

Nº 1

Sunday, July 5



PHYSICS IN ACTION

THE WORLD UNITES THROUGH PHYSICS

Host City: Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia.



GOOD MORNING BRILLIANT MINDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

Welcome to the dawn of the day when your incredible journey at **IPhO 2026** officially begins. Today, July 5, as you wake up in Bucaramanga for Day 1, you have reached that unique moment when the months of dedication, study, and hard work in your home countries finally become an international reality.

Having successfully completed registration and accreditation yesterday, this morning's schedule gives you the perfect opportunity to settle into your surroundings, breathe in the fresh mountain air of the Andes, and find your rhythm. Everything has been thoughtfully arranged to prepare you for the highlight of the day: our **Official Opening Ceremony**.

There is a remarkable sense of excitement in the air this morning. Today is not about blackboards, examinations, or laboratory challenges. Today is about coming together, reconnecting, and celebrating. The **Neomundo Convention Center** will be transformed into a stage worthy of this extraordinary occasion, where music, Colombia's vibrant culture, and the pride of representing your nations will take center stage. Today you will discover that the true heart of physics is also reflected in the warmth of human connection—in the smiles exchanged as you walk through the hallways, in the greetings shared among teams in many different languages, and in the colorful mosaic of delegations from dozens of nations coming together in one place.

Before the stage lights shine, before the official speeches begin, and before the spirit of the Olympiad completely surrounds you, we invite you to take a moment for mindful observation. Look carefully around you and commit these first hours of the morning to memory: the faces of your new companions, the quiet uncertainty of friendships just beginning to form, and the welcoming smiles of your Colombian guides.

Treasure this moment of anticipation that you are experiencing today in the **"City of Parks."** At the end of this unforgettable adventure, we will open this time capsule once again, and you will realize that this beautiful Opening Sunday marked the beginning of an irreversible and wonderful transformation in your lives.

Fill your hearts with pride, raise your flags high, and enjoy every moment of your official opening ceremony!

IPhO 2026 Team – Colombia

EVENT SCHEDULE

DAY - 1

JULY 5TH: OPENING CEREMONY



STUDENTS

08:00 - 09:00: Transfer to Neomundo Convention Center
09:30 - 12:30: Opening Ceremony
12:30 - 13:00: Transfer to assigned hotels
13:00 - 14:00: Lunch
14:00 - 19:00: Free time
19:00 - 21:00: Dinner
21:00 - 23:00: Free time

LEADERS

07:00 - 08:30: Breakfast
08:30 - 09:00: Walk to Neomundo (Convention Center)
09:30 - 12:30: Opening Ceremony
12:30 - 13:00: Walk to hotel
13:00 - 14:00: Lunch
14:00 - 19:00: Discussion Session (International Board)
19:00 - 21:00: Dinner
21:00 - 23:00: Discussion Session

OBSERVERS

07:00 - 08:30: Breakfast
08:30 - 09:00: Walk to Neomundo (Convention Center)
09:30 - 12:30: Opening Ceremony
12:30 - 13:00: Walk to hotel
13:00 - 14:00: Lunch
14:00 - 19:00: Discussion Session (International Board)
19:00 - 21:00: Dinner
21:00 - 23:00: Free Time
23:00 - 00:00: Transfer to Dann Carlton hotel

PHYSICS BRINGS THE WORLD TOGETHER

The International Physics Olympiad (IPhO 2026) brings together delegations from 91 countries and territories, making it one of the world's most important scientific events for young physics talents. More than 800 participants—including students, teachers, experts, and international academic leaders—are expected to attend. Among them are 430 outstanding high school students who will demonstrate their knowledge through theoretical and experimental examinations.

The event is hosted by Universidad Antonio Nariño, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2026 and has become a leading institution in scientific education and the promotion of young talent in Colombia and Latin America. International delegations begin arriving in Bucaramanga on July 3, while the Opening Ceremony will take place on July 5. Throughout the week, participants will face demanding theoretical and experimental challenges designed to evaluate their scientific knowledge, analytical skills, and understanding of complex physical phenomena.



Let's talk about the IPhO in Colombia and its architects: The Universidad Antonio Nariño (UAN). Founded in 1976 by an independent collective of science and mathematics professors powerfully led by Dr. Ricardo Losada Márquez and Dra. Mary Falk de Losada, the institution was explicitly built to democratize high-level knowledge.

Decades later, that legacy of devotion to science is brighter than ever. This private institution has expanded nationwide and became the second home for more than 100,000 alumni. The university pairs this growth with elite research, collaborating directly with CERN on the ATLAS experiment.

Securing the 2026 IPhO relies on a fierce legacy. The UAN offers institutional support, but Dra. Elena Losada Falk has also been the driving force behind Colombia's Olympiads, building key international connections. Locally, Fredy Andrés Gómez Rojas leads operations as director of the Bucaramanga campus. With Elena's leadership, UAN's staff is ready to welcome nearly 1,000 young physics talents to Neomundo.

FORMER IPHO OLYMPIANS



SANTIAGO VARGAS DOMÍNGUEZ

Santiago Vargas Domínguez Ph.D. in Astrophysics and is an Associate Professor at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and a researcher at the National Astronomical Observatory. A former Physics Olympiad competitor, he has dedicated his career to the study of the Sun, space weather, and space sciences. He combines scientific research with active outreach efforts, participating in educational projects, conferences, and publications that bring astronomy closer to diverse audiences.

Mutis, Caldas, Garavito and the pioneers who put Colombia on the scientific map

When you think of great scientific traditions, Colombia may not be the first country that comes to mind. But look closer, at the mountains, the skies, the rivers, and the stars above Bogotá, and you will find a rich, often overlooked history of scientific discovery that stretches back more than two centuries.



PHD. SOFÍA ROJAS RUIZ

Astronomy is the science that connects us with the universe and transcends all borders. As an astronomer, it is my responsibility to research the universe responsibly and teach others about this beautiful science. My first lessons applying physics equations to understand planetary orbits or the shape of the universe were at the Universidad Antonio Nariño in my city Bogotá, Colombia. I was thrilled to acquire so much knowledge in preparation for the 4th Colombian National Astronomy Olympiads (IV OCA), and the 5th Latin American Olympiads (VOLAA).

I was in my last year of school and already dreamed with studying the frontiers of the universe, which became real soon after when I began writing my first scientific paper as an undergraduate student at The University of Texas at Austin. I was discovering galaxies and setting new precedents in the global scientific community. Naturally, I wanted to continue my pursuits as a PhD candidate at the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy and the University of Heidelberg, Germany. This time, I was studying some of the most extreme object in the universe, supermassive black holes. In parallel, I was awarded telescope time with our new eye in the sky, the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST).



CALENDAR OF THE MAIN CELEBRATIONS IN COLOMBIA:

January

Blacks and Whites' Carnival (Pasto, Nariño): Recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, this festival is one of the most important cultural celebrations in southern Colombia.

Manizales Fair (Caldas): A traditional festival featuring cultural events, parades, concerts, and the International Coffee Queen Pageant.

February

Barranquilla Carnival (Atlántico): Widely regarded as Colombia's largest folkloric celebration and recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

March or April

Holy Week: Celebrated throughout the country, with the city of Popayán standing out for its Holy Week processions, which have also been recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

June

National Vallenato Legend Festival (Valledupar): The country's premier celebration of vallenato music, a traditional genre recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

National Bambuco Folk Festival and Reign (Neiva): A vibrant celebration showcasing the traditions, music, and dances of Colombia's Andean region.

July

Festival of the Sea (Santa Marta): A cultural celebration that combines sporting events, maritime activities, and artistic performances to honor the richness of Colombia's Caribbean heritage.

July 20 – Colombia's Independence Day: A national holiday commemorating the beginning of Colombia's independence movement in 1810, celebrated with military parades, cultural events, and festivities across the country.

August

Flower Festival (Medellín): Internationally renowned for the traditional Silleteiros Parade and its extensive cultural program.

September

International Kite Festival (Villa de Leyva): A colorful event that brings together national and international participants in spectacular kite-flying competitions.

October

World Salsa Festival (Cali): One of the world's leading salsa events, featuring internationally acclaimed dancers, performers, and dance schools.

November

Cartagena Independence Festivities: A celebration commemorating the city's independence with parades, cultural performances, and traditional festivities.

December

Cali Fair: Known as the world's salsa capital during this iconic celebration, featuring concerts, parades, and dance competitions.

Medellín Christmas Lights: One of Latin America's most spectacular holiday light displays and one of Colombia's most popular year-end tourist attractions.

DID YOU KNOW...?

July 5, 1687 – Publication of Isaac Newton's Principia Mathematica

On July 5, 1687, Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica by Isaac Newton was published. This groundbreaking work introduced the laws of motion and the law of universal gravitation, laying the foundations of classical physics and becoming one of the most influential scientific books in history.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July 5

- **Yang Qi**
China – Leader
- **Alfonso Miguel Dizon**
Philippines – Student
- **Gabriella Levy Berger**
South Africa – Student
- **Angkurn Tanasittikun**
Thailand – Student



SURNAMES OF FEMALE SCIENTISTS

- **CURIE (Marie Curie):** Pioneer in radioactivity, first person to win two Nobel Prizes.
- **MEITNER (Lise Meitner):** Discoverer of nuclear fission.
- **GOEPPERTMEYER (Maria Goeppert-Mayer):** Nobel Prize in Physics for the nuclear shell model.
- **BELLBURNELL (Jocelyn Bell Burnell):** Astrophysicist who discovered pulsars.
- **FRANKLIN (Rosalind Franklin):** Key biophysicist in the study of DNA structure using X-ray diffraction.
- **CHU (Chien-Shiung Wu):** Known as the "First Lady of Physics," key figure in the Manhattan Project and the violation of parity. (Note: Entered separately as CHU and WU to avoid indexing confusion in generators.)
- **WU (Chien-Shiung Wu):** (Her full surname is Wu, broken down for the search matrix).
- **RUBIN (Vera Rubin):** Astronomer and physicist who pioneered the measurement of galaxy rotation, providing evidence for dark matter.
- **HAU (Lene Hau):** Danish physicist known for leading the team that slowed light to a few meters per second.
- **BLAU (Marietta Blau):** Austrian nuclear physicist who developed the photographic method for studying charged particles.
- **SELDAM (Cornelia van Seldam):** Prominent experimental physicist and pioneer in spectroscopy.
- **YALOW (Rosalyn Yalow):** Medical physicist awarded the Nobel Prize for the development of radioimmunoassay.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

The words can be hidden horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

CURIE
MEITNER
GOEPPERTMEYER
BELLBURNELL
FRANKLIN
CHU
WU
RUBIN
HAU
BLAU
SELDAM
YALOW

B	H	F	M	E	I	T	N	E	R	F	N	I	W
E	Q	Q	T	F	Q	Z	L	K	W	B	R	V	O
L	T	Q	J	S	S	T	U	A	H	N	E	U	L
L	B	S	J	R	T	M	F	P	P	W	Y	G	A
B	Y	N	E	I	R	U	C	Y	W	U	E	W	Y
U	H	X	N	A	Z	F	C	O	F	T	M	G	A
R	D	B	G	D	F	M	B	K	R	W	T	L	U
N	R	W	W	O	R	I	F	M	V	N	R	E	H
E	Z	T	U	G	A	B	V	A	D	A	E	H	C
L	Q	R	F	U	N	G	J	D	I	H	P	P	R
L	C	U	I	T	K	O	U	L	W	M	P	W	B
K	G	B	B	M	L	U	O	E	L	T	E	X	L
C	X	I	R	Z	I	B	Q	S	F	W	O	W	A
E	E	N	E	V	N	Q	Z	M	A	N	G	C	U

PHOTO GALLERY

Arrival of delegations in Bucaramanga



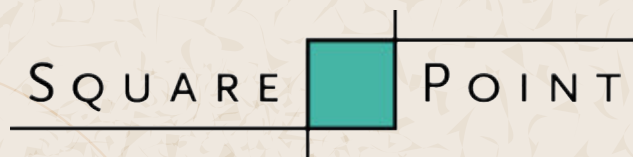
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