

REGULATIONS

International Sommelier Competition

“The Best Sommelier of the Great Steppe”

1. General Provisions

1.1. The international professional sommelier competition “The Best Sommelier of the Great Steppe” (hereinafter referred to as the “Competition”) is held with the following objectives:

- to develop wine culture;
- to enhance the professional level of industry specialists;
- to unite sommeliers from different countries;
- to promote the sommelier profession.

1.2. The Competition is international in nature and is held across various countries in Asia and other regions of the world.

1.3. The location and date of each stage are announced separately by the Organizer.

2. Participant Requirements

2.1. Participation is open to individuals who meet the legal age requirements of their respective country.

2.2. Participants under the age of 21 are allowed to participate only with written consent from a parent or legal guardian.

2.3. Participation in a national stage is limited to citizens of the host country or individuals officially working in the professional field within the country where the stage is held (with the exception of the Grand Final).

2.4. The following individuals are not eligible to participate:

- finalists of their country’s national sommelier competition;
- winners of The Best Sommelier of the Great Steppe in their country;
- participants of international competitions organized by the Association de la Sommellerie Internationale.

3. Competition Structure

— Qualifying Round — Theoretical test and blind tasting; assessment of knowledge, analytical skills, and understanding of regional context

— Semi-Final — Practical tasks in service, sales, and food pairing

— Final — Public performance before an audience; assessment of knowledge, taste, and professional mastery of the sommelier

4. Competition Language

4.1. The primary language of the competition is Russian. In the Grand Final, the primary language is English.

4.2. The use of English may also be permitted at other stages at the discretion of the Organizer.

5. Evaluation and Scoring

5.1. Evaluation is conducted using a point-based system. Scoring grids are published on the official website.

5.2. Evaluation criteria are announced prior to each stage.

5.3. Judges' scores are not disclosed until the official announcement of results. Participants' work is not publicly presented, shared with third parties, or subject to public distribution. Participants may only be informed of their final total score, without disclosure of detailed evaluations, judges' comments, or comparative results of other participants.

6. Appeals

6.1. Appeals are accepted exclusively in written form, submitted via an official request to the Organizer's email within the established timeframe following the announcement of results. An appeal will be considered only upon receipt of the official request. Adjustments to results are possible solely in the case of a confirmed technical error in score calculation. Reconsideration of judges' evaluations or scoring criteria is not permitted.

6.2. Participants' work is assessed independently by multiple members of the judging panel in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria.

7. Tasting

7.1. Consumption of alcohol beyond the scope of the assigned task is prohibited.

7.2. Any participant found to be under the influence of alcohol will be disqualified.

8. Timing

8.1. All tasks are subject to time limits.

8.2. Exceeding the time limit will affect the score or result in termination of the task.

9. Tie-Breaking

9.1. In the event of a tie in the final scores, priority is given to the participant with the higher score in the service task. In case of equal scores within individual stages, priority is determined as follows:

— in the first stage — by the higher score in the theoretical test;

— in the second stage — by the higher score in the tasting task;

— in the third stage — by the higher score in the service task.

9.2. In the event of a complete tie across all criteria, the judging panel may assign an additional task to determine the winner.

10. Photo and Video

10.1. During the competition, the Organizer has the right to conduct photo, video, and audio recording of the event, including participants' performances, competition tasks, the awards ceremony, and other program elements.

10.2. By submitting an application, the participant grants consent to the use of their image, voice, and any recorded materials obtained during the competition, without limitation in time or territory.

10.3. The Organizer has the right to publish photo and video materials on official websites, social media platforms, and in mass media, as well as to use them for promotional, informational, and educational purposes without any compensation to the participant.

10.4. The participant is not entitled to request the removal of published materials, except where required by applicable law.

11. Alcohol and Responsibility

11.1. The participant bears full personal responsibility for their health condition.

11.2. Samples are intended strictly for professional tasting purposes only.

11.3. The Organizer is not responsible for any individual physiological reactions.

12. Dress Code

Mandatory Requirements:

- White classic-cut shirt with no prints, logos, or decorative elements
- Dark suit (black, navy, or dark grey) without patterns or prints; a jacket must be worn throughout the competition stage
- Dark, closed-toe formal shoes
- Neat and professional business appearance

Permitted:

- Heels up to 3 cm
- Minimalist accessories (subtle earrings, a simple ring, understated watch)

Not Permitted:

- Skirts or any alternatives to classic trousers
- Bright, oversized, or attention-grabbing accessories
- Visible piercings
- Loose hair (hair must be neatly tied back)
- Clothing with prints, shiny elements, decorative hardware, or contrasting details

Failure to comply with the dress code may result in denial of participation in the competition stage.

13. Organizer's Responsibilities

13.1. Ensuring Equal Conditions of Participation

The Organizer shall ensure equal conditions for all participants, including unified requirements, evaluation criteria, task timing, and access to necessary materials.

13.2. Provision of Equipment and Samples

The Organizer provides participants with all necessary equipment, tools, and product samples required for each stage of the competition. All equipment must be in proper working condition and meet professional standards.

13.3. Formation of an Independent Jury

The Organizer appoints a panel of qualified professionals, ensuring independence of evaluation, absence of conflicts of interest, and objectivity in judging.

13.4. Participant Communication

The Organizer shall provide timely information to participants regarding the date, location, and schedule of the competition, any changes to the regulations (if applicable), the structure of stages, evaluation criteria, and other organizational matters.

13.5. Ensuring Event Safety

The Organizer takes all necessary measures to ensure the safety of participants, jury members, and guests, including compliance with public safety regulations and technical safety standards at the venue.

13.6. Confidentiality

The Organizer undertakes to ensure the confidentiality of participants' personal data and not to disclose individual score sheets, judges' comments, or internal competition materials to third parties, except as required by law or by these Regulations.

The Organizer ensures the safekeeping of competition materials and evaluation results until the official announcement of outcomes.

Only final results may be published, unless otherwise specified by the official competition format.

14. Participant Responsibilities

14.1. Compliance with Regulations

The participant agrees to comply with these Competition Regulations, the rules of each stage, established evaluation criteria, and the instructions of the Organizer and the judging panel.

14.2. Punctuality

The participant must arrive at the competition venue on time and adhere to the schedule of all stages. Late arrival may result in denial of participation or a reduction in score in accordance with the competition rules.

14.3. Professional Conduct and Ethics

The participant must demonstrate respectful, professional, and appropriate behavior towards other participants, judges, the Organizer, partners, and guests. Any form of unethical conduct, aggression, inappropriate statements, or actions that may discredit the competition or its participants is strictly prohibited.

14.4. Prohibition of Assistance and Use of Electronic Devices

During the performance of competition tasks, participants are prohibited from receiving assistance in any form or using mobile phones, smartwatches, headphones, or any other electronic or communication devices. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

14.5. Dress Code Compliance

The participant must adhere to the established dress code at all stages of the competition. Failure to comply may result in denial of participation in the stage.

14.6. Confidentiality

The participant agrees not to disclose the content of competition tasks, evaluation criteria (if not publicly disclosed), internal competition materials, or any discussions and comments of the judging panel prior to their official publication by the Organizer. Photo, video, or audio recording of competition materials and tasks without prior written permission from the Organizer is strictly prohibited. Violation of the principle of confidentiality may entail disqualification and other measures provided for by the Competition Regulations.

15. Force Majeure

15.1. In the event of force majeure circumstances, including but not limited to emergencies, natural disasters, government restrictions, epidemiological measures, technical failures of the venue, or any other circumstances beyond the Organizer's control, the Organizer reserves the right to change the date, location, or format of the competition, or postpone it to a later date.

15.2. In the event of force majeure, participants will be notified within a reasonable timeframe using the contact details provided during registration (phone number, email), as well as through the competition's official communication channels.

15.3. The occurrence of force majeure circumstances releases the Organizer from liability for partial or complete failure to fulfill obligations for the duration of such circumstances.

16. Amendments to the Regulations

16.1. The Organizer reserves the right to introduce amendments and additions to these Regulations as necessary to clarify the procedures of the competition.

16.2. The current version of the Regulations is published in the official competition sources and comes into effect upon publication, unless otherwise specified.

16.3. Participants are responsible for independently monitoring the validity and updates of the Regulations.

17. Personal Data

17.1. By submitting an application, the participant confirms consent to the processing, storage, and use of personal data by the Organizer.

17.2. Personal data is used exclusively for the purposes of organizing and conducting the competition, forming participant lists, publishing results, communicating with participants, and supporting the competition's educational and professional initiatives.

17.3. The Organizer undertakes not to transfer personal data to third parties, except as required by applicable law.

18. Final Provisions

18.1. Submission of an application and participation in the competition constitute full and unconditional acceptance of these Regulations.

18.2. Any disputes not covered by these Regulations shall be resolved by the Organizer in accordance with the principles of objectivity, professional ethics, and applicable law.

18.3. Decisions of the Organizer and the judging panel regarding the conduct of the competition are final and binding for all participants.