International Olympic Committee

FACTSHEET

THE YOG – VISION, BIRTH AND PRINCIPLES

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YOG vision and objectives

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) vision is to inspire young people around the world to participate in sport and encourage them to adopt and live by the Olympic values and become ambassadors of Olympism. The YOG align with Coubertin's vision, where education serves as the foundation of Olympism.
The idea behind the YOG is to organize an event, to educate, engage and influence young athletes and other young participants, inspiring them to play an active role in their communities.

In essence, the YOG's main focus is to deliver an experience on and off the field of play which provides skills to the athletes both for their sporting career and beyond sport. The YOG are meant to inspire and empower young athletes and other young participants. Within the Olympic Movement, the Youth Olympic Games are a catalyst for sporting, educational and cultural initiatives for young people. In addition, the Youth Olympic Games aim to be the leading component of a network of youth sporting events, including World Youth Championships and Continental Youth Games.

Main objectives of the YOG

The four objectives of the YOG are:

1. Bring together the best young athletes for high level global multi-sport competition at a purpose driven sports festival that includes cultural and educational activities;
2. Promote cultural exchange and the Olympic values, including non-discrimination, fair play and the pursuit of excellence;
3. Be a catalyst for innovation and an incubator for new concepts such as new sports and competition formats, youth education initiatives, more sustainable event delivery models, the creation of programmes that can be shared digitally

Birth of the YOG

The Youth Olympic Games were created on the initiative of the former President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Jacques Rogge. The IOC Executive Board unanimously welcomed the President's idea on 25 April 2007. The 119th IOC Session later approved the project in Guatemala City, and the YOG were finally able to take shape.

Concept

The YOG are the ultimate multi-sporting event, inviting the world's best young athletes aged between 15 and 18 years. The YOG are centred on a "Compete, Learn & Share" experience that is delivered in a purpose-driven sports festival format. It strives to reach and engage as many young people as possible by integrating sport with educational and cultural activities.
For the young elite athletes, the YOG are a step in their learning pathway, enhancing their long-term athletic development and career opportunities both inside and outside of the sporting arena. Local youth are encouraged to use the YOG to discover new passions, develop a better understanding of key topics, develop new skills, take on new responsibilities and ultimately become ambassadors for sport and the Olympic values.
There is a summer and a winter edition of the YOG. The Summer YOG are staged in the years of the Olympic Winter Games and vice versa. The period of the Games is adapted to the climate and sports calendar of the host city (region). The two first editions were staged in Singapore in 2010 (Summer) and in Innsbruck 2012 (Winter)

YOG target groups

The YOG priority target groups are:

- Young elite athletes – to provide them with skills and tools to: develop and support their future

career, empower them to become ambassadors of the Olympic values, and encourage them to play an active role in their communities;

- The athletes' entourage (coaches and parents) – to motivate them to always act in the best interests of the young athletes, and to help them support and reinforce the wider learning and experience of the young athletes at the YOG;
- Local youth in the Host City, Host Region and Host Country – to inspire them to participate in sport and physical activity and stay in organised sport. The festival activities at the YOG, which include sport, education and cultural elements, should be developed for local youth with this objective in mind.

Principles

Host Selection Approach:

The revised Host Selection Process has four key features:

1. **Streamlined and shorter process:** The formal Candidature process has been shortened to only four months with the compilation of a Candidature Report being undertaken by the IOC, rather than each Candidate party.
2. **The IOC has commissioned research and also completed its own analysis:** By sourcing its own feasibility assessments, the IOC has minimised the scope of work and expenditure of candidates.
3. **Open dialogue and flexibility to ensure strategic alignment:** The IOC conducted a site visit to each Candidate and has held numerous interactive working sessions at its own cost.
4. **Partnership working with greater support and expertise from the IOC:** During the Candidature Phase the IOC creates an Outline Plan of Sports and Facilities in consultation with each Candidate Party. The Outline plan sets out an overview of the potential facilities/sites to host the YOG. In the co-construction period, the IOC and Olympic stakeholders collaborate with the elected Host to jointly develop a master plan, concepts and budget that aligns to strategic objectives and is adapted and optimised for the local context.

As part of the revised Host Selection Process, the IOC works collaboratively with each Candidate to develop an Outline Plan of Sport and Facilities (Outline Plan). The Outline Plan is a potential master plan, and contains a map of the facilities, accompanying photo files, and a detailed table listing the potential allocation of sports and key facts about each facility, including usage, ownership and key dimensions as applicable.

Duration: The Summer and Winter YOG last from 10 to 14 days

Age groups: All YOG athletes must be between 15 and 18 years old on 31 December in the year of the YOG. However, depending on the sport and discipline, specific age groups are defined. This is done by the relevant International Federation (IF) responsible for the sport, in close collaboration with the IOC.

Participants: There are currently approximately up to 4,000 athletes for the Summer Games from all (or almost all) of the 206 NOCs; and up to 1,900 athletes from 80 NOCs for the Winter YOG. To maximise the reach and impact of the YOG for young elite athlete development and to increase the level of competition, the sports programme for YOG 2024 has been designed around waves of athletes. Applying waves of athletes has provided an opportunity to optimise the number of athletes at YOG 2024 while avoiding increased costs to the city. The young athletes must stay in the host city for the whole duration of the YOG or, for 2020 onward, for the duration of their wave at the YOG, in order to make the most of the activities offered in the framework of their experience on and off the field of play. The conditions for qualifying to compete in the YOG change from one sport to another depending on the IFs and NOCs.

Sports programme: Following the debrief of the Winter YOG Gangwon 2024, where the IOC examined the evolution of the YOG and emphasised the need to deliver Games that totally fit the local and regional context. This revised process will see a tailored sports competition programme designed for each edition of the YOG, created in close collaboration with the Organising Committee (YOGOC) and the International Federations (IFs), based on the position taken by the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) General Assembly earlier this year, to ensure the YOG retain their position as an elite multisport competition

and sport engagement platform. The YOG Dakar 2026 will be the first to benefit from this.

Venues: For the YOG, the following principles, are applied:

- No new permanent venue should be built for the sole purpose of hosting YOG events.
- The use of existing venues should be realistic and consider affordability in terms of the efficiency of the overall operational footprint, impact on direct and indirect operating costs and the contribution to the overall YOG experience.
- Hosting events outside of traditional self-contained venues and/or in urban environments that showcase local youth-specific locations or landmarks is considered for specific sports, disciplines or events in order to enhance the YOG experience.
- The use of temporary solutions should be realistic and affordable (fit for purpose), with due consideration of options for simplified solutions that are appealing to young people.

During the YOG, athlete competition will take place alongside athlete education and local youth activities. These locations are the "beating heart" of the YOG and are known as Festival Sites.

The Compete, Learn & Share experience: The YOG are structured around a "Compete, *Learn & Share"* experience. This is a unique blend of sporting, cultural and educational activities offered to the YOG target groups, offering a unique and transformative experience for all participants.

The Athlete Education Programme: For the young athletes and their entourage (coaches and parents), the YOG represent a unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience to acquire key sport and life skills and to celebrate the spirit and values of Olympism. For the athletes, experiencing educational and cultural activities and taking part in the athlete competitions are of equal importance and benefit. The Athlete Education programme is **structured around three central themes**; Athlete Performance, Protect the Clean Athlete and the Athlete Beyond Sport

Youth Olympic Village (VIL): It accommodates the athletes, their entourage and other participants during their stay. This is the heart of the YOG and a special place for participants to come together and share their experiences and cultures with each other, and also with their relatives and communities through digital and social means of communication.

Transport: The YOG transport system relies simply on a shuttle service (for all accredited persons). There is no need for additional road and railway infrastructures. Whenever possible, public transport are used, including for accredited persons.

Empowering Youth: The YOG are also an opportunity to involve and empower young talented people beyond sport. The organising committee hires many young staff members who take on some critical responsibilities and build up their skills. The nomination of young people as Chefs de Mission, leaders, coaches, volunteers and referees is also encouraged. The IOC also manages or encourages youth-focused programmes implemented by the YOGOCs or the International Federations such as Young Change Makers, Young Reporters, Young Technical Officials, Young Volunteers, Young Broadcasters, Young Commentators, Young Sports presenters and Young Translators, amongst examples. In Buenos Aires, 84 NOCs had a Young Change Maker and 34 Young reporters from the five continents were accredited.

Olympic legacy and sustainability: The YOG legacy is at the core of both planning and operational phases. YOG have the potential to be a catalyst for numerous long lasting benefits in areas such as the sports participation in local clubs, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and enhancing knowledge through skills development among local young people. Implementing sustainable practices and technologies is encouraged, ranging from ethical sourcing and procurement methods to sustainable solutions in food, beverage, and licensing. Successfully organizing an event of this magnitude requires a strong vision to deliver a meaningful and sustainable legacy for the city and its youth.

For further information, please contact:
IOC Olympic Studies Centre
Tel. +41 21 621 66 11
studies.centre@olympic.org