International Olympic Committee

FACTSHEET

Electing Olympic hosts

12 December 2024

The IOC is permanently open to informal and non-committal discussions with any cities, regions or countries and their National Olympic Committees (NOCs), in any part of the world, that are interested in hosting the Games of the Olympiad, the Olympic Winter Games, the Youth Olympic Games, or the Winter Youth Olympic Games.

The process is overseen by two permanent Future Host Commissions, one for Summer and one for Winter Games. These Commissions, composed of IOC Members and other Olympic Movement stakeholders, make recommendations to the IOC Executive Board regarding possible future hosts.

The first step is an informal exchange between the IOC and the city or region and the respective NOC.

Continuous Dialogue

If these talks progress positively, the NOC and city or region can choose to enter a non-committal Continuous Dialogue with the IOC. This helps the potential host to explore and improve its Olympic project, without linking it to any specific Games edition or year. Upon entering Continuous Dialogue, the potential host becomes known as an Interested Party. It will receive bespoke support from the IOC to help it to design a Games plan and vision with maximum potential benefits for local communities.

This dialogue is flexible and does not require any financial commitment, written submission or other legal or financial guarantee. The IOC conducts a feasibility study to assess the state of progress of a project, to help the Interested Party make improvements, and to assist the IOC Executive Board with its strategic long-term outlook and decision-making.

Among the criteria for assessment are the:

- Geopolitical, socio-economic, human development and environmental factors
- Vision and venue masterplan
- Alignment with existing long-term development plans
- Envisaged sustainability and legacy impacts
- Political and public support
- Funding strategy
- Sports event experience, accommodation capacity, transport infrastructure, and safety and security.

Targeted Dialogue

If the results of the feasibility study are positive, and the Future Host Commission determines that a project represents a strategic opportunity for the Olympic Movement, the Commission may recommend to the Executive Board to open a Targeted Dialogue for a particular edition of the Games, and to invite one or more parties into this next stage as “Preferred Hosts”.

Targeted Dialogue represents a deep dive into one or more projects. Extensive consultation takes place, for example with International Sports Federations. The IOC commissions independent reports in key areas such as venue costs, public opinion and potential environmental impact. Furthermore, the IOC commissions an independent report by a third-party specialist organisation about the human rights situation in each Preferred Host region, insofar as this relates to the Games organisation. This report is then shared with the relevant Future Host Commission.

The Preferred Host will be asked to respond to the Future Host Questionnaire [see the most recent version, for the Olympic Winter Games] and to provide a number of guarantees supporting their project.

At the end of the Targeted Dialogue, the Executive Board can put forward one or more Preferred Hosts for election by the IOC Session. This is not the only option – if one or both parties feel the time is not right, or the conditions have not been met for election, the Commission could recommend that the Preferred Host to go back to Continuous Dialogue. Nor does opening a Targeted Dialogue mean saying "no" to other Interested Parties. They can choose to continue working on their Olympic projects in collaboration with the IOC, with a view to staging a future edition of the Olympic Games, or another Olympic event.

Host elections

If the Executive Board calls an election, the Preferred Host(s) will be invited to a meeting to present and discuss their project with all the IOC Members. They will then make a final presentation to the IOC Session, which will be followed by a vote by secret ballot. If elected, the Host will immediately sign the Olympic Host Contract with the IOC [see examples for Brisbane 2032 and Salt Lake City-Utah 2034].

New approach to electing hosts

The approach to electing Olympic hosts has been reshaped in recent years, starting with the adoption of Olympic Agenda 2020 in 2014.

Further changes followed with the New Norm, to create a flexible and collaborative partnership between potential hosts and the IOC, and ensure that future Olympic Games are designed to meet the needs of local communities and align with existing long-term development plans.

Elements of the current selection process – such as a non-committal dialogue, flexibility, and knowledge-sharing – were incorporated into election of Milano-Cortina 2026. The new process was fully implemented for the election of Brisbane 2032 and was first applied to the Olympic Winter Games for the elections of French Alps 2030 and Salt Lake City-Utah 2034.

The election process was reformed to address the challenges of the past:

- High expenditure by bidding cities which led to high expectations – but only one winner
- Reputational risks for the Olympic Movement
- "Losing" cities were discouraged from bidding again.

The new approach reflects the new priorities of the Olympic Movement:

- Flexibility and contextualisation
- Aligning Olympic projects with long-term social and economic development plans
- Keeping pace with a fast-changing world
- Being able to react quickly to developments and opportunities
- Sustainability and legacy at the heart of all projects, to meet community needs;

"The Games adapt to the host – the host does not adapt to the Games."

Future Host Commissions

The two Future Host Commissions have a dual role, as described in their Terms of Reference:

1. To explore, monitor and encourage interest in future Olympic Games, Olympic Winter Games and Youth Olympic Games; and
2. To make recommendations to enable the IOC Executive Board to be in a position to react to various developments and opportunities.

This means that they are tasked with studying long-term opportunities and challenges related to hosting the Games, such as climate change.

Good governance

Good governance is one of the founding principles of the new approach. There are strict rules on ethics and conduct, to protect IOC Members from lobbying and to preserve the integrity of their decisions.

All documents are published on olympics.com, including the Rules of Conduct for Continuous Dialogue and Targeted Dialogue, the Future Host Questionnaire, the Host Contract and the Future Host Commission report produced during the Targeted Dialogue [see examples of the reports for Brisbane 2032 and Salt Lake City Utah-2034].

The IOC is a founding member of the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport, launched in 2017 to: "strengthen and support efforts to eliminate corruption and promote a culture of good governance in and around sport". The IOC commits to providing an honest and fair process exempt from any external influence, without any risk of conflicts of interest.

Benefits of the new approach to electing hosts

- No financial or legal commitment on either side in the early stages of discussions
- Sustainability and legacy are key drivers
- Cost efficiency for potential hosts
- Potential hosts can test ideas without commitment through Continuous Dialogue
- No permanent construction required for the Games
- A pool of potential hosts for the future
- Increased opportunities to create economic, environmental and social/health benefits for communities

Driven by Olympic Agenda 2020 and the New Norm, the Games' organisation and host election must be sustainable and cost-effective. Potential hosts should use as many existing or temporary facilities as possible, even outside the main host region or country, if there is no proven legacy for new venues. No permanent Olympic construction may take place in a statutory nature or culture protected area, or UNESCO World Heritage site. From 2030, all Olympic Games will be obliged to:

- minimise direct and indirect Games-related carbon emissions, thereby contributing to international efforts aligned with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change;
- strive to remove more carbon from the atmosphere than the Games project emits;
- use their influence to encourage stakeholders to take climate action.

Use of existing or temporary venues	Paris 2024	95%	2 new venues planned irrespective of the Games
	Milano Cortina 2026	93%	1 new venue planned irrespective of the Games
	Los Angeles 2028	100%	0 new venues
	Brisbane 2032	84%	6 new venues planned irrespective of the Games

Recently-elected hosts have reported spending significantly less than previous candidates. To reduce hosts' costs and limit the use of public money, the IOC provides expertise to potential future hosts.

Cost savings	Milano Cortina 2026 host application budget	-80%	Compared to average candidate city spend for 2018 and 2022
	Brisbane 2032 host application budget	-80%	Compared to average candidate city spend for 2020, 2024 and 2028

Independent reports, commissioned by the regions in question, have predicted the economic and social benefits of hosting the Olympic Games. The size of the impact is dependent on local market conditions and the edition of the Games. In all cases from Paris 2024 to Brisbane 2032, the economic benefits are predicted to far outweigh the initial investments:

Economic benefits (USD) Games of the Olympiad	Paris 2024	12.2bn (range: 7.4bn-12.2bn)	Predicted economic benefits
	Los Angeles 2028	18.3bn	Predicted economic output
	Brisbane 2032	13.4bn	Predicted socio-economic benefits

Sources: Centre for Law and Economics of Sport (CDES), University of Limoges; Riverside School of Business, University of California; KPMG

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