

The INTERNATIONAL OPEN DOORS OLYMPIAD for prospective master's and doctoral students

Overview of the rules



Overview of the rules of the INTERNATIONAL OPEN DOORS OLYMPIAD for prospective master's and doctoral students

Contents

[Aim](#)

[Requirements for participation](#)

[What do the winners of the Olympiad get](#)

[What do the runners-up of the Olympiad get](#)

[What other opportunities do the winners and runners-up have](#)

[General information and the calendar of the Olympiad events](#)

[The first stage of the Olympiad](#)

[Preparation for the second stage of the Olympiad](#)

[How is the second stage of the Olympiad organized](#)

[Results of the second stage and the appeal procedure](#)

[Announcement of winners and runners-up in the master's track](#)

[Announcement of the winners of the doctoral track](#)

[Third stage of the Olympiad \(for the doctoral track only\)](#)

[I am a winner. What should I do next?](#)

Aim

The aim of the International Open Doors Olympiad is to assist talented, knowledgeable and ambitious foreign students who would like to enroll in a master's or doctoral degree program at one of the leading Russian universities with no tuition fee.

Requirements for participation

The competition is open to foreign citizens and stateless persons, as well as Russian nationals permanently residing abroad (i.e., having a residence permit issued by a foreign country).

The Olympiad is organized in two tracks - for prospective master's and doctoral students. For the

master's track, the competition is open to students having a bachelor's degree or completing this degree program in the year of the Olympiad.

For the doctoral track, the competition is open to students having a master's or a five-year specialist's degree or completing these degree programs in the year of the Olympiad.

No documentary proof of Russian or English language proficiency is required.

There is no age limit and the number of participants per country is not limited either.

During the registration, participants are expected to give their consent to the processing of personal data.

What do the winners of the Olympiad get

Winners of the master's track of the Olympiad receive the right to free education at the organizing universities and other Russian higher education institutions in the fields of study corresponding to the Olympiad subject areas. The Government of the Russian Federation covers all education costs. All other expenses (relocation, food, accommodation, communication, medical care, etc.) are expected to be covered by participants.

The list of master's programs that winners of the master's track can apply to is available in their accounts on the Olympiad website after the results of the second stage are announced. When filling out the application for admission, participants can select one field of study and up to six universities offering that field, listing their preferences in descending order. Any of the organizing universities selected as a priority will admit you to one of the chosen fields of study if you win the Olympiad.

Universities that are not among the organizers of the Olympiad may either admit the Olympiad winner or decline admission based on the availability of the chosen field of study and other factors. The winner will need to independently inquire about vacancies for enrolling in a degree program of his/her choice in Russian universities other than the organizers of the Olympiad.

When choosing a degree program, please pay attention to the language of instruction: it can be either Russian or English. If you choose Russian as the language of instruction, you can first take a free one-year preparatory Russian language course. There are no preparatory English language courses.

Within the established government quota for foreign citizens and stateless persons, winners in the doctoral track have the right to be admitted to a doctoral program at one of the organizing universities in Russia. During the third stage of the Olympiad, students are required to have interviews with a representative from the university where they plan to pursue their studies. During these interviews, candidates must secure academic supervision to progress further in the process.

A complete list of the organizing universities (including information on the location of the universities, fields of study, campus, conditions of study, residence, etc.) is available [here](#).

What do the runners-up of the Olympiad get

As a runner-up, you have the opportunity to receive a discount on the tuition fee. The amount of the discount depends on the chosen university.

You may also take the place of a winner if one of them refuses the right to study or fails to provide the necessary documents on time. Which of the runners-up get this opportunity depends on the result of their participation in the Olympiad.

What other opportunities do the winners and runners-up have

Winners and runners-up are entitled to a Russian Government monthly scholarship for the entire duration of their studies. The scholarship amount is determined by the scholarship regulations of the chosen university and depends on the student's academic performance. In some cases, universities may also offer additional financial support.

Accommodation in a university hall of residence is quite affordable and the internet is usually free. Most universities offer their students to take jobs on campus or find part-time jobs in partner organizations.

Winners and runners-up can also receive various discounts and bonuses (for example, discounts on accommodation, public transport, free health insurance, etc.). The percentage of a discount varies from university to university.

You can get information about the scholarship, additional financial support, accommodation and employment on the websites of the organizing universities, as well as from publications in [VKontakte](#) and [Telegram](#).

General information and the calendar of the Olympiad events

The Olympiad is held online and there is no participation fee. All stages of the Olympiad are organized in two languages - Russian or English. The language you choose during registration is the language of PARTICIPATION in the Olympiad. The language of INSTRUCTION is chosen after the Olympiad is over and depends on the selected university and the degree program.

Participants have the flexibility to engage in an unlimited number of subject areas, either within a single track or across two tracks.

Olympiad subject areas, demos, subject programs, reading lists for preparation as well as lists of potential research supervisors are available [here](#).

As a rule, registration for the Olympiad opens in mid-September, and the winners and runners-up are announced in February or March.

There might be some changes in the Olympiad schedule.

The schedule of the Olympiad stages is available [here](#).

There are two Olympiad stages for the master's track and three for the doctoral track.

The first stage of the Olympiad

The first stage is a portfolio competition. You can take part in it on any day and time within the schedule of the first stage. You have the flexibility to participate in this stage on any day and at any time that falls within the schedule of the first stage.

To register for the Olympiad, click **PARTICIPATE** on the main page of the Olympiad website and fill in the registration form. You'll need to provide your personal data, create a password, and select a subject area and track or several areas and tracks for participation in the Olympiad. After filling in the registration form, click **REGISTER**.

Once you have registered, verify your account (a link will be sent to your email). To log in to your account, click **LOGIN** in the upper right corner of the page and enter your login (your email) and the password you created during registration.

After logging in to your account, use only the **LOGIN** button for subsequent logins. The **PARTICIPATE** button is only intended for registration.

After accessing your account, go to the **FIRST STAGE** tab where you can fill out and submit your portfolio.

The portfolio consists of three elements:

1. Motivation Letter

The text of the motivation letter is NOT uploaded as a separate file; it is typed in directly in a text field. Proceed to **FILL IN THE PORTFOLIO**. Click on the pencil icon in the Motivation letter section to start writing (it is located to the right of the **Motivation Letter** heading).

If you are planning to participate in several subject areas, you need to write a separate motivation letter for EACH subject area of the Olympiad. The more detailed and well-argued information you provide in your motivation letter, the more points you will get.

For participants in the Olympiad doctoral track, it is recommended to pay special attention to the **Research Interests** field, where you should describe your competencies and the topic of your future research. This will help you attract the best academic supervisors for your research.

2. Certificate of education and additional documents

Uploading a certificate of education is mandatory for participation in the first stage.

If you do not have a bachelor's, master's or specialist's degree (for example, you have not yet completed your studies), you can attach any other official document confirming your level of education, for instance, an academic transcript or academic record, an extract from them or a scanned copy of your academic record, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: you should provide the information about your level of education and your education institution while registering and creating your personal account and also include it in your portfolio.

Indicating your level of education and higher education institution during registration and when creating a personal account is **NOT THE SAME** as filling in the education section of your portfolio. You need to fill in these sections **both** during registration **and** in your personal account.

All other documents are optional. However, the more relevant documents you upload, the more chances of getting a higher score for your portfolio you have. In your Olympiad account, you can see the maximum possible score for each type of achievement, which can be lower depending on the results of the portfolio review.

PLEASE NOTE: all documents should be submitted only in Russian or in English.

If the original of your document is in another language, you will have to have it translated by a professional translator who should certify the translation by signing and stamping it. You can commission a professional translator from a translation agency or the Russian consulate/embassy in your country. Sometimes professional translation service is available at the university where you intend to study. At this stage, it is **NOT** required to notarize the translation.

3. Entry test

The entry test contains tasks related to the subjects of the Olympiad and is designed to assess the participant's knowledge in the chosen field. You can only take it after writing your motivation letter. To do this, click **PROCEED TO THE ENTRANCE TEST**. This button is located at the bottom of the screen, next to the **SUBMIT PORTFOLIO** button, which at this stage should be inactive.

On the main page of your personal account, you will see entry tests next to the subject areas you have chosen. Each subject area has its own test. The duration of the entry test is 1 hour, and it consists of 45 questions. You can take the entry test at any time during the first stage of the Olympiad. Each participant is allowed up to 3 attempts to complete the entry test. Each subject area sets its own minimum score, and once you reach that score, the attempt will be counted as successful. One successful attempt is enough to submit your portfolio for evaluation.

PLEASE NOTE: You will not be able to complete the first stage and submit your portfolio for review without a motivation letter, uploaded education documents, and passing the entry test.

The option to send your portfolio for review will be available in your Olympiad account **no later than one month** before the end of registration. You can submit your portfolio yourself before the **10th of December** or it will be sent automatically after this date.

After submission, you can still upload/replace documents or change your subject area/participation track. To do that you will need to withdraw the portfolio you previously uploaded by clicking the **WITHDRAW** button. After making changes and uploading additional documents you should resubmit your portfolio. The deadline for resubmission of the portfolio is **November 30th**.

Portfolios sent for review are assessed by a jury. There is no commentary on the review results; they are final and non-appealable.

The minimum passing score to qualify for the second stage is determined based on the portfolio competition results. After the completion of the first stage, your results will be published in your account on the scheduled date, indicating whether you have advanced to the second stage for each of the subject areas you participated in. Lists of participants who have advanced to the second stage will also be published on the subject area pages.

In the lists, participants are ranked based on the number of points they have scored, with those having higher scores appearing at the top.

Participants can only access their own results. The scores of other participants are not disclosed.

Preparation for the second stage of the Olympiad

The second stage of the Olympiad is a problem-solving challenge (an exam).

Demo versions of the exam and subject programs are available on the Olympiad [Subjects pages](#). The assignments of the second stage for the master's and doctoral tracks are the same. If you have chosen both tracks within one subject area, you will have to take the Olympiad exam only once.

The schedule of the second stage is published on the Olympiad website in the [Schedule](#) section. The date of the exam cannot be changed.

PLEASE NOTE: Advancing to the second stage does not automatically mean that you will participate in the exam. To participate in the exam for each subject area (including an additional attempt on the reserve day), you must register in advance in your personal account on the Olympiad website within the timeframe specified for each subject area.

The registration procedure, general rules for taking the exam, and instructions for each subject area will be available in the personal account within a few days after the end of the first stage and **no later than 7 days** before the start of the second stage.

Registration for participation in the second stage includes filling in the participant's identity data in the registration form in the personal account and uploading a photograph or scanned image of the identity document of a size and resolution sufficient for unambiguous identification based on the photograph. **Participants who fail to provide this information within the specified timeframe cannot take part in the second stage.**

During the second stage, the performance of the exam tasks is video-recorded. To prevent any breach of the rules of the Olympiad, the video of your exam will be viewed by an expert called a proctor. The proctor will have access to your webcam feed and your computer screen throughout the exam.

The need to use computer software and applications, a calculator, paper, and a pen will be specified individually for each subject area. During the exam, it is prohibited to use mobile

phones and other gadgets, as well as communicate with third parties. In addition, it is prohibited to access external websites (except for the exam page), take screenshots, or capture screen images, unless it is necessary to provide evidence of an internet connection issue with the Olympiad platform, problems with the proctoring system, or to document any other technical errors that may occur during exam registration or while completing exam tasks.

If these or other exam rules are breached (you can familiarize yourself with the rules in your Olympiad account), your exam results will be nullified without the option to appeal.

Before the exam, we recommend that you:

- ensure a fast internet connection (for maximum stability, we recommend using a wired connection via Ethernet).
- ensure good lighting and a low noise level in the room where you will take the test.
- prepare the equipment that meets the technical requirements for taking the proctored exam (laptop/computer, webcam).
- test the transmission of video and audio signals.
- have an identity document ready, a photo or scanned copy of which was uploaded to your personal account during the registration for the second stage.
- familiarize yourself with the rules of the second stage.

How is the second stage of the Olympiad organized

On the scheduled day and time, you should log in to the Olympiad electronic system. After entering your login and password, you should go through a personal identification procedure. For this, you should look straight into the webcam of your computer or laptop and hold an identity document near your face for 1 minute.

After the identification procedure, you will have access to the list of tasks in your Olympiad account. The tasks are divided into two types: closed-ended, for which a set number of points is awarded for a correct answer, and open-ended tasks which have several answer options. You can complete the tasks in any order and edit your answers **before** clicking **FINISH**.

The time for completing the tasks of the second stage is limited to 180 minutes. You can start the exam at any time during the designated timeframe on the day of the exam. After the time has run out, the system will automatically terminate your access to the tasks. Only those answers that you have sent **before** clicking **FINISH** will be saved and sent for grading.

If you experience a technical failure or a disruption in your connection during the exam, lasting more than 10 minutes, you will lose the opportunity to continue the exam on that day. You can report the issue to the Open Doors communication group at opendoors@globaluni.ru and request an additional attempt to take the exam on a reserve day. Each request is considered on an individual basis. In the event of a positive decision, the results of the first attempt will be annulled, and only the results obtained on the reserve day will be taken into account.

PLEASE NOTE: the number of attempts is limited to one so as not to give an unfair advantage to an individual participant over the others, and not to disrupt the Olympiad schedule. Please give

the technical requirements your utmost attention and ensure compliance.

Failing to take the exam means that you will lose the opportunity to receive an Open Doors scholarship, even if you score high in the first stage.

Participants who did not make it to the second stage or failed the exam may receive a letter from the universities they selected during registration with offers of alternative enrolment options. Each university has its own opportunities for enrolment, and details can only be clarified directly with the organizing university. These opportunities are not related to the Open Doors scholarship, which cannot be obtained without advancing to the second stage and passing the exam.

Results of the second stage and the appeal procedure

The results of the second stage will be available in your Olympiad account on the day specified in the schedule of the Olympiad. If there is a reasoned justification for disagreeing with the exam results, you can file an appeal **within two days** after the results of the second stage are published. The text of the appeal must contain a clear description of the subject of the appeal and an indication of the criteria, points or rules that, in your opinion, were not met by the organizers. The appeal should be submitted electronically from the personal account. The appeal will be considered within **five days** after its submission.

To file an appeal, go to the **SECOND STAGE** tab in your personal account and open **MY ANSWERS** page. Click on the **APPEAL** button next to the question you disagree with and fill in the text field explaining the reasons for your disagreement. After filling in the text field, click **SEND APPEALS** again. To submit your appeal for consideration, click **SEND APPEALS** at the bottom of the screen **after** you have completed all the questions which grades you disagree with.

Announcement of winners and runners-up in the master's track

After the appeal process is completed, ranked lists of participants are published on the Olympiad subject area pages. The lists are organized in descending order based on the integrated score, which takes into account the results of both stages. The integrated score is calculated by summing the results of the two stages, with a coefficient of 0.4 for the first stage results and 0.6 for the second stage. Winners and runners-up in the master's track are determined based on the highest number of points awarded. Olympiad winners and runners-up are announced separately for each subject area. You can also find out if you have become an Olympiad winner or runner-up in your personal account.

Third stage of the Olympiad (for the doctoral track only)

For participants in the doctoral track, in addition to the portfolio competition and the Olympiad exam, there is a third stage: the selection of a potential research supervisor and an interview with them and/or the doctoral track manager.

Participants in the doctoral track are included in ranked lists based on their integrated scores, in descending order. Information about advancing to the third stage will appear in the personal account. Additionally, the list of participants of the doctoral track invited to the third stage as well

as the rules of participation in it, will be published on the Olympiad website **three days** before the interviews.

In your Olympiad account, you can sign up for interviews with three potential supervisors whose research interests align with yours.

An essential requirement for meeting a potential research supervisor is having a motivation letter in your portfolio, which was completed during the first stage. This letter should explain your choice of the subject area, describe your achievements, and outline your intended research topic. To prepare for the interview, please check the interview plan available on the page of the selected subject area.

The interview is conducted using special video conference software you will need to install in advance and test for functionality (internet speed, a microphone, and a webcam). A link to the video conference will be sent to your personal account on the scheduled interview day.

At the appointed time, you must log in to your personal account and follow the link to join the interview. After the interview, the potential research supervisor will either agree or refuse to supervise your research. If several potential supervisors express interest in mentoring you, you will need to choose only one of them. If none of the supervisors confirm their willingness to guide your research but provide positive recommendations about your level of preparedness, you will have the opportunity to schedule an additional interview with the doctoral track manager.

If, due to the absence of a university representative, the interview did not take place at the scheduled time, you can reschedule it to one of the available reserve time slots, which will be accessible in your personal account. You can reschedule the interview only once for each research supervisor with whom you were unable to meet online on the main interview days, for a total of no more than 3 times.

If you experience a technical failure during the interview that prevents you from getting connected, it is necessary to take a screenshot, send a message with the screenshot to opendoors@globaluni.ru, and request the opportunity to schedule the interview on one of the reserve days. Each request is considered individually. In case of a positive decision, you will be granted access to schedule interviews on the days. If the potential research supervisor with whom you did not have an interview has not provided time slots for interviews on the backup days, you can request to be scheduled with another potential supervisor.

Announcement of the winners of the doctoral track

Winners of the doctoral are the participants who have received a positive decision on research guidance from potential supervisors or doctoral track managers.

The results of the third stage are published in the personal account and on the subject area pages of the Olympiad.

I am a winner. What should I do next?

If you are a winner or a runner-up in the master's track of the Olympiad, you should upload a

package of required documents to apply for a scholarship and admission to a Russian university using your personal account. The list of necessary documents, their formatting requirements, and submission dates will be published in your personal account after the Olympiad results are announced.

If you are a winner in the doctoral track, you should submit the required documents directly to the university of your choice. The list of the documents, formatting requirements, submission deadlines, and contact information will be sent to the email address you provided during registration.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have previously graduated from a master's program at a Russian university under the Russian Government quota, you are not eligible to reapply for the master's scholarship.

Contact Information

Should you have any questions about the Olympiad and your participation in it, do not hesitate to contact the organizers by:

- email to the Olympiad office at opendoors@globaluni.ru;
- writing [a feedback](#) on the Olympiad website;
- [VKontakte](#) social media pages.

PLEASE NOTE: please use only ONE communication channel.

By resending your message, you take the time of the contact center employees.

This will make it difficult for them to respond to other participants who, just like you, may need help.