International Olympic Case Study Competition

Elite athletes as ambassadors of International Sports Federations to promote their sport and its values

Background and Context

2023/2024 Competition

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1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Sport and physical activity play a vital role in communities and people’s lives across the globe.

In the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sport is recognised not only for its important contribution to health, education and social inclusion, but also for its unique potential to contribute to sustainable development and promote peace and human rights (see Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and International Day of Sport for Development and Peace).

This is in line with the vision of the Olympic Movement, which is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating young people through sport practised in accordance with Olympism and its values.

The Olympic Charter defines the Fundamental Principles of Olympism as:

1: Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

2: The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

As world governing sports bodies, International Sports Federations (IFs) of Olympic sports have a mission (among other things) to ensure the development of their sports throughout the world and to contribute to disseminating Olympism and Olympic education (Olympic Charter (§26, 1.2 and 1.3)).

The performances of world-class athletes at the Olympic Games and world championships showcase human excellence and sportsmanship, and inspire the audience to engage in sport and live by the principles and values of Olympism: excellence, friendship and respect.

These three principal Olympic values, which lie within Olympism as a framework for the advancement and development of humans and societies, ultimately summarise the humanistic mission of the Olympic Movement.
2. THE CASE STUDY CHALLENGE – “ELITE ATHLETES AS AMBASSADORS OF INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS TO PROMOTE THEIR SPORT AND ITS VALUES”

Through the global reach and visibility of the Olympic Games and other international sports competitions, IFs have the unique opportunity to reach young people around the world and try to attract them to their sport, as grassroots participants, and as competitive athletes, fans and spectators.

This opportunity can be leveraged thanks to the contribution of Olympic athletes, who can serve as positive role models and ambassadors for their IFs.

To leverage elite athletes in an impactful way, the IFs require a clear strategy, which helps them select the most suitable athletes and educate them to be ambassadors of the sport and its values, and sets out a relevant framework to engage with them for physical and digital out-reach programmes. The athletes may use their social media platforms or be called upon to participate in promotional events or campaigns, media interviews or public speaking engagements.

In this edition of the Case Study Competition, the students will conduct a role play exercise in which they consult an International Sports Federation (IF) to build and implement an “Elite Athlete Ambassador Strategy”. The objective of the six-year programme is to maximise the global reach towards a young population, promote the sport and its values, and strengthen the positioning of the IF as a promoter of positive and sustainable human and social values.

The students work in groups and are challenged to work on a strategy-building exercise, with all phases from diagnosis, strategy, to operations and controlling the execution.