

# WORLD LEISURE CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE OPEN REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



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## INTENT AND SCOPE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from interested colleges or universities to establish and implement a World Leisure Center of Excellence (WLCE) and be a recognized member of the WLCE network. The rights specified in this agreement pertain to the opportunities outlined in "Rights and privileges of the WLCE network and opportunities within WLO" section. Only complete applications will be considered.

The required documentation of expertise and qualifications outlined in this request are intended to serve primarily as a general guide for each statement of qualifications, with the minimum requirements listed. Each college or university is expected to submit a fully detailed statement of qualifications that adequately describes the advantages and benefits the World Leisure Organization (WLO) would realize by selecting their institution. Through this RFP process WLO may select multiple institutions to establish WLCE.

# WORLD LEISURE ORGANIZATION

As a worldwide, non-governmental voluntary organization, WLO is dedicated to discovering and fostering the conditions that enable leisure to serve as a force to optimize collective and individual well-being. More specifically, through research, education, knowledge transfer and advocacy, WLO: 1) promotes leisure as integral to social, cultural and economic

development; 2) supports the rights of all people to good quality leisure experiences; 3) recognizes that many people have special requirements related to disability, age, gender, social status, poverty, domicile and education; 4) acts where leisure includes play, recreation, the arts and culture, sport, festivals and celebrations, health and fitness, travel and tourism.

## WLCE NETWORK

WLCEs are tertiary institutions that provide state-of-the-art \*English-taught graduate programs focused on play, recreation, the arts, culture, sport, festivals and celebrations, health and fitness, or travel and tourism. As part of the WLO family, the WLCE network provides students, educators, researchers and professionals the chance to participate and contribute to unique, theme-focused educational endeavors at an international level. WLCEs are leading institutions, providing teaching, research and community services on leisure best practices.

*\*\*To have English-taught graduate programs is not mandatory but preferable. If you have questions about this matter connect directly with WLO Secretariat.*

Currently, the WLCE network consists of 10 members: **Breda University of Applied Sciences** (the Netherlands), **Vancouver Island University** (Canada), **University of Sao Paulo** (Brazil), **University of Otago** (New Zealand), **Zhejiang University** (China), **Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières** (Canada), **Western Sydney University** (Australia), **Hungarian University of Sport Science** (Hungary), **Texas State University** (USA) & **North Carolina State University**.

WLO anticipates the establishment of selective additional WLCE, especially in geographic areas without representation of such programs. However, all proposals will receive consideration by the WLO Board of Directors.





# RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE WLCE NETWORK

WLCE network colleges and universities shall be granted the following rights, privileges and opportunities. This is not an exhaustive list, and creative collaborations, innovation and mutually beneficial exchanges are encouraged.

## FOR ACADEMICS, RESEARCHERS AND SCHOLARS.

### Exchange programs

Access and co-create joint programmes and activities among the WLCEs network:

- Take part in research and teaching exchange programs within the WLCE network.
- Organize master classes and guest lectures within the WLCE network.
- Get exclusive invitations to present at WL Events (e.g., WL Congress, WL Expo, WL Day) and other WLO partnership events in the leisure field.
- Organize collaborative research projects.
- Promote joint thesis supervision.

### Publications

- Regular invitations to contribute to WLO and WLCE-related publications, as authors, editors, or members of the editorial board. Below are some of the current publication outlets:
- World Leisure Journal
- World Leisure Book Series: The Advisory Board should be composed of a representative from each WLCE plus a member of the WLO Board of Directors, according to the Rules of Governance and Composition.
- Leisure Practices Case Studies (WLCE VIU)
- Uncover (WLCE BUAS)

## FOR STUDENTS.

### Field experience programmes

- Have exclusive access to specifically designed programmes:
- WL Field Schools - a learning opportunity that combines practical field learning experience with congress attendance.
- Leisure Experience Research Opportunity (LERO) - internationally oriented field research project aimed at exploring tourism and leisure experiences in the host city.

### Internships

- Have exclusive access to internship opportunities supported by WLO:
- Internship at WLO Headquarters, working with the Secretariat in the operations of this international leisure organization
- Other international internship opportunities in the leisure industry through the WLO and WLCE network.

### WL Youth Ambassadors

Have access to the World Leisure Youth Ambassadors program. This program connects students with other young people across the world on a local-to-global basis to gain a broader perspective of trends, issues, strategies and advancing leisure worldwide.

### NETWORKING (As and institution and in general terms).

Build bridges and break barriers with the support of WLO:

- Access to the WLCE network worldwide and cooperation with students and faculty members in the field of leisure worldwide
- Connect and build bridges with other leisure related topics through the WL Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Access WL publication partners (e.g., Leisure Media, Australasia Leisure Management)
- Engage with external leisure related organizations, WL Institutional Members, Global Relevance Committee, among others.
- Have privileged access and involvement opportunities in WLO programmes and activities.
- Access to WLO membership to serve as faculty, consultants and collaborators.

### MARKETING, PROMOTION AND MEMBERSHIP (As and institution and in general terms).

- WLO provides a great range of marketing and promotion opportunities through its various communication channels:
- Have a dedicated site in the WLO website
- Publish in the WL News published monthly
- Use of the WLO and WLCE logos
- Support from WLO Secretariat in developing communication materials for WLCE activities
- Get up to 10 WL Premium Individual Memberships for leisure academics and research students

# ARE YOU ELEGIBLE TO BECOME A WLCE?

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.

- A. Applicant colleges or universities must be accredited or approved as tertiary institutions by recognized bodies in their country of origin (e.g., governmental agencies or other official accrediting bodies).
- B. Applicant colleges or universities must offer at least one program at the undergraduate, masters, or PhD level in the leisure field (or leisure-related field).
- C. Applicant colleges or universities must have demonstrated a previous and ongoing commitment to providing a leisure-focused academic curriculum and have sufficient resources in terms of administrative services and faculty members to support their operations.

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## SERVICES REQUIRED.

WLCEs shall be explicitly willing to commit themselves to the network and provide added value to both their universities, emerging student leaders and the global leisure profession and academy. WLCEs shall be pro-active participants in the network in order to provide faculty and students with multiple opportunities for maximum benefit from the international network.

## FEE REQUIREMENTS.

The host institution will pay an annual fee of \$5,000 USD to WLO.

WLO will establish an Evaluation Committee that will visit the applicant to assess the proposals submitted. The cost of such visits will be covered by the potential WLCE. In extraordinary circumstances when an in-person site visit is not possible due to justified reasons, WLO is committed to offering applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their potential by organizing a virtual visit (including audiovisual materials) and online meetings with various representatives.

Fee exemption: In certain and extraordinary situations, an exception may be made, for no longer than 3 years, for those institutions that are unable to pay the annual fee for justified or force majeure reasons. For those cases, institutions may request a specific revision of their applications including explicit requests for a fee exemption. These proposals will be evaluated by the WLO Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis, and will ultimately decide whether the fee exemption will be applied. Those proposals granted with a fee exemption will be yearly monitored and evaluated both in relation to the activities and programs performed as well as for its financial situation. A report will be requested for this purpose.

# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PROPOSAL

## STEP 1. NOTICE OF INTENT TO RESPOND TO THIS RFP.

Each college or university that intends to respond to this RFP must provide the following information via email to the WLO Scientific and Technical Secretariat.

1. Name of College or University
2. Name of College or University's Primary Contact(s) with relation to this RFP
3. Mailing Address of Primary Contact(s)
4. Telephone Number of Primary Contact(s)
6. E-mail Address of Primary Contact(s)

## STEP 2. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS.

All colleges or universities must submit their proposals in English and in Adobe PDF format to the World Leisure Secretariat using the following email address: [secretariat@worldleisure.org](mailto:secretariat@worldleisure.org). Proposals are to be signed by an officially authorized representative of the college or university.

Colleges or universities are expected to comply with all specifications, terms, conditions and instructions in this RFP and must provide all required information. All proposals will be compared with the stated criteria. Multiple centres may be selected at the time.

Proposals should be straightforward and describe the college or university's capabilities to meet the requirements of the current RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

The proposal of the successful college or university will be included as reference into the ensuing contract.

Submission of the proposal is due 3 months after the receipt of the Notice of Intent to respond to this RFP.

# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Your proposal should contain, at least, the following points:

## 01. VISION/MISSION STATEMENT, PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND UNIQUE ASPECTS AND STRENGTHS.

Proposals should detail the department's or program's vision/mission statement. Describing the vision/mission statement specific for the WLCE is considered ideal. In addition, program objectives and learning outcomes should be identified. Each proposal should also detail the unique aspects and strengths of the institution's offerings, human resources, physical resources/location, fiscal resources, and the other unique features of the programs such as experiential learning opportunities, department or program affiliations, etc.

## 02. PROPOSED CURRICULUM THEME AND FOCUS.

Proposals must include a draft outline of an existing academic program theme and focus related to leisure. WLO seeks curriculum proposals that link leisure to academic areas such as social and cultural programming, com-

munity recreation development, youth development, event management, natural resource management, tourism, therapeutic recreation, economics, sociology, social psychology, and others. In addition, proposals must include a draft outline of the curriculum, including English-taught course titles and descriptions. Also, proposals must provide information regarding the program's timeframe and sequencing of course work.

### **03. FACULTY/STAFFING PATTERNS.**

Proposals must include information regarding faculty and staffing patterns, including a short curriculum vitae of the potential WLCE leadership team. The curriculum vitae should include supervision experience, publications, grants, research and governance experience in a maximum of four (4) pages. Strategies for recruiting faculty on an international basis must be included in each proposal. Such strategies may involve retaining faculty members to provide instruction on an adjunct short-term basis. Applicants should include any recognized anti-discrimination policies and/or proactive measures for recruiting women and ethnic/racial minorities within their application documentation.

### **04. CENTER/ DEPARTMENT/ PROGRAM GOVERNANCE.**

The administrative location of the center/department/program shall be identified in the proposal, including an organizational chart of the institution and the placement of the proposed program inside the existing structure.

Proposals regarding the governance and oversight activities of the proposed WLCE must include the establishment of a committee/working group. The committee/working group shall be established at the selected institution to coordinate the overall cooperation between WLO and the parties involved in the establishment of the program. The focus is on co-operation in general, i.e. projects, relationship between WLO representatives and institutions faculty and staff. The committee/working group will send an annual report to WLO no later than two months after the end of the academic year.

### **05. ADDED VALUE TO THE NETWORK.**

Proposals must provide a commitment to further develop the WLCE network and demonstrate the potential added value to the network. The purpose of the WLCE program is not self-serving but must be network focused and driven.

### **06. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS AND RECRUITMENT PLAN.**

In addition, proposals must include strategies for establishing and supporting scholarships, assistantships and funds for research projects as well as plans for recruiting students. A commitment and demonstration to internationalization of all aspects related to the centre and the university department would be highly appreciated.

### **07. PROPOSED BUSINESS PLAN.**

Proposals to establish a WLCE program must include a business plan addressing the following elements:

- A. Budget, identifying funding sources and potential expenditures;
- B. a statement acknowledging that all financial liabilities for the WLCE programmes are the responsibility of the host university or college;
- C. confirmation of the requirement for reporting program statements annually following the conclusion of the academic year.



## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

### **01. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS BY THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE.**

Submitted proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee, comprised of experts in the field. WLO will establish this Evaluation Committee that will undertake a site visit in order to assess the proposals submitted. The cost of such site visit will be covered by the applicant. In cases where an in-person site visit is not possible, WLO is committed to offering applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their potential by organizing a virtual visit (including audiovisual materials) and online meetings with various representatives.

### **02. PRESENTATION TO THE WLO BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

Candidates who submit proposals in response to the RFP will be given a chance to personally present their proposals to the Board of Directors of the WLO. This presentation will take place before the Board makes its final decision. This opportunity allows candidates to directly communicate the strengths and benefits of their proposals, address any questions or concerns the Board may have, and further elaborate on any key aspects that might reinforce their candidacy.

### **03. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE.**

After undergoing the evaluation process, the successful proposals should be approved by the WLO Board of Directors. Once this is approved, applicants will be entrusted by WLO with the right to establish a WLCE. The effective date of the contract between the successful colleges or universities and WLO will be the date agreed upon by the parties.

### **04. NEGOTIATION.**

It is the intention of WLO to enter into any proposal reviewing negotiation with the colleges or universities selected as a result of the RFP process. Colleges or universities selected to participate in negotiations will be provided with an opportunity to provide a final copy of their negotiated proposal for contract purposes.

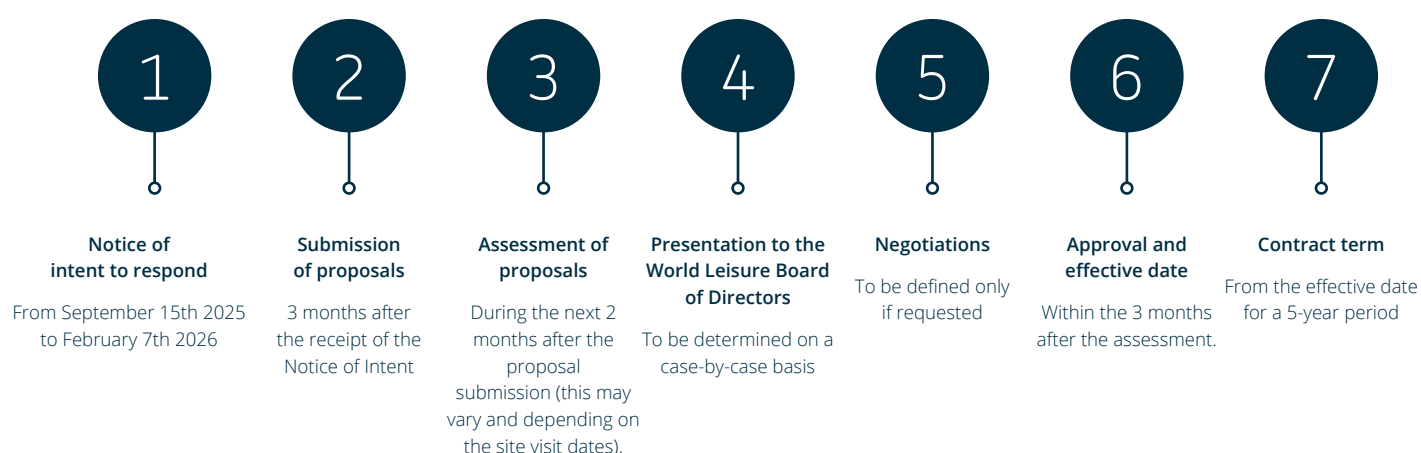
### **05. CONTRACT TERM.**

The contract that results from award of rights outlined in this RFP will be for five (5) years, and with a five (5) year renewal option.

# OFFICIAL SUBMISSION TIMEFRAME

The official submission timeframe refer to the specific deadlines set by WLO for the different stages of the RFP process. These timeframes are crucial for ensuring that all candidates submit their proposals in a timely manner. Key dates as follows:

1. **Notice of Intent to respond** to this RFP between September 15th, 2025, and February 7th, 2026.
2. **Submission of proposals** – 3 months after the receipt of the Notice of Intent (this would be 7th May, latest.)
3. **Assessment of proposals** – during the next 2 months after the proposal submission (this may vary and depending on the site visit dates).
4. **Presentation to the World Leisure Board of Directors** – *to be determined on a case-by-case basis*
5. **Negotiations** – *to be defined only if requested*
6. **Approval and effective date** – within the 3 months after the assessment.
7. **Contract term** – from the effective date for a 5-year period



# QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Questions and comments with reference to this RFP must be directed by email to World Leisure Secretariat at: [secretariat@worldleisure.org](mailto:secretariat@worldleisure.org)

