

Call for proposals for the awarding of grants for annual promotional programmes in IOC member countries

1. Purpose

Within the framework of the promotion activities approved by the Council of Members of the International Olive Council (IOC), the Executive Secretariat (ES) intends to award grants to finance annual national programmes of a maximum duration of four years, aimed at promoting the local consumption of olive oil and table olives in IOC member countries.

The objectives of these grants are, inter alia, to build a market culture in member countries that wish to showcase the quality of local products, as well as to encourage cooperation between all IOC member countries. The proposed actions and events should be distinctly centred on their promotional worth and fall in line with the objectives laid out in the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015.

2. Duration

Proposals must clearly specify the duration of the planned activities and must involve activities to be carried out during the current year (2026).

3. Available funding of annual grants and co-financing rates

- The global budget available¹ for annual grants in 2026 is estimated at €64,100.00 (sixty-four thousand one hundred euros), subject to the approval and availability of the corresponding budget appropriations.
- With the aim of distributing the available budget among the largest number of applicants, the maximum amount per grant will be of €6,000 per calendar year for each beneficiary.
- The amount granted by the IOC shall in no case exceed 50 % of the cost of the co-financed activity programmed for that calendar year.

4. Actions supported by the grants

The proposals submitted must provide a rundown of the activities to be carried out in each calendar year of the project.

For guidance, the programmes submitted should encompass activities such as those listed below:

- Organisation of seminars, trade fairs, symposiums and workshops;
- Information points at food and nutrition fairs;

¹ The available amount for 2026 may be subject to change.

- Promotional material (brochures, CDs, books, etc.);
- Invitations for the participation of international specialists;

The IOC ES has also decided to award grants to support the organisation of national extra virgin olive oil quality competitions organised by competent authorities, meeting the conditions foreseen in the IOC standards ([IOC T30/2/Doc. N. 3](#)).

Grants will be governed by an agreement and subject to the following principles:

- The aim of the financed project or action is to help achieve the objectives outlined in the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015.
- Co-financing principle: external co-financing is required from a source other than an IOC grant, either in the form of the beneficiary's own resources or as financial contributions from third parties. Grants awarded by the IOC must in no case exceed 50 % of the cost of the co-financed activity.
- Non-profit principle: grants may not have the purpose or effect of leading to profit for the beneficiary.
- Non-retroactivity principle: expenditures incurred prior to the signature of the agreement will not be accepted.
- Non-cumulation principle: only one grant may be awarded for any single action to any one beneficiary per budget year.
- Transparency principle.
- Equal treatment principle.

5. Partnership requirements: Who can apply?

The following categories of applicants are eligible for funding:

- Public-law bodies (bodies governed by public law);
- Private non-profit entities.

Eligible candidates must be legal entities established in an IOC member country. Applicants belonging to member countries that have lost their rights according to Article 16.8² of the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015, will not be eligible.

² Article 16.8: "After two consecutive years of unpaid contributions, the Council of Members may, upon hearing the member in arrears, decide that the latter shall cease to enjoy the rights of membership but may participate in sessions as an observer within the meaning of article 8, paragraph 7".

Source: [International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015](#)

6. Additional requirements

Involvement of the Heads of Delegation

Special consideration will be given to projects endorsed by the Head of Delegation of the member country submitting proposals. In the case of proposals from the European Union (EU), endorsement by the national authorities of the country submitting the proposal will be accepted.

Originality of proposals

Proposals that present creative and innovative ideas will receive additional points for originality, ensuring that the IOC funds new and impactful approaches.

Geographical balance

In order to ensure equitable representation across IOC member countries, the final selection of proposals will take into account geographical balance. The evaluation process will consider the distribution of grants to various regions to avoid over-concentration in any single area and to promote the promotion of olive oil across diverse member countries. This will help ensure that olive oil promotion activities are widespread and inclusive across all IOC member regions.

7. Application

- Proposals must be submitted before the deadline of the call for proposals.
- Proposals must be submitted electronically. Paper submissions will NOT be accepted.
- Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided through the IOC's Electronic Submission System, available through [this link](#).
- Proposals must be fully completed, providing all the requested information, required annexes and supporting documents.
- Proposals must be submitted in English or French.
- Annexes and supporting documents can be submitted in any of the IOC's five official languages (Arabic, English, French, Italian or Spanish). If the original document is not in one of these languages, a translation to one of these languages is also required.
- The online system runs a number of automatic validation checks that prevent users from submitting forms that are not adequately filled in.

8. Financial reporting and invoice requirements

In the event of being awarded a grant, beneficiaries must submit the invoices corresponding to every expense indicated in the budget. Please note that full invoices are required and that purchase receipts will not be accepted.

To enhance transparency and accountability in the financial management of the projects, the following updates have been made:

- **Invoices must be submitted in their original versions and reflecting the local currency:**

All invoices must be submitted in their original versions and in the local currency. This ensures that

the financial documentation reflects the real cost of the activity and is consistent with the applicable local regulations.

- **Financial report template:**

A standardised financial report template to be submitted by all beneficiaries will be provided in the agreement form. This will ensure consistency and clarity in financial reporting.

Please note that the budget amounts submitted in the summarised budget table (filled in online) must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table. In the event of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail.

9. Eligibility criteria

Applications must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Adherence to the deadline of the call for proposals	The online application is submitted by the deadline set for the call.
2. Completeness of the application	The application is complete. It includes the application form and all required documents and declarations.
3. Correctness of the application form	The application form is fully and properly completed according to the instructions.
4. Correctness of the declarations	The declarations are correct. The grant application template is used, with the declarations properly completed and signed.
5. Geographical coverage	The applicants are from and established in an IOC member country that has not lost its rights pursuant to Article 16.8 of the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2015.

10. Exclusion criteria

Candidates shall be excluded from participating in the call for proposals if:

- Their application form is not filled out correctly, has incorrect data or contains unanswered sections.
- They are bankrupt or being wound up; are having their affairs administered by the courts; have entered into an arrangement with creditors; have suspended business activities; are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters; or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

- They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- They have not fulfilled their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, with those of the country of the contracting authority, or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the financial interests of the IOC;
- Following another grant procedure, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.
- To certify these points, the applicant must complete, sign, date, and submit the declarations next to the form, indicating that none of the abovementioned circumstances apply to them.
- Depending on the circumstances and if deemed necessary, the IOC may request the applicant to submit any of the following documents as additional proof: a recent extract from their judicial record; a recent and equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in their country of origin; or other documentation proving that the requirements are satisfied.

Grants will not be awarded to candidates who are:

- a) Subject to a conflict of interest;
- b) Guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the relevant authorizing officer as a condition of participation, or who fail to supply this information;
- c) Subject to any of the exclusion criteria.

To certify these points, the applicant must complete, sign, date, and submit the declarations provided alongside the form.

11. Selection criteria

a. Economic and financial capacity:

Candidates must provide proof that they have stable and sufficient resources. Proof of economic and financial capacity may be furnished by means of one or more of the following documents:

- Appropriate bank statements or evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance;
- Presentation of balance sheets or extracts from balance sheets for at least the last two closed

financial years;

- Statement of overall turnover, especially turnover related to works, supplies, or services covered by the contract, for a period not exceeding the last three financial years;
- Any other means deemed appropriate by the contracting authority.

Public bodies (entities established as a public body under national law, including local, regional, or national authorities) and international organizations are exempt from submitting these documents. However, they are required to submit a document certifying their status as a public body or international organization.

b. Operational capacity:

Candidates must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the proposed projects. In particular, they must provide:

- General profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the project (e.g., Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the project manager, CVs of the core project team, etc.);
- A list of the main tasks carried out in the past three years related to the presented action;
- A description of the measures in place to ensure quality control;
- A statement detailing the average annual manpower and the number of managerial staff for the past three years.

12. Award criteria

The criteria for awarding the grants, which will be weighted during the procedure of the call for proposals, are:

Award criteria	Points
Programme technical quality	30
- Aims and objectives	10
- Target groups	10
- Themes and messages	10
Programme management quality	35
- Planning and organization	15
- Stakeholders involvement	10
- Communications strategy	10
Originality of the proposal	5
Overall detailed budget	30
Total	100

Proposals scoring less than 35 points will be ruled out.

13. Financial provisions

Activities will be financed up to a limit of 50 % of the total activity cost per year, and the amount financed by IOC per grant shall in no case exceed €6,000 per year.

In the application form, each project is required to set out their overall spending plan broken down for each of the reporting periods, taking the following into consideration:

- The proposal has to include a budget **in euros**, indicating all the itemised costs in relation to the action for each project year. The budget presentation template available on the IOC submission portal must be used. The budget must be balanced and must respect the principles of co-financing, non-profitability, non-retroactivity and non-cumulation.
- The IOC will reimburse only **eligible costs**. Eligible costs are defined as costs that are actual and incurred by the beneficiary during the action, contributing to the objectives of the grant in an economic, efficient and effective manner.
- The reporting periods cover periods of a calendar year, except for the first reporting period, which covers the period from the signing of the agreement until the end of 2026. The terms of reporting shall be defined in the agreement to be signed by the Parties.
- The spending plan should be an estimation of the actual payments to be made in each of the reporting periods. It is essential that candidates:
 - Carefully prepare a realistic spending plan (spending usually increases over the semesters that a project is running);
 - Are ready to start implementing their project soon after it has been approved;
 - Monitor spending continuously during its implementation;
 - Ensure regular, timely and complete reporting.

To obtain the reimbursement of a cost, it must have been included in the budget of the action. Slight modifications to the budget for each year may be requested on an annual basis.

However, the budget will not be modified without the prior written approval of the IOC. The ES reserves the right to reduce the amount of the allocated grant based on the analysis of the Evaluation Committee without changing any other element of the proposal.

As a general rule, the costs will be reimbursed once the action has been completed, all documents have been sent to the IOC and these have been duly checked and approved.

14. Planned schedule

All interested institutions from member countries are invited to submit their proposals electronically. The deadline for receipt of proposals is Monday, **14 September 2026**.

The planned schedule is as follows:

Publication of the call for proposals:	08 June 2026
Deadline for submitting proposals:	14 September 2026
Evaluation period:	September – October 2026
Electronic signature of the agreement between the beneficiary and the IOC:	At least 10 calendar days before the commencement of the action, the IOC will send the agreement to the beneficiary for their electronic signature using the IOC's electronic signature system. The beneficiary's signature will precede that of the IOC.
Online course for grant beneficiaries	14 October 2026
Start and end dates of the activities scheduled for 2026:	From 15 October 2026 to 10 December 2026

Applicants are asked to kindly remember:

- ANY event or action must take place AFTER the agreement has been signed by the beneficiary and the IOC.
- An online link is provided on the IOC website through which applicants can fill in the form and follow all the instructions. All required documents must be submitted through this established platform, otherwise the application will not be accepted.
- The e-mail address, prom@iocorg.org, is available for answering any questions that the applicants may have when filling out their application.

15. Shortlisting and award

The authorising officer will draw up the final list of beneficiaries and the approved amounts to be allocated. The ES reserves the right to not award the entirety of the funds. The ES's decision to reject a proposal or not award a grant shall be final.

Once selected, the beneficiary automatically authorizes the ES to publish the following information in any form and medium, including the internet:

- The name and address of the beneficiary if they are a legal entity, or their name and country of origin if they are a natural person;

- b. The purpose of the grant;
- c. The awarded amount and the financing rate with regard to the total cost of the action.

16. Grant agreement

The ES reserves the right to reduce the grant amount based on the Evaluation Committee's analysis without amending other elements of the proposal.

The ES may not award a grant that is higher than the amount requested. The grant will be governed by a Grant Agreement.

The allocation of any grants is subject to budgetary availability.
