

WORLD OLYMPIANS FORUM II

Olympians for Life

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Overview of the World Olympians Forum II

The World Olympians Forum II took place in Lausanne, Switzerland from 15th to 17th April 2019 (<https://olympians.org/news/1233/woa-launches-world-olympians-forum-ii/>). The forum brought together 170 Olympians from 110 National Olympians Association (hereafter, NOAs) and was conducted under the theme “*Olympians for Life*”. Strengthening the capabilities of NOAs and highlighting their vital role as ambassadors of the Olympic ideals was the main focus of this forum. At all workshops, sessions and the Grants Challenge, Olympians presentations were aimed to upskill and provide the tools necessary for NOAs to become as effective as possible ambassadors of the Olympic Movement.

Day 1: Joint Session with the 9th International Athletes’ Forum

The forum started with a joint session with the Athletes’ forum which was run from 13th to 15th by IOC Athletes Commission (hereafter, ACs) at the Swiss Tech Convention Centre. There were over 450 athletes and Olympians representatives from across the world in the joint session. This session featured workshops, networking and team building opportunities focusing on strengthening continental/local communication. The forum opened with remarks by the president of IOC, Thomas Bach and he expressed to the participants that we all should take advantage of this opportunity to encourage cooperation between ACs and NOAs for further development. The participants were divided into own continent and had a discussion regarding ACs and NOAs priorities and how we can collaborate to support athletes (including retired athletes). The result of the discussion in Asia, ACs and NOAs revealed that we share common priorities such as Education, Health Support, and Career for both the active and retired athletes. It remained, however, controversial in regards to the way of separating the tasks by ACs and NOAs on these priorities. In addition, we found out that Asian counties encounter the language barrier in terms of the Educational tools provided by the IOC, and we concluded that this aspect should be addressed by the IOC.



Swiss Tech Convention Centre



The Opening remark
by President of IOC, Thomas Bach

In the afternoon session, there were workshops “Influence like a Pro” by Gabriela Mueller Mendoza. It started with increasing awareness of individual personality and she also told us the keys / key points to increase our influence to others.

Day 2: Opening of the World Olympians Forum

Day 2 was held at the Swiss Tech Convention Centre and there were 150 Olympians and 107 NOAs. The opening remarks were delivered by the president of World Olympians Association (hereafter, WOA), Joel Bouzou, OLY and WOA patron, HSJ Prince Albert II of Monaco. Post-opening session, the WOA Secretary General, Tony Ledgard, OLY and WOA CEO Mike Miller presented about “WHO & WHAT is WOA” and talked about the status quo, our missions, strategies, and their actions towards Olympians and NOAs. The forum’s main focus is one of the strategy “Increase and strengthen the NOAs”. The participants were divided into three groups for the “NOAs from Good to Great Workshop”. The workshop goal was to strengthen NOAs through practical activities such as effective promotion tips and basic managing skills. There were three activities as follows:

1. Project Delivery to Society by NOAs
2. The Event Preparation Checklist
3. Member Engagement

The participants carried out the discussion in each specific table within the group and cooperated to complete the assignment within the activities. Our group consisted of Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians. We had respect for each other’s’ ideas and different backgrounds, while we formed the opinion/answers in each activity.



Day 2 the Opening session at Swiss Tech

NOA Case Study Presentations were conducted in the afternoon. The presenters were from Great Britain, Chinese Taipei, Singapore, and Canada. They presented the NOAs activities to engage Olympians each other and society, and how they have got/managed the fund for the activities. Sharing the success cases and also difficulties that they faced were very informative and participants could obtain practical ideas. One of the implementation that Canada introduced was to celebrate Olympians with letters and a small gift. It was something that is relatively easy to do, and helps to remain connected to the Olympians and NOAs.

Day 3: WOA Grants Challenge, NOA Think-tank, and Closing Session

Day 3 started with the WOA Grants Challenge (conducted since 2016 to help support funds to NOAs; over 120 grants so far). Grants categories are 1. NOAs Development Grants, 2. Service to Olympians, and 3. Service to Society. Five finalists from Colombia, Nigeria, Philippine, Malaysia, and Lithuania conducted five minutes’ presentation and Q&A from panelists. Colombia and Lithuania each won 5,000 US dollars for their NOA project procedures. Details of winning projects are below.

- **Mentoring through the Olympic Eye**
An Olympian-led mentoring program that will support the empowerment of women in sport and in their communities.
- **Olympian Life Mentoring**
To promote, activate and diversity the life of the elderly, orphans and the disabled through sports and physical activity.

At the NOA think-tank workshop, the participants were divided into each own continent and have a discussion in regards to the designated questions. The goals of these workshops were to identify opportunities for NOA and WOA development and to build relationships with the continental counterparts. We as an Asia continent had a discussion on the reasons why someone should invest in our NOA program, the answers we came up were: In order to make the program happen successfully, to deliver the program to a wide range of people in the country, and to leverage the Olympians to the community as the Olympic ambassador. The forum closed with the presentation by the ACs regarding details of AC activities and the Closing remarks by the president of WOA, Joel Bouzou.



Day 3 The Thinktank Session

Conclusion and Take-home Message

WOA CEO, Mike Miller said at the beginning of the forum that WOA and this forum is here to provide information that can be simply applied at the home country and help NOAs further development. As he stated, the last two days of the forum were very informative for further development of NOAs and involved many activities to use the knowledge into a more practical way. Japanese NOA is considered as one of the good examples among Asia, however, in order to increase in prevalence Japanese NOA and to support Olympians and athletes at all the age stage, it is very important to take action of what I learned in this forum. I am grateful to TIAS for the financial support for attending the forum, and also what I experienced in TIAS Master's program (courses, e.g., cross-cultural communication) that I could apply in this international forum.



Asian NOAs

Links: <https://www.olympic.org/news/biggest-ever-international-athletes-forum-ends-with-concrete-proposals-to-further-increase-the-support-to-athletes-at-all-levels> ; <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1078090/woa-hails-successful-world-olympians-forum-in-lausanne>