



Second Circular

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICS OLYMPIAD (IPhO) - COLOMBIA 2026

Welcome to Colombia!

Bienvenido a Colombia!

We are very pleased to inform you that the final number of participating countries is 91. Antonio Nariño University is delighted to welcome all delegations to the 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO), which will be held in Bucaramanga, Colombia, from 4 to 12 July 2026.

This guide contains essential information to help ensure a smooth and pleasant stay throughout the event. Participants and delegation leaders are strongly encouraged to read it carefully in preparation for their visit.





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1. EVENT VENUES

Neomundo Convention Center - The opening and closing ceremonies as well as the student exams and academic conferences will all take place here.

Address: Calle 89 Transversal Oriental Metropolitana, 69 Barrio Tejar, Bucaramanga, Santander

Phone Numbers: +57 302 324 6560 - 607 7000260

Website: www.neomundo.co

2. ACCOMMODATION

- **HOLIDAY INN HOTEL (LEADERS AND VISITORS)**

Located in the Cacique Mall and a *two-minute walk from the Neomundo convention center*, the Holiday Inn is a comfortable, well-equipped hotel offering easy access to shopping, dining, and event venues.

Address: Transversal Oriental con calle 93 Bucaramanga, 680003 Colombia

Email: reservas@holidaybga.com

Website: <https://www.ihg.com/holidayinn/hotels/es/es/bucaramanga/bgaco/hoteldetail>

- **DANN CARLTON HOTEL (OBSERVERS)**

The hotel is located in the Cabecera area, the most exclusive commercial and business area of the city. Thanks to its modern architecture and design, you can enjoy a warm, elegant and original style.

Address: Calle 47 # 28-83, Bucaramanga, Colombia

Email: reservas.dannbucaramanga@hotelesdann.com

Website: <https://hotelesdann.com/dann-carlton-bucaramanga>

- **PUNTA DIAMANTE HOTEL (STUDENTS)**

Located on the top of the Ruitoque Hill and with breathtaking views of the Andes, this hotel offers comfort and tranquility surrounded by nature.

Address: Km 7 via Piedecuesta, Ruitoque Condominio, Piedecuesta, Santander

Email: reservaspuntadiamante@gmail.com

Website: <https://puntadiamantehotel.com/>



The student game room is located on the S1 floor and will be available throughout the event as a space for relaxation and recreation.

A selection of snacks and refreshments will also be provided in this area for participants.

Delegations staying here: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Chinese Taipei, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea (Republic of Korea), Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

- **VENTURA HOTEL (STUDENTS)**

Located next to a small forest reserve outside of Bucaramanga with mountain views, this hotel blends historic expressions of pre-Columbian culture with modern comfort.

Address: Kilómetro 2 +197 Autopista Sur. Floridablanca, Colombia

Email: reservas@hotelventura.com.co

Website: <https://hotelventura.com.co/en/index>

The student game room is located on the second floor of the annex building, above the restaurant. It will be available throughout the event as a dedicated space for relaxation, recreation, and social interaction among participants.

A selection of snacks and refreshments will also be provided in this area for participants.

Delegations staying here: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.

- **ROSELIERE HOTEL (STUDENTS)**

In the heart of the city of Floridablanca, the Roseliere Hotel stands as a modern destination for discerning travelers.

Address: Cl. 30 #24-38 Cañaveral,
Floridablanca | Santander | Colombia

Phone Number: (57) 300 4747694

Website: <https://hotelroseliere.com/>



The student game room is located on the 20th floor and will be available throughout the event as a dedicated space for relaxation, recreation, and social interaction among participants.

A selection of snacks and refreshments will also be provided in this area for participants.

Delegations staying here: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Rwanda, South Africa, and Spain.

- **ACCOMODATION OPTIONS FOR EXTENDED STAY**

All of the official IPhO hotels have offered their discounted rate for any delegations that wish to arrive early or leave after the Olympiad.

Type of room	HOLIDAY INN	ROSELIERE	DANN CARLTON	PUNTA DIAMANTE	VENTURA
Single Occupancy	€110		€95		€72
Twin Occupancy	€118	€105	€107	€134	€81
Triple Occupancy		€124		€134	€93
Quadruple Occupancy		€145			€108

*These prices can vary depending on the exchange rate

If you need any help booking the rooms, please don't hesitate to contact us.

3. TRANSPORT FROM AIRPORT TO HOTEL

3.1 Arrival at Palonegro International Airport (BGA)

All delegations will be welcomed upon arrival at Palonegro International Airport (BGA) on 3 and 4 July. Upon landing, participants are kindly requested to look for official IPhO signage and staff members wearing T-shirts with the IPhO logo.



Our airport reception team will be available to assist with guidance, transportation coordination, and any immediate questions to ensure a smooth arrival experience for all delegations.

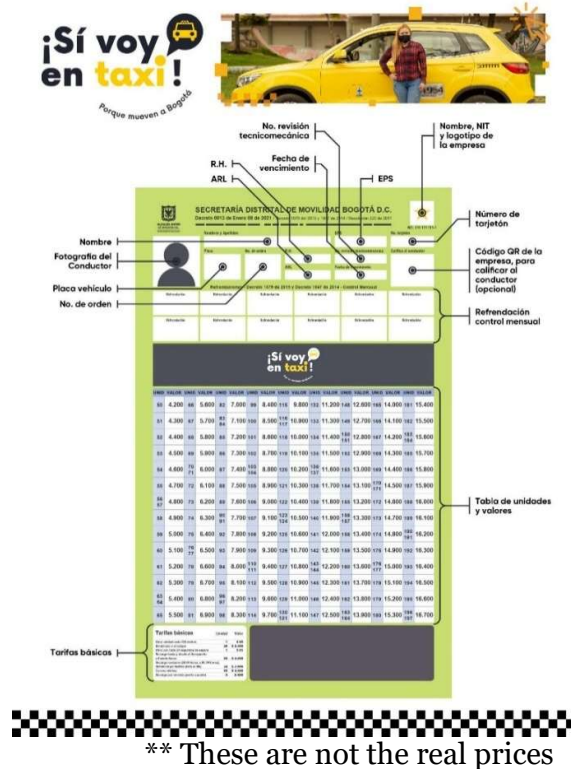
3.2 Taxis in Bucaramanga

Taxis are a straightforward and widely used mode of transportation in Bucaramanga.

- **Legal Taxis:** Authorized taxis are yellow and display their license plate number on the side of the vehicle. They are also equipped with a functioning meter.
- **The Meter:** Ensure that the meter is activated and reset at the start of your journey. If it is not, politely ask the driver to turn it on.
- **Capacity:** Taxis can accommodate up to four adult passengers.
- **Fares:** Taxi fares are calculated using a meter that starts at 28 units. The minimum fare in Bucaramanga is currently 50 units (COP 9,100). Additional surcharges may apply for airport trips, nighttime service, or other special circumstances.
- **Control Card:** Every authorized taxi must display a control card in a visible location, usually on the back of the front passenger seat. This document certifies that the vehicle is legally authorized to operate as a taxi and that the driver holds the required permits. It also contains information about applicable fares and surcharges.

As with any destination, participants are encouraged to confirm the fare conditions before starting their journey and to use authorized transportation services whenever possible.

An example of the taxi control card is shown below.



For travel between the hotel and the main tourist attractions, shopping areas, restaurants, and entertainment districts, taxis and ride-hailing mobile applications are the most convenient and recommended means of transportation. These services are widely available throughout Bucaramanga and provide a safe, reliable, and efficient way to move around the city.

Participants are encouraged to use authorized transportation services and to verify driver and vehicle information before beginning their journey.

4. PROGRAMS

A very detailed program for all participants is available on the website

4.1 Student Program

Day	Date	Programme	Key Activities
Day 0	4 July	Arrivals	Arrival of delegations, airport transfers, dinner
Day 1	5 July	Opening Ceremony	Opening ceremony at Neomundo Convention Center, meals, free time
Day 2	6 July	Experimental Examination	Experimental exam, transfers, meals, free time
Day 3	7 July	Excursion 1	Chicamocha National Park (PANACHI), Casa de Campo activities
Day 4	8 July	Theoretical Examination	Theoretical exam, sponsors' fair, activities, dinner at Neomundo
Day 5	9 July	Excursion 2	Girón cultural tour, lunch at Club Campestre, visit to El Santísimo
Day 6	10 July	Academic Programme	Lectures, activities, Jane Street dinner and game night
Day 7	11 July	Closing Ceremony	Free time, closing ceremony, farewell banquet
Day 8	12 July	Departures	Hotel check-out and airport transfers

4.2 Leaders Program

Day	Date	Programme	Key Activities
Day 0	July 4	Arrivals	Arrival of delegations; hotel check-in; welcome dinner
Day 1	July 5	Opening Ceremony	Opening Ceremony; International Board discussions; experimental discussion session
Day 2	July 6	Excursion 1	Visit to Chicamocha Canyon; lunch at Terra Hotel; cultural tour of Barichara; dinner at Chiflas
Day 3	July 7	Theoretical Exam Discussion	Discussion sessions on the theoretical exam; meals and coffee breaks; evening discussions
Day 4	July 8	Excursion 2 & Sponsors' Fair	Walking tour of Bucaramanga; lunch at UAN; Sponsors' Fair at Neomundo; dinner
Day 5	July 9	Marking	Marking sessions; lunch sponsored by Jane Street; visit to El Santísimo Ecopark
Day 6	July 10	Moderation Sessions	Moderation sessions; International Board (IB) Meeting
Day 7	July 11	Closing Ceremony	Free time; Closing Ceremony; Farewell Banquet
Day 8	July 12	Departures	Departure of delegations; transfers to the airport

4.3 Observers Program

Day	Date	Programme	Key Activities
Day 0	July 4	Arrivals	Arrival of delegations, airport transfers to assigned hotels, welcome dinner
Day 1	July 5	Opening Ceremony	Opening Ceremony at Neomundo Convention Center, International Board discussions, evening discussion session, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 2	July 6	Excursion 1	Visit to Chicamocha Canyon, lunch at Terra Hotel, cultural tour of Barichara, dinner at Chiflas, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 3	July 7	Theoretical Exam Discussion	Discussion sessions at Holiday Inn Hotel, meals and coffee breaks, evening discussions, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 4	July 8	Excursion 2 & Sponsors' Fair	Walking tour of Bucaramanga, lunch at UAN, Sponsors' Fair at Neomundo, dinner, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel

Day 5	July 9	Marking	Marking sessions at Holiday Inn Hotel, sponsored lunch by Jane Street, visit to El Santísimo Ecopark, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 6	July 10	Moderation Sessions	Moderation sessions at Holiday Inn Hotel, International Board (IB) Meeting, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 7	July 11	Closing Ceremony	Free time, Closing Ceremony at Neomundo, Farewell Banquet, transfer to Dann Carlton Hotel
Day 8	July 12	Departures	Departure of delegations and transfers from hotel to airport

4.4 Visitors Program

Day	Date	Programme	Key Activities
Day 2	July 6	Excursion 1	Visit to Chicamocha Canyon, lunch, cultural tour of Barichara, return to hotels, dinner
Day 3	July 7	Excursion 2	Visit to Hacienda Casa Blanca, lunch, transfer to Holiday Inn Hotel, free time
Day 4	July 8	Excursion 3	Walking tour of Bucaramanga, lunch at UAN, Sponsors' Fair at Neomundo, dinner, transfer to hotel
Day 5	July 9	Leisure & El Santísimo	Free time, visit to El Santísimo Ecopark, transfer to hotel, dinner
Day 6	July 10	Cultural Visit to Girón	Walking tour of Girón, transfer to Holiday Inn Hotel, free time

5. CALCULATORS

The official calculator provided for use during the IPhO 2026 examinations is the Casio FX-82LA CW scientific calculator. To ensure fairness and consistency for all participants, the same calculator model will be supplied to every student and should be used throughout the competition.



Each participant will receive a calculator before the examinations begin and will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with its functions during the event. Students are encouraged to review the calculator's features in advance if possible, as no alternative personal calculators will be permitted during the examinations unless otherwise specified by the organizers.

Please note that the calculators are provided on a temporary basis and remain the property of the IPhO 2026 organizers. As they will be reused for future activities and events, all calculators must be returned after the theoretical examination. Participants are kindly requested to handle the equipment with care and ensure that it is returned in good condition at the end of the exam.

6. EXCURSIONS

6.1 Chicamocha Canyon

In the heart of Santander, Colombia, just a short drive from Bucaramanga, lies one of the country's most spectacular natural wonders: Chicamocha Canyon. Stretching more than 200 kilometers and reaching depths of up to 2,000 meters, this dramatic landscape of towering cliffs, rugged mountains, and winding rivers is considered one of the largest canyons in the world. For travelers seeking adventure, culture, and breathtaking scenery, it is an essential destination.

Today, Chicamocha Canyon offers an unforgettable blend of nature and adventure. Visitors can take in panoramic views from the cable car that crosses the canyon, soar above its vast expanse on a paragliding flight, or admire its beauty from the many scenic viewpoints overlooking the canyon and the Chicamocha River below. Every visit provides a unique



opportunity to experience the grandeur of Santander and discover one of Colombia's most remarkable landscapes.

6.2 Barichara

Nestled among the rolling hills of Santander, Barichara is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful towns in Colombia. Founded in 1705, this picturesque colonial town has preserved its historic character through its cobblestone streets, whitewashed buildings, clay-tiled roofs, and peaceful plazas. Designated as a National Monument of Colombia, Barichara offers visitors a unique blend of architectural heritage, cultural traditions, and stunning natural scenery. From its scenic viewpoints overlooking the Suárez River Canyon to its charming artisan workshops and welcoming atmosphere, Barichara provides an authentic glimpse into Colombia's colonial past and remains one of the country's most treasured destinations.

6.3 Girón

Located just a few kilometers from Bucaramanga, Girón is one of Santander's most charming and historically significant towns. Officially known as San Juan de Girón, it was founded in 1631 and is recognized as a National Monument of Colombia for its well-preserved colonial architecture and cultural heritage. Visitors can stroll through its cobblestone streets, admire whitewashed houses with traditional wooden balconies, and explore picturesque squares that reflect centuries of history. The town's iconic basilica, tranquil atmosphere, and rich local traditions make Girón an ideal destination for those wishing to experience the colonial charm and cultural identity of the Santander region.

6.4 El Santísimo

Overlooking the metropolitan area of Bucaramanga from the hills of Floridablanca, El Santísimo is one of the most iconic landmarks in Santander. The site is home to a monumental statue of Christ that rises more than 35 meters above the surrounding landscape, offering visitors spectacular panoramic views of the city and the Eastern Andes. Reached by a scenic cable car ride, the complex combines impressive architecture, religious symbolism, and natural beauty. Whether visiting for its viewpoints, cultural significance, or peaceful atmosphere, El Santísimo has become one of the region's most popular attractions and a symbol of Santander's growing tourism appeal.

7. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

7.1 Climate

Known as the "City of Parks," Bucaramanga enjoys a pleasant climate throughout the year, making it one of Colombia's most comfortable urban destinations. Located on a plateau in the Eastern Andes at an altitude of approximately 960 meters above sea level, the city experiences warm daytime temperatures that typically range between 22°C and 30°C. Its



moderate elevation helps maintain a spring-like atmosphere, while refreshing evening breezes provide relief from the daytime warmth. Bucaramanga's climate, combined with its abundance of green spaces and surrounding mountain landscapes, creates an inviting environment for outdoor activities and year-round tourism.

Bucaramanga is well known for its abundant sunshine, enjoying many bright and sunny days throughout the year. Thanks to its location in the Colombian Andes and its relatively dry climate compared with many other regions of the country, the city often experiences clear skies and strong solar radiation. Visitors are encouraged to use sunscreen, wear hats, and stay hydrated when spending time outdoors, especially during the middle of the day. The city's sunny weather contributes to its vibrant outdoor lifestyle, allowing residents and visitors alike to enjoy its parks, plazas, and surrounding natural attractions year-round.

However, Bucaramanga's weather can be quite unpredictable, and rainfall may occur suddenly even during periods that begin with clear skies. Like much of Colombia, the region can experience rapid changes in weather conditions throughout the day, making it difficult to rely on forecasts alone.

For this reason, it is recommended to carry a light waterproof jacket or a compact umbrella when moving around the city. Being prepared for occasional rain will help ensure comfort while exploring Bucaramanga.

7.2 Currency and Exchange

The official currency of Colombia is the Colombian peso, abbreviated as COP. It is issued and regulated by the Banco de la República, the country's central bank. Colombian banknotes are available in denominations of 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000, and 100,000 pesos, while coins are commonly used in smaller transactions.

The currency features designs that highlight Colombia's cultural heritage, historical figures, and natural biodiversity. Cash remains widely used across the country, especially in smaller towns and rural areas, although digital payments and card (especially Visa and Mastercard) transactions are very common in all major cities.

For visitors, understanding the exchange rate and carrying smaller bills can be helpful for everyday purchases such as transportation, markets, and local shops. **A permanent currency exchange point will be available throughout IPhO 2026 at the Neomundo Convention Center. Please note that only Euros (EUR) and U.S. Dollars (USD) will be accepted for currency exchange services.**

7.3 Supermarkets and Convenient Stores

Next to the Holiday Inn, there is a large supermarket called Éxito, where visitors can find a wide variety of products including food, beverages, liquor, medicines, sunscreen, insect repellent, and clothing. It is one of the most convenient options for guests staying in the area who need anything from daily essentials to larger grocery items.



Convenience stores such as OXXO are also widely available throughout the city, including locations next to the Dann Carlton and Roselière hotels. These stores are open late and offer snacks, drinks, and basic necessities, making them a practical option for quick purchases.

Across from the Punta Diamante hotel, there is a smaller supermarket called “+ x –”. Although more compact in size, it still provides a good selection of food and beverages, suitable for everyday needs.

Finally, near the Ventura hotel and accessible via the pedestrian bridge across the road, there are two pharmacies that also stock snacks, drinks, and basic essentials in addition to medications, sunscreen, and insect repellent, offering further convenience for guests staying in the area.

7.4 Safety & Security

Bucaramanga is generally considered one of the safer major cities in Colombia, with a relaxed atmosphere and a strong presence of public spaces such as parks and pedestrian areas. Visitors often find it comfortable for walking around during the day, especially in central and well-traveled neighborhoods.

As in any urban destination, however, basic precautions are recommended. It is advisable to remain aware of your surroundings, especially in crowded areas or when using public transport. Valuables such as phones, wallets, and cameras should be kept secure and not displayed openly. At night, it is safer to use trusted transportation services rather than walking long distances, particularly in unfamiliar areas.

Most visits to Bucaramanga are trouble-free, and by following standard travel safety practices, visitors can enjoy the city’s parks, restaurants, and surrounding attractions with confidence and peace of mind.

7.5 Vaccinations

No vaccination is required to enter Colombia for most travelers. However, it is still recommended that visitors ensure their routine vaccinations are up to date, including those for measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, and diphtheria, as well as COVID-19 where applicable based on individual health guidance and country-of-origin recommendations.

Depending on travel plans, additional vaccines may be advised. For example, the yellow fever vaccine is often recommended for those visiting rural or jungle regions and may be required for entry into certain protected areas. **It is important to note that these requirements do not apply to visits to Chicamocha Canyon, which is not classified as a protected area requiring vaccination for entry.**

In practice, Colombia may ask for a **Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate** if you are arriving from or have spent time in countries with a risk of yellow fever transmission.



Countries commonly affected by this requirement (risk zones)

In South America:

- Brazil (especially northern and Amazon regions)
- Peru
- Bolivia
- Ecuador
- Venezuela
- Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana

In Africa (many countries are considered risk areas):

- Nigeria
- Ghana
- Cameroon
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Angola
- Uganda
- Kenya
- Tanzania
- Ethiopia
- Sudan / South Sudan
- And several others across tropical/subtropical Africa

Important notes

- The rule is usually based on **recent travel (often within the last 6 days or transit through an airport in a risk country)**, not just nationality.
- Requirements can change depending on public health alerts.
- Even if not required for entry, the vaccine is often **recommended for travel within Colombia**, especially for Amazon and rural jungle regions.

7.6 What to bring

- **Sunscreen and hats:** Due to Colombia's proximity to the equator, the sun is strong throughout the year, even on cloudy days. Participants are strongly encouraged to bring sufficient sunscreen to last the full 9 days of the event, along with hats or other sun protection. Sunscreen is also readily available in local supermarkets and pharmacies if additional supplies are needed.
- **Insect repellent:** Mosquitoes and other insects are common in the Santander region, particularly in the evenings and in warmer or greener areas. Participants are advised to bring a strong insect repellent to ensure comfort during outdoor activities.



- **Medication:** Participants undergoing medical treatment are kindly requested to bring an adequate supply of their prescribed medication to cover the entire duration of their stay, along with any necessary documentation or prescriptions, if applicable.

7.7 Quick Facts & Procedures

Time Zone: UTC -5

Electricity: Colombia uses a **110-volt electrical system** with a frequency of **60 Hz**. The most common power outlets are compatible with **standard U.S. two-pin plugs (Type A)** and **grounded three-pin plugs (Type B)**.

Participants travelling from countries that use different plug types or voltages are advised to bring an appropriate plug adapter and, if necessary, a voltage converter for their electronic devices.

International Dialing Code: Colombia's international dialing code is **+57**.

Currency Declaration: Any amount exceeding **USD 10,000 (or its equivalent in other currencies)** per person must be declared to Colombian Customs upon entry into the country.

Airport Departure: For international flights, participants are advised to arrive at the airport at least **three hours before departure**. For domestic flights, arriving **two hours before departure** is generally recommended.

Identification: Participants are advised to carry their identification documents, particularly their passport, at all times. It is also recommended to keep a digital copy of these documents in a secure location.

Electronic Equipment: Please remain vigilant and keep a close watch on personal belongings, including laptops, mobile phones, tablets, cameras, and other electronic devices, especially in public areas, transportation hubs, and crowded locations.

7.8 Emergency Numbers

In case of an emergency, please use the following contact details:

Emergency services: 123

Head Organizer (Elena Losada): +573102726486

WhatsApp group:

https://chat.whatsapp.com/CxzYNUObRXXFYkbhUOnDGP?utm_source=chatgpt.com

7.9 Emergency Medical Services

Bucaramanga is recognized as one of Colombia's leading healthcare hubs and offers access to high-quality medical services for both residents and international visitors. In the event of



a medical emergency, participants can rely on the city's modern healthcare infrastructure and highly qualified medical professionals.

The International Hospital of Colombia (HIC), located in the Bucaramanga metropolitan area (Km 7 Autopista Bucaramanga – Piedecuesta), is one of the country's most advanced medical institutions. Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and a wide range of specialized services, the hospital provides comprehensive emergency and critical care 24 hours a day. Its facilities and internationally oriented services make it a key healthcare reference center for visitors requiring medical attention during their stay.

Participants are encouraged to carry their health insurance information at all times and to immediately contact event staff should medical assistance be required.

We hope that this guide will be a valuable resource as you prepare for your stay and make the most of your participation in IPhO 2026.

Beyond the scientific and academic exchanges, we hope your time in Colombia will provide an opportunity to discover our rich heritage, vibrant culture, breathtaking landscapes, and the warmth of Colombian hospitality.

The Organizing Committee sincerely thanks you for your trust and confidence. We remain at your disposal should you require any further information or assistance, and we look forward to welcoming you to Bucaramanga for an unforgettable IPhO 2026.

Organizing Committee IPhO 2026