The Olympic Studies Centre

Guidelines for Academic Olympic Studies and Research Centres

Summary

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1. Background

Since the 1980s, a growing number of universities have responded to the academic interest in Olympic-related topics by creating dedicated university-based Olympic Studies and Research Centres (OSRCs). These centres aim to promote teaching, research, publications and conferences about the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games with a humanities or social sciences perspective.

The IOC Olympic Studies Centre (OSC) maintains regular contact with these academic initiatives, and facilitates communication and opportunities for cooperation between them.

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework in which the OSRCs can function, ensuring full alignment with the Olympic Charter while respecting their independence in terms of academic activities.

As such, the objectives of these guidelines are to:

- support the academic OSRCs by providing a well-defined framework to those that consistently contribute to the teaching, creation and/or dissemination of Olympic knowledge;
- underline the independence of the academic OSRCs vis-à-vis the IOC and the Olympic Movement;
- regulate the use of the Olympic properties by the academic OSRCs and protect the Olympic brand, in accordance with the Olympic Charter; and
- promote the network of the academic OSRCs, and foster collaboration and exchange among its members.

To meet these objectives, these guidelines provide a clear framework and rules concerning:

- the definition of “academic Olympic Studies and Research Centres”;
- the requirements in terms of institutional support;
- the requirements in terms of activities; and
- use of the Olympic properties by the academic OSRCs, and their partners and products.

2. Definition of an academic Olympic Studies and Research Centre

For the IOC, an academic Olympic Studies and Research Centre is a **university-based initiative** that functions thanks to the contribution of professors, researchers and (postgraduate) students, and whose mission is to create and/or disseminate Olympic knowledge, mainly for university students. The main activities of the OSRCs are regular academic teaching and/or research activities typically embedded within the academic courses/programmes, together with dissemination activities such as publications and conferences. Olympic chairs fitting this definition are also considered academic OSRCs.

To avoid confusion, note that we do not consider as academic OSRCs other organisations/institutions, such as:

- the IOC Research Centres for the Prevention of Injury and Illness, which conduct research in partnership with the IOC Health, Medicine and Science (HMS) Department. For further information on these Centres, see here.
- National Olympic Academies, which are devoted to "Olympic education and culture" but are not university based,
- documentation centres, which exclusively manage Olympic-related written resources;
- university-based initiatives that do not specifically focus on Olympic-related research or teaching in a consistent manner;
- university-based athlete training centres that conduct research on sports performance; or
- public/governmental administrations promoting Olympism.

3. Requirements

3.1 Institutional requirements

In order to be recognised by the IOC Olympic Studies Centre as an academic OSRC actively engaged in Olympic studies, and to be included in the network of academic OSRCs (see here the list published on the IOC website), academic OSRCs need to fulfil the following conditions:

- Comply with the definition of an academic Olympic Studies and Research Centre, as detailed under section 3 above;
- Receive the endorsement of their NOC (official letter signed by the President or Secretary General);
- Have the financial and logistical support of the university/faculty that hosts the academic OSRC to deliver an annual programme of activities (official letter signed by the appropriate university authority); and
- For an initiative in a host city aimed at contributing to the legacy of the Olympic Games, receive written confirmation from the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (OCOG) that the initiative is in line with the legacy plan, and that clear coordination has been established with the OCOG, the NOC and other parties involved in the legacy governance.

3.2 Activity criteria

In terms of activities, the academic OSRCs must fulfil the following criteria:

- Organise regular academic teaching, research and/or dissemination activities embedded within the academic courses/programmes covering topics directly related to Olympism, the Olympic Games and/or the activities of the Olympic Movement.
- At the request of the IOC OSC, send an annual activity report with a summary of the activities organised during the previous (academic) year, together with the programme of activities for the following (academic) year.

4. Further information

Academic representatives interested in creating an academic Olympic Studies Research Centre and requesting to be included in the network of OSRCs are invited to write to studies.centre@olympic.org. We will be happy to send you additional information concerning the “Guidelines for the academic Olympic Studies and Research Centres”, provide you with the “Form for the Academic Olympic Studies and Research Centres” to be completed and answer any questions you might have.

To find out more about the activities and collections of the IOC Olympic Studies Centre, please consult our website.