

2026 Loyalty Reward Program

Financial Support Offer

18TH WORLD CONGRESS
MARRAKECH, MOROCCO
OCTOBER 26–29, 2026



OVPM . OWHC . OCPM



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18th World Congress of the OWHC

Marrakech, Morocco, October 26–29, 2026

BACKGROUND

As was the case with previous congresses, the General Secretariat is offering financial assistance to members who need it to ensure their attendance at the 18th World Congress in Marrakech (Morocco). In accordance with the Organization's principles of solidarity, the Loyalty Reward Program is designed to encourage and facilitate the participation of member cities, including those that lack the necessary resources to cover part of the travel, accommodation, or registration expenses in Marrakech.

PROCEDURE AND PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS

Applications for financial contributions under the Loyalty Reward Program must be sent to the General Secretariat **BEFORE a member city's delegation registers on the official website: [HTTPS://WWW.OVPMARRAKECH2026.COM/](https://www.ovpmmarrakech2026.com/)**. They must be submitted **no later than September 18, 2026**, to allow for timely processing and to avoid additional costs associated with travel arrangements made too late. Given that the budget is limited (see the Budget section below) and that airfare costs are rising, applications will be processed in the order they are received; consequently, it is possible that not all applications can be accommodated. **We encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible.**

An application for financial support under the Loyalty Reward Program must be made on behalf of the member city and signed by the mayor. It must be sent by email to the following address: SECRETARIAT@OVPM.ORG, with "Loyalty Reward Application – [City Name]" in the email subject line. The application must confirm whether or not the mayor (and his or her official representative, if applicable) will be participating, list the full composition of the delegation,¹ and detail the titles and responsibilities of the delegation members. See the sample letter provided in Appendix 1.

Please also include in your Loyalty Reward application or in your email the contact information of the person with whom the OWHC should communicate to process the application.

Applications for financial contributions will be processed as quickly as possible. Once the application is deemed eligible and the score is determined based on the three established criteria (see below), specific instructions will be sent to applicants to address practical arrangements (registration, accommodation, air travel). **Please do not make any arrangements for any of these aspects of your trip on your own before submitting your application and receiving a reply from the General Secretariat.**

¹ Please indicate whether the mayor will attend (or not, and if not, his or her official representative), as well as the individuals who will accompany the delegation's official representative. A maximum of five representatives will be considered for the Loyalty Reward Program (see criterion 3 below), but your entire delegation may include more than five people.



For any inquiries, please write to SECRETARIAT@OVPM.ORG

ELIGIBILITY AND PRINCIPLES

The main eligibility requirement for the Loyalty Reward Program for the 18th World Congress in Marrakech is that a city must have been a member in good standing without interruption for the three years preceding the Congress, including the current year (2024, 2025, and 2026). New member cities are also eligible, starting from the year they became members (2025 or 2026).

Scoring system

The General Secretariat will apply a scoring system to each application for a Loyalty Reward, based on three criteria:

1. City wealth category² —1 to 5 points (more assistance for cities with less financial capacity)
2. Participation in activities³ —0 to 3 points (more assistance for active cities)
3. Composition of the delegation⁴ —1 to 8 points (more assistance for diverse delegations)

Other considerations

The scoring system is a decision-making tool. All Loyalty Reward applications may be subject to arbitration, which is the prerogative of the Secretary General.

Any potential beneficiary eligible for the Program who requires a visa to enter Morocco will receive a proposed itinerary from the OWHC travel agency in order to begin the visa application process. Please submit your application well in advance to allow sufficient time to obtain your visa.

Please note that any other expenses not covered by this program will be the responsibility of the applicants.

BUDGET

The budget allocated to the Loyalty Reward Program amounts to CAD 160,000. Loyalty Reward applications will be processed in the order in which they are received by the General Secretariat, and financial contributions will be awarded within the limits of the available budget.

² Based on the “Basic Principles for the Allocation of OWHC Financial Contributions to Cities Participating in Activities,” adopted at the 61st Board of Directors meeting in San Antonio in March 2025, which establishes five wealth categories for all OWHC member cities.

³ 0 = no participation; 1 = little; 2 = moderate; 3 = significant (each city’s participation in NUP activities since the last congress has been recorded).

⁴ It should be noted that for this last criterion, the scoring system will count a maximum of **five people** in the delegation. The more diverse the delegation is in terms of political and technical representation (expertise), the higher the score will be.



Budget allocation

Based on the total budget of CAD 160,000, the average total cost of congress participation per participant,⁵ and simulations using real data from a sample of cities for each category (wealth categories 1 through 5), a calculation was carried out to determine the value of each point. **Each point is equivalent to CAD 317.**

Each participating city, based on its score, will therefore be awarded CAD 317 per point,⁶ which it may use for its rewards. **It may allocate this total amount as it sees fit: to cover one or more registrations, one or more accommodations, or international transportation, for the person(s) in the delegation of its choice.**

⁵ Registration fee of 500 Euros, cost of 5 nights at the official conference hotel, and average cost of international travel for members.

⁶ For example, if a city earns 10 points; $10 \times 317 = \text{CAD } 3,170$ to be used for rewards.



APPENDIX 1—SAMPLE LETTER FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

[City letterhead]

[Letter addressed to the Secretary General of the OWHC: Mikhaël de Thyse]

Subject: 2026 Loyalty Reward Program – Application for Financial Assistance for [City Name]

Dear Secretary General,

I am writing on behalf of [City Name] to express our interest in the Loyalty Reward Program, thereby ensuring that a delegation from my city will attend the 18th World Congress of the Organization of World Heritage Cities, to be held in Marrakech, Morocco, from October 26 to 29, 2026.

[Please choose one of the following two responses depending on whether or not the mayor will attend the Congress]

[Option 1: If the mayor is personally attending the Congress]

I confirm that I, [Mayor's Name], Mayor of [City Name], will personally attend the 18th World Congress.

I will be accompanied by the following members, thereby ensuring a diverse representation of our city's stakeholders at the 18th World Congress:

[Name], [Title/Responsibilities]

[Name], [Title/Responsibilities]

Maximum of four people

[Option 2: If the mayor is not personally attending the Congress]

I regret to inform you that I, [Mayor's Name], Mayor of [City Name], will be unable to attend the 18th World Congress in person. I have appointed [Name of the Mayor's Official Representative], [Title], who will serve as my official representative during the Congress.

[He/She] will be accompanied by the following members, thereby ensuring a diverse representation of our city's stakeholders at the 18th World Congress:

[Name], [Title/Responsibilities]

[Name], [Title/Responsibilities]

Maximum of four people

We thank you for considering this application.

Sincerely,

[Mayor's Name]

Mayor

[City Name]

[Date]