INTERNATIONAL CHEER UNION

THE WORLD GOVERNING BODY FOR THE SPORT OF CHEER

INTERNATIONAL
MASCOT PROGRAM

2027 | PARTICIPANT INFORMATION & PROGRAM GUIDELINES

DEVELOP.

PERFORM.

INSPIRE.

Build memorable characters. Inspire crowds. Create national pride.





DEVELOP THE CHARACTER

MASTER THE PERFORMANCE

BUILD THE PROGRAM

01 / PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Build the character. Inspire a nation.

The International Cheer Union (ICU) Mascot Program is designed to provide participating National Federations with an educational and interactive experience focused on mascot character development, performance excellence, and fan engagement.

Through professional instruction, hands-on workshops, live performances, and constructive evaluations, participants will develop the skills necessary to create memorable mascot characters that positively represent their countries and enhance the spectator experience.

The inaugural program emphasizes education, participation, and continuous improvement while providing a foundation for National Federations to establish and expand their own mascot programs.

THE THREE PILLARS OF THE ICU MASCOT PROGRAM

01

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Create memorable, consistent mascot characters through personality, expressive movement, body language, and positive audience interaction.

02

PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE

Develop confidence, showmanship, and audience engagement techniques through professional coaching, practical exercises, and live performance evaluations.

03

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Equip participating National Federations with the knowledge and resources to establish and grow sustainable mascot programs, creating opportunities for their characters to represent their countries beyond cheerleading through national sporting events, community engagement, and future international appearances.

THE PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

Throughout the program, mascots will participate in interactive workshops and scheduled Live Performance Evaluations, where they will interact with spectators in designated event venues.

These evaluations provide opportunities to apply workshop techniques in a live environment while receiving constructive feedback on character development, performance, and fan engagement.

The program will conclude with participant recognition and an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned and future development opportunities.

02.1 / MASCOT CODE

Mascot Guidelines & Responsibilities

All participating mascots are expected to uphold the standards of professionalism, sportsmanship, and positive audience engagement established by the International Cheer Union (ICU).

THE MASCOT CODE

The following Do's and Don'ts reflect the established ICU Mascot Program guidelines.

DO'S

✓ **STAY IN CHARACTER**
Commit to your character from start to finish.

✓ **BE BIG & EXPRESSIVE**
Use large, exaggerated movements that can be seen from anywhere.

✓ **ENGAGE POSITIVELY**
High-fives, waves, photos, dancing, and fun interactions make memories.

✓ **BE PROFESSIONAL**
Represent your country, your federation, and the ICU with pride and respect.

✓ **ACCEPT FEEDBACK**
Use coaching and evaluations to improve and evolve your performance.

DON'TS

✗ **DON'T BREAK CHARACTER**
Stay in character at all times. Don't act like a human.

✗ **DON'T TALK**
No talking, mouthing words, or making sounds.

✗ **DON'T USE OFFENSIVE GESTURES OR INAPPROPRIATE HUMOR**
Keep it fun, family-friendly, and respectful.

✗ **DON'T REVEAL YOURSELF**
No skin showing, no rolled-up sleeves, and no removing the head in public.

✗ **DON'T IGNORE SAFETY**
Be aware of your surroundings, stay hydrated, and follow staff instructions.

The Mascot Code guides every appearance throughout the program.

02.2 / PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Performer & Assistant Responsibilities

★ MASCOT PERFORMERS

- **Program Participation:** Arrive prepared and on time for scheduled workshops, appearances, and Live Performance Evaluations.
- **Costume Readiness:** Maintain a complete, clean, and properly fitted mascot costume throughout the program.
- **Character Consistency:** Maintain the character's personality, movement, and behavior during public appearances.
- **Professional Conduct:** Interact positively and respectfully with spectators, athletes, event officials, and fellow mascots.
- **International Sportsmanship:** Demonstrate appropriate conduct during national anthems, official ceremonies, injured-athlete situations, and other moments requiring respect or reduced audience interaction.
- **Safety Awareness:** Recognize that mascot costumes may restrict visibility, hearing, and mobility. Work closely with designated assistants when navigating venues and interacting with spectators.
- **Respect Personal Boundaries:** Ensure interactions are appropriate, welcoming, and respectful of personal space, cultural differences, and individual comfort.
- **Program Development:** Apply workshop techniques and constructive feedback to continuously improve performance.

◆ MASCOT ASSISTANTS

National Federations are strongly encouraged to provide one to two designated mascot assistants for performer safety, coordination, and audience engagement.

- Guiding performers safely through venues and crowded areas.
- Monitoring performer comfort, hydration, and fatigue.
- Supporting appropriate audience interactions and managing spectator boundaries.
- Assisting with costume preparation, maintenance, and breaks.
- Coordinating scheduled appearances and Live Performance Evaluations with ICU program staff.
- Communicating safety concerns or emergencies to appropriate event personnel.

02.3 / FEDERATION PREPARATION

National Federations & Registration

National Federations help ensure their mascot arrives prepared and can take full advantage of the program.

NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

Participating National Federations are responsible for:

- Ensuring mascot performers and designated assistants understand program guidelines and expectations.
- Providing appropriate mascot costumes and necessary support resources.
- Ensuring representatives comply with ICU event policies and venue regulations.
- Supporting the continued development of their mascot programs beyond the World Championships.

MASCOT REGISTRATION & PREPARATION

Participating National Federations should arrive with a complete, performance-ready mascot costume. A fully developed character personality is not required; instructors will help participants shape their character, with the National Federation retaining final approval.

As part of mascot registration, each National Federation should provide:

- **Mascot Character Name:** The official name of the mascot representing the National Federation.
- **Country / National Federation:** The country and federation represented by the mascot.
- **Mascot Character Concept (Optional):** Any existing ideas for the mascot's personality, identity, or cultural inspiration.
- **Mascot Costume:** Confirmation that a complete, properly fitted, performance-ready costume will be available.
- **Mascot Performer:** Identification of the registered participant performing as the mascot.
- **Mascot Assistants:** Names of designated assistants, if applicable.

Mascot character names and National Federation information may be used for program materials, evaluations, awards, and personalized Certificates of Participation.

03 / WORKSHOP & PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Workshop & Program Activities

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

The ICU International Mascot Program combines interactive instruction, hands-on learning, and live performance opportunities to help participating mascots develop their characters, strengthen performance skills, and engage confidently with spectators.

Participants will begin with an instructor-led workshop before applying their skills during scheduled activities and Live Performance Evaluations throughout the World Championships.

MASCOT DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The workshop introduces essential mascot performance techniques through instruction, demonstrations, and interactive exercises.

Character Development & Personality

Develop a recognizable mascot personality through character consistency, expressive body language, signature walks, poses, and gestures.

Movement & Performance Techniques

Explore exaggerated movement, physical expression, improvisation, and techniques that help mascots communicate effectively without speaking.

Fan Engagement & Crowd Interaction

Practice positive interactions with individuals, families, and larger audiences through visual communication, audience awareness, and creative engagement.

Child Psychology & Family Interaction

Learn how children of different ages may respond to mascot characters, including excitement, hesitation, or fear, and how to adapt interactions to create safe, welcoming, and memorable experiences.

03 / WORKSHOP CONTINUED

Workshop & Program Activities

Continued workshop topics and participant experiences.

Mascot Branding & Digital Representation

Explore how mascot characters can strengthen National Federation identity and connect with audiences through appropriate digital content, social media, and public appearances, while respecting federation policies, intellectual property, and the responsibilities of national representation.

Mascot Safety & Professionalism

Review performer safety and conditioning, costume awareness and suit maintenance, character costuming, assistant coordination, appropriate audience interactions, and the importance of representing each National Federation with pride.

Building a Successful Mascot Program

Explore how National Federations can develop sustainable mascot programs that extend beyond cheerleading, creating opportunities for their characters to serve as ambassadors at sporting events, community activities, and other national and international engagements.

LIVE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Following the workshop, mascots will participate in scheduled Live Performance Evaluations at designated event venues.

These evaluations provide opportunities for participants to apply workshop techniques while interacting with spectators in an authentic sporting environment.

ICU Mascot Instructors will observe performances and provide constructive feedback to support continued development and improvement throughout the program.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION & RECOGNITION

In addition to workshops and Live Performance Evaluations, participants will have opportunities to engage with fellow mascots, exchange ideas, and represent their National Federations during designated World Championships activities.

The program will conclude with an awards and recognition ceremony celebrating participant achievements, individual growth, and outstanding mascot performances.

LEARN. PERFORM. IMPROVE.

04 / PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Preliminary Three-Day Schedule

The schedule below illustrates the planned three-day experience. Instruction and coaching will continue throughout the program, with exact times, venues, and assignments communicated before the event.

WEDNESDAY

BUILD YOUR CHARACTER

- Welcome & Mascot Introductions
- Program Orientation
- Mascot Rules: Do's & Don'ts
- Character Definition & Personality
- Character Walks & Movement
- Basic Pantomime & Expression
- Mascot Safety & Responsibilities
- **Live Performance Evaluation Orientation**

Optional Opening Ceremony Appearance (Not Evaluated)

THURSDAY

BRING YOUR CHARACTER TO LIFE

- Daily Warm-Up & Review
- Crowd Interaction & Fan Engagement
- Child Psychology & Family Interaction
- **Live Performance Evaluation #1 (25 Minutes)**
- Instructor Feedback
- Improvisation & Pantomime Workshop
- Performance Conditioning & Health
- Suit Maintenance & Costume Care
- **Live Performance Evaluation #2 (35 Minutes)**
- Instructor Feedback

FRIDAY

MASTER YOUR PERFORMANCE

- Daily Warm-Up & Review
- Performance Review & Coaching
- Costuming Your Character
- **Live Performance Evaluation #3 (45 Minutes)**
- Final Instructor Feedback
- Mascot Branding & Digital Representation
- Building a National Mascot Program
- Program Debrief

Awards & Recognition

PROGRAM NOTES

- Wednesday's Opening Ceremony appearance is optional and will not be evaluated.
- Specific times, venues, and evaluation assignments will be communicated prior to the event.
- Activities may be adjusted to accommodate championship scheduling and participant needs.

05 / LIVE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Live Performance Evaluations

A consistent, developmental approach to assessing mascot performance during the World Championships.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

During scheduled appearances, ICU Mascot Instructors observe how participants bring their characters to life and interact with spectators. Each evaluation uses the same score sheet, allowing mascots to track progress as they develop their skills.

THREE PROGRESSIVE EVALUATIONS

EVALUATION 01	EVALUATION 02	EVALUATION 03
25 MINUTES	**35 MINUTES**	**45 MINUTES**
Introduction	**Development**	**Final Evaluation**
Basic character presence, confidence, and crowd interaction.	Character walk, movement, creativity, and growing crowd confidence.	Overall performance and application of instructor feedback.

The durations above are proposed evaluation windows, not mandatory uninterrupted time in costume. Appropriate rest, cooling, and adjustments will be based on performer readiness and safety.

SCORING SYSTEM

Six performance categories are scored from 1 to 5 points each, for a maximum of 30 points per evaluation. The categories and scoring spaces appear on the sample form on the next page.

1	2	3	4	5
Needs Improvement	**Developing**	**Good**	**Very Good**	**Excellent**

INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

After each evaluation, instructors provide written comments in three areas:

- **Performance Strengths:** What the mascot did particularly well.
- **Areas for Improvement:** What the mascot should focus on next.
- **Additional Comments:** Other observations or coaching recommendations.

05 / SAMPLE EVALUATION FORM

Mascot Live Performance Evaluation

Sample scoring form | Circle one rating per category | 30 points possible

National Federation: _____	**Mascot Name:** _____
Instructor Name: _____	**Date:** _____
Evaluation: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3	**Venue:** _____

PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5
Character & Personality	○	○	○	○	○
Character Walk	○	○	○	○	○
Movement & Expression	○	○	○	○	○
Crowd Interaction	○	○	○	○	○
Creativity	○	○	○	○	○
Sportsmanship	○	○	○	○	○

1 Needs Improvement 2 Developing 3 Good
4 Very Good 5 Excellent

TOTAL ____ / 30

INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

PERFORMANCE STRENGTHS

_____

_____

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS

_____

_____

06 / AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Awards & Recognition

The ICU International Mascot Program recognizes outstanding performance, individual development, and the achievements of participating National Federations.

At the conclusion of the program, mascots will be recognized for their performances during the Live Performance Evaluations and their commitment to continued development.

CHAMPIONSHIP PLACEMENTS

GOLD
1ST PLACE
Awarded to the highest-ranking mascot based on the final Live Performance Evaluation.

SILVER
2ND PLACE
Awarded to the second-highest-ranking mascot based on the final Live Performance Evaluation.

BRONZE
3RD PLACE
Awarded to the third-highest-ranking mascot based on the final Live Performance Evaluation.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

ICU MASCOT DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Recognizes a participating mascot demonstrating exceptional growth and improvement throughout the program.

PARTICIPATION RECOGNITION

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

Each participating mascot will receive a personalized certificate recognizing their involvement in the ICU International Mascot Program.

Certificates will feature the mascot’s registered character name and National Federation.

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Awards and recognition will be presented at the conclusion of the program, celebrating the achievements of participating mascots and their National Federations.