

# IOC

International Olympic Committee



LASALLECUNMUN  
2026

“Reforming Figure Skating  
Scoring: Balancing Technical  
Skill and Artistic Expression.”

BACKGROUND GUIDE





Welcome delegates,

It is a pleasure for me and my chair to have you in this committee in this model LASALLECUNMUN2026. My name is Amanda Nabil Lira Ramírez, it is an honor to be the President of the International Olympic Committee, it is my first time participating as chair in a model. I decided to be president this year because I wanted a challenge, and I think MUN was the perfect opportunity to improve myself. I also came with a good experience from last year's model. Since I was little, I have liked debates and collaborating in the creation of solutions to problems that no one thinks about, which has generated a lot of curiosity in me. I entered this model because I want to improve my English skills and the way I develop conversations with people. I sincerely hope that you enjoy this model, that you achieve your goals and good grades, but that you enjoy the model as much as I enjoyed it last year and I hope to see you next year.

I am currently 16 years old, I am in my third semester in the Business Administration and Development Area, in this way I will be able to enter the economic-administrative sub-area in the fifth semester, when I graduate, I will study gastronomy, in the area of pastry and I think this area will help me run my business, since I was little I have always been interested in cooking, I enjoyed it a lot and when I used to swim I always brought hotcakes for everyone on my team and they loved them; I would like to study at UT for its study plan and because I dream about going on a Exchange I really like singing and dancing, in fact I am in the schools Choir, I love skating, since I saw the series Soy Luna I loved skating a lot and I have practiced it acrobatically, I enjoy dancing and dancing as solos in skating, which is actually why the committee was created, because of my fanaticism in ice skating, I love love reading, I don't have a favorite genre ; my favourite book is The Phantom of the Opera. I really enjoy debates, and that's why I'm interested, because I'm looking to improve my skills and how I communicate in English.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy the model very much. Don't feel anxious or nervous. I guarantee that you will enjoy it very much. I hope that you can be interested in these topics, and sometimes, how injustices are even committed, which I believe have happened to you regarding your efforts. Remember, in any case, that we are not looking for fights, pointless debates, pointless failures, and obviously not just to harass you. We rather seek to teach you to defend yourself, debate things, and relate better, not only with your own tastes or ideals, but also so that even with those you don't agree with, you can always relate and be successful. Do not hesitate to contact me if you need anything or help regarding the committee, and whatever you like.

My best wishes to you.

Amanda Nabil Lira Ramírez

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## **COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION**

The Olympic Games are the only truly global, multi-sport competition celebrating sport in the world. With more than 200 countries participating in over 400 events between the Summer and Winter Games, the Games are where everyone comes to compete, be inspired, and unite.

*Topic: “Reforming Figure Skating Scoring: ‘Balancing Technical Skill and Artistic Expression.’”*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Figure skating is one of the most iconic disciplines of the Winter Olympics, combining technical complexity with artistic expression. Through the International Skating Union (ISU) Judging System, athletes' programs are evaluated both for the difficulty of their technical elements and for the interpretive and choreographic quality of their routines. This system seeks to ensure a balance between athletic performance and artistic dimension, thus preserving the integral essence of the discipline.

However, this balance has generated controversy on the international stage. A significant example occurred at the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, where the final decision between Russian skaters Alexandra Trusova and Anna Shcherbakova sparked intense debate. While Trusova executed a program with multiple quadruple jumps of great difficulty, even breaking a world record, Shcherbakova stood out for her consistency and artistic expression, resulting in the gold medal. This case highlighted the tensions within the scoring system and sparked a debate on the need to reform the current criteria to achieve a more equitable evaluation of technical skill and artistic interpretation.

This case evidenced the persistence of a dilemma that is not new, but has accompanied sport for decades: the difficulty of establishing evaluation criteria that give a balanced weight between technique and art. Today, the discussion continues to be relevant, as the evolution of skating has led to increasingly technical routines, which could threaten the artistic dimension that distinguishes the discipline.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Figure skating, renowned for its unique combination of technical complexity and artistic expression, was established as an Olympic discipline in 1908 during the London Games. From its inception, competitions were evaluated using the so-called "6.0 System," which awarded scores from 0 to 6 based on execution and artistic impression. Although simple and

appealing to the public, it soon drew criticism for its high degree of subjectivity and the potential for bias in evaluations.

Throughout history, several episodes have highlighted the problems of impartiality in scoring. One of the most memorable was at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics, when young American Tara Lipinski, with a technically difficult routine, defeated Michelle Kwan, renowned for her artistic and expressive superiority. The result sparked a broad international debate about whether more emphasis should be placed on the difficulty of the elements or on artistic interpretation.

The debate intensified after the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, when a corruption scandal in the pairs division revealed an agreement between judges to favor the Russian duo over the Canadian pair. The case reached international attention and jeopardized the sport's credibility. In response, the International Skating Union (ISU), with support from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), adopted the Code of Points in 2004. This introduced the current judging system, divided into Technical Element Scoring (TES) and Program Component Scoring (PCS), seeking a fairer and more transparent balance.

Despite this reform, the controversies continued. At the 2010 World Championships, Japan's Mao Asada, famous for her triple Axel, lost to South Korea's Yuna Kim, whose routine was noted more for its cleanliness and artistry than for its technical difficulty. Once again, the debate about what should weigh more heavily in scoring was reopened.

An even more controversial case occurred at the 2014 Sochi Olympics, when Russian Adelina Sotnikova defeated defending champion Yuna Kim. Despite Kim's technical execution being considered cleaner by most experts, Sotnikova received unusually high artistic scores, sparking international protests and even petitions to the IOC to review the result.

This persistent tension reached a new peak during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, in the women's singles competition between Russian skaters Alexandra Trusova and Anna Shcherbakova. Trusova made history by landing five quadruple jumps in her free skate — an unprecedented technical feat — yet she placed second behind Shcherbakova, who presented a more artistically refined but less technically demanding program. Following the announcement, Trusova expressed her frustration publicly, declaring that she had done everything possible technically yet still could not win. The controversy reignited global debate over the ISU's scoring system and whether it fairly balances athletic complexity and artistic quality.

These episodes show that, from Nagano 1998 to Beijing 2022, the tension between the technical and the artistic has been constant. Although the current scoring system sought to correct subjectivity and improve transparency, the results continue to generate controversy,

demonstrating that the dilemma between technical skill and artistic expression is a structural and persistent problem in figure skating.

## **CURRENT SITUATION**

Currently, the debate over scoring in figure skating remains a relevant topic internationally. Despite reforms implemented by the International Skating Union (ISU) and oversight by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), recent competition results have shown that the tension between technical difficulty and artistic expression continues to generate controversy. For example, during the World Championships and the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games, the implementation of the Code of Points showed that the allocation of Program Components (PCS) still exhibits subjective variations, particularly in the evaluation of performance and choreography. The ISU has stated that its system seeks to "balance objectivity and artistic appreciation," but athletes and coaches have criticized the lack of consistency, which has affected the perception of fairness in the results.

The IOC, as the governing body of the Olympic Games, has issued official statements emphasizing the need to ensure transparency and credibility in all disciplines, including figure skating, and urging the ISU to train judges and ensure the independence of evaluation panels. However, the implementation of these recommendations depends largely on national federations and organizing committees, which has limited their effectiveness in some cases.

In recent years, various international federations and associations have proposed additional changes to the scoring system, including greater weighting of the artistic component to balance the advantage of technically complex jumps, revising judging panels to ensure geographic diversity and minimize national bias, and using technology and video analysis to support technical evaluation. However, these proposals have generated resistance from certain countries with highly technically competitive athletes, who believe that greater emphasis on the artistic component could affect their standing in international competitions.

The consequences of maintaining a system perceived as unfair could be significant: loss of confidence among athletes and the public, diminished prestige of competitions, and diplomatic conflicts between national federations and the ISU. Conversely, a more balanced system could increase transparency, improve fairness, and preserve the artistic essence of sport, strengthening its legitimacy and global appeal.

Currently, the ISU continues to evaluate competition results and review rules and scoring criteria based on feedback from judges, coaches, and athletes. The IOC maintains its oversight role, ensuring that any reforms comply with the Olympic Movement's principles of fairness and transparency. In this context, delegates will need to consider the interaction of multiple international stakeholders: the ISU, the IOC, national federations, coaches, athletes, and specialists, as well as public and media opinion, which influences the perception of fairness in sport. The central challenge is to achieve a sustainable balance between technical difficulty and artistic interpretation, ensuring that the scoring system accurately reflects both dimensions of figure skating, avoids conflicts, and guarantees the continuity and credibility of the discipline worldwide.

## **SKATERS BOX**

Alexandra Trusova

Alina Zagitova

Alysa Liu

Amber Glenn

Anna Shcherbakova

Boyang Jin

Cha Jun-hwan

Dmitri Aliev

Donovan Carrillo

Evgenia Medvedeva

Ilia Malinin

Javier Fernández

Kaori Sakamoto

Mikhail Shaidorov

Nathan Chen

Shun Sato

Sofia Akateva

Surya Bonaly

Vincent Zhou

Yuma Kagiyama

Yuzuru Hanyu

## **GUIDE QUESTIONS**

- I. What is the skater's position regarding the appropriate balance between technical difficulty and artistic expression within the scoring system?
- II. What actions has the skater taken throughout their career (training decisions, stylistic changes, competitive strategies) that reflect or reinforce their stance on this issue?
- III. What consequences has the skater experienced (controversies, public criticism, disputed results) due to the current balance between technical and artistic components in judging?
- IV. How does the skater propose to harmonize both elements—technical skill and artistic performance—to achieve a fairer and more consistent evaluation system?
- V. What reforms or solutions does the skater consider necessary for the ISU to implement to reduce subjectivity and ensure equitable scoring for all athletes?

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