that such a list should appear in the proceedings, the ED will request such information from the GA.
- It was agreed to produce a flyer for the conference, suitable for distribution when traveling or at conferences.

11. IC / ISC voting procedure

- The document discussing approval voting (attached) which had previously been circulated and discussed by email, was introduced and explained by the ED.
- It was pointed out that two potential issues with approval voting were tactical voting and the Burr Dilemma (the increased probability of ties). In addition to the positive points raised in the attached document, the semantics of approval voting were seen as positive.
- Instant-runoff voting, which had been discussed by email, was again mentioned. Several members added to that discussion, indicating that they felt the multiple languages of the GA would cause difficulties. It was mentioned that this system was less susceptible to tactical voting.
- The committee agreed that the proposed approval voting system would work and it was approved. The committee would consider how well it worked this year.

12. Regulations

- Two queries had been received from the GA regarding S2.5 defining contestants. Specifically, whether the regulation was intended to exclude those students who had not yet started university but who were not studying during the given period; e.g. those taking a year out or doing national service.
    - In the past, the IC had decided that the primary intent of the rule was the enrollment in secondary education and not the age limit. I.e. students post secondary education, even if not yet in university, were not eligible.
    - Separate issues were raised as to whether students in alternative forms of secondary education (such as home schooling or remote learning) were eligible. It was agreed that such students were eligible.
    - A vote was taken to determine whether the intent should remain focused on 'secondary education', 'pre-university' or just 'under 20'. It was agreed, by 2/3 of the committee, that the existing interpretation of 'secondary education' was correct.
- In addition to the regulation changes already put before the GA, it was agreed to add a change to S2.6 extending the Invited Observers from Future Hosts to IOI'n+2 (x1).

13.   IOI Logo

- No logo submissions had been received from the GA. 7 new submissions were received from Mohamed Youssef (attached), in addition to his previous submission in the style of the current IOI trophy.
- Members of the committee offered brief opinions on the 7 new submissions, before a vote was taken to see which logos should be discussed in more detail. Three of the logos (numbers 3,4 and 7) were dropped. At this stage the committee, with a single exception, were in favour of changing the logo.
- On recommencing the discussion later in the week the previous suggested new logo was also presented and rejected. Another vote was taken on whether to change the logo and, on this occasion, the committee voted to keep the original.

14.   Website

- The contact information for national contests needs to be updated. There are around 15 enquiries per year, coming through the website, from students requesting such information.
- It was agreed, to avoid domain squatters, that Troy Vasiga would register ioi20xx.org through to 2020. He would also investigate the possibility of acquiring ioi.org.
- Some information on the website is hard to find, so some redesign will take place.
- It has been suggested that the website might host blogs, so that countries could blog about their IOI experiences. It was agreed that such IOI'n specific blogs were more appropriate for an IOI'n website.
- Valentina Dagiene and Troy Vasiga would discuss the possibility of putting audio records from the conference on the website.

15.   CoLib

- Almost all countries have registered on CoLib.
- In the run-up to the IOI some communication was done directly with those countries who had not yet registered.
- All data will be passed on to the IOI'2010 organisation.
- It was agreed that Eljakim Schrijvers and Fredrik Niemelä would assess the current CoLib system and make a recommendation to the committee.

16.   Awards

- The two trophies (top student and distinguished service award) had been lost in transit. It was agreed that the Atanasov award, which had been produced by the Host, would be given to the top student, and that a trophy would be sent after the IOI to Rob Kolstad (recipient of the distinguished service award).
- Pieter Walker would present the IFIP award to the youngest medal winning student.
- The issue of recognising members of our own community was discussed.
    - The majority of the committee felt that it was appropriate for the IOI community to recognise the IOI contributors, and for the Host country to recognise its contributors.
    - If the IOI community tried to recognise the Host country's volunteers there was a danger of missing some people. The IOI community could thank the Host country, who could ensure they thanked all the appropriate Host volunteers.
    - An appropriate 'symbol' would be something like an IOI'n specific lapel badge / pin, to be given at the leaders' dinner.
    - There was some debate as to whether this should just include the ISC, or perhaps be extended to include the IC and those who had submitted tasks. It was acknowledged that the different committees brought different skills and contributions to the IOI.
    - It was agreed that the President should thank members of the ISC and IC at the leaders' dinner, and that money should be allocated in the budget.
- The committee discussed whether the proposed Atanasov award should be a regular award of the IOI.
    - Suggestions had included top female, exceptional solution, best received task and best delegation leader. The committee expressed doubt in all these suggestions.
    - It was noted that we were not in a position where we wanted to give a new award, rather in a position where we had a potential trophy in need of an award.
    - It was agreed that we would not look for something to award, but that it something arose in the future we would re-consider.

17.   Future developments workshop

Wolfgang Pohl was invited to attend the IC for the following item.
- A panel discussion at the end of the *Olympiads in Informatics* conference had brought up several potential topics for a workshop (see GA minutes). In particular, communication and community.
- It was agreed that topics should be selected prior to the workshop and that attendees should come having done some preparation.
- Schloss Dagstuhl, in Germany, was suggested as the venue for the workshop, having been used successfully in 2006. Wolfgang Pohl will make enquiries as to availability.
- A full week (Sunday - Friday) was suggested, for about 20 people.
- Wolfgang Pohl will do the organisation, but will require at least one person per 'topic', who must commit to doing some research.
- Travel assistance for delegates would be considered on an individual basis.
- The workshop was approved.

18.   Financial report for preceding year

Eljakim Schrijvers presented the previous year's financial report (attached).
- Only 69 registration fees were recorded, with no current indication as to which countries did not pay.
- A formal asset / liability balance sheet was requested for future years.
- The accounts were approved.

19.   Budget

- It was agreed to maintain the same budget for the President and ED.
- Website funding would continue. Whilst the rejection of a new logo meant that less work would be required, previous spending on the website had been 'design work' and not 'implementation work' so more work was anticipated.
- Web conference funding was no longer necessary, due to modern technology.
- €4000 was budgeted last year for a workshop and this amount would be repeated this year. The combined €8000 to be spent on the future developments workshop in 2010.
- The conference proceeding budget would be increased to €5,500, since the number of printed proceedings was to increase from 200 to 400 and leaflets are to be produced.
- Technical funding (ITWG, Info System, Task Archive and the ISC Fund) will remain at the current level. The ISC will be encourage to use this funding, where appropriate.
- €500 would be added to the budget to cover the recognition of members of our own community (as per item 16).
- Funding for the IOI Foundation was added.
- It was pointed out that, despite the levels of funding in the budget, it was likely that much of the work would be continued by volunteers.

20.   Registration Fee

- It is important to keep registration fees static for several years, since some delegations have difficulties in justifying changing fees to ministries.
- If registration fees are a problem for a delegation we do have a mechanism for requesting exemption.
- It was agreed to recommend a registration fee, at the same value as in recent years, i.e. €200.

21.   IOI'2008 Final Report (inc. registration receipts)

No report was received from Mohamed Youssef (who was absent).

22.   Report on IOI'2009

- The theatre where the closing ceremony was to be held (unless it rained) is a second century Roman ampitheatre with no stairs. Some concern was expressed over the safely of the location and Krassimir Manev promised to check out the facility, before the event, to check on safety.
- 78 delegations, plus 3 observing countries, were present.
- 75 delegations had paid the registration fee, 2 had been granted an exemption and the host's delegation had not yet paid.
- The Present Host is not obliged to receive Invited Observers from the previous year's host. The discovery of this by the IOI'2009 funding group in the week prior to the olympiad had led to a problem with the attendance of some representatives from the previous year's host, for which Krassimir Manev expressed his apologies.

23.   Report on IOI'2010

In addition to information previously reported by Troy Vasiga (and recorded in earlier minutes):
- Accommodation has now been booked.
- The two observers that had been brought this year covered technical and logistics.
- The March IC meeting date was not yet fixed. There is a 'March break' when schools are on holiday, and the organisation is keen to avoid these dates.
- The Governor General has been asked to the IOI, but only makes commitments 6 months in advance. It was suggested that she might be asked to the March IC meeting.
- A possible excursion on the day between competition days would be to the shore of one of the great lakes. The big excursion is planned to Niagara Falls, around 100km from the campus.
- Registration should be available in April. There will be a deadline, which will be fixed after communication with the accommodation people.

24.   Report on IOI'2011

Kanchit Malaivongs gave a presentation on IOI'2011 (attached). In addition:
- A mock-up contest will be run next year, on a smaller scale to the IOI, including pre-contest activities such as registration.
- This year there are around 10 observers. Next year it will be fewer.
- Guides will be selected from university students since they should have stronger English.
- It has not yet been decided whether the princess will be invited, since this will lead to a lot of security and limitations on photography and movement.
- Dates are still not fixed.
- Computers will be purchased and then passed on to schools.

25.   Report on IOI'2012

Benedetto di Rienze gave a presentation on IOI'2012. In addition to previously reported information:
- €500,000 had been raised so far.
- The venue has not yet been fixed, but is still currently the Milan region. If the IOI is held in August, Milan might be the venue; if it is held in September it will be out of Milan.
- The purchase of PCs and subsequent sale to schools is being considered.

26.   Potential Hosts

- A call for future hosts had been distributed. Two countries had been interested in 2013: Russia and Australia. A formal bid was only received from Australia.
- Some interest had been expressed for hosting IOI'2014 from Russia, Chinese Taipei and Kazakhstan (via Valentina Dagiene). No letters of intent had been received yet.

27.   Interview of Potential Hosts for 2013

A presentation supporting Australia's bid for 2013 was given by Ben Burton and Peter Taylor. In addition to the comprehensive bid documentation (attached):
*   Visas would be required for most countries, but no specific problems were expected.
*   The IOI will take place in July, since this is the available month for the university. It could, potentially, be held earlier in July than the date given in the bid documentation.
*   Government support for olympiads is bipartisan.

The committee unanimously agreed to nominate Australia as host for 2013, subject to GA ratification.

28.   Chile

*   Arturo Cepeda had spoken with Alexander Velkov and the UTFSM. Negotiations were started, but broken off.
*   UTFSM was only able to commit to funding their own observers, not the students, and so withdrew from the process for this year.
*   The invitation for Alexander Velkov to attend was just for this year.
*   Arturo Cepeda will, as a first step, get in contact with the Ministry of Education (who had withdrawn from the process for IOI'2009).

29.   Legal status of IOI

*   The requested contributions to a risk assessment report had not been forthcoming. A questionnaire had been sent to Past, Present and Future Hosts.
    *   There was consensus that this would make holding a bank account easier.
    *   90% of those polled felt that fundraising would not become any easier.
    *   There was consensus from Past Hosts who responded that being a legal entity was not necessary and from future hosts that they would be able to run their IOI if we were not a legal entity.
*   Eljakim Schrijvers had consulted a European lawyer who confirmed that we would have a legal right to go to Germany and recover the IOI's money as currently held (with the German computing federation). Doubt was expressed by some members of the committee as to this legal advice.
*   Enquiries had suggested that an IOI Foundation could be established, at a cost of around €1000 per year, and a corresponding IOI bank account established.
*   It was agreed, that Eljakim Schrijvers would establish such a Foundation on behalf of the IOI. The goals of the foundation will be circulated to the IC prior to its establishment.

30.   Other business

*   The ED was asked to write to Mohamed Youssef to express their thanks for his work whilst on the IC.
*   The ED will make enquires as to the future dates of the other major science olympiads.
*   Judging Procedures, as specified in S6.10, were not made explicit this year.
*   It was agreed that it was more appropriate to apply the curfew (pre-competition days) to students rather than delegation leaders. In particular, loosing access to online resources such as dictionaries, is an unnecessary inconvenience.
*   The ED announced that the magazine *Wired* had been in touch, and it was agreed that he would liaise.