



## Institute of Groundsmanship – proposed name change Q&As

### Q1. Why is the IOG proposing a name change?

A1. Extensive, independent research during 2019 has shown that the IOG name, brand and messaging needs to change in order to reflect the society we live in and ensure that we attract enough new people to keep the profession alive. We need to modernise so that we remain relevant and appeal to a new, young, diverse workforce.

All the research indicated that our current name felt dated and would not attract an essential pipeline of new, diverse recruits. 1 in 5 grounds managers will be leaving the profession in the next 10 years. It's essential that we update who we are, to appeal to a new generation and respond to evolving terminology and attitudes within society, our partners and stakeholder groups.

### Q2. What research have you done to support this?

A2. The research was extensive and included speaking to:

- You, our members (method: an online survey in August 2019)
- Our partners and funders including national governing bodies (method: 13 in-depth interviews)
- Members of the public – whom we want to consider this as a career option and to volunteer their time (method: we spoke to over 100 members of the public to find out their views on the IOG's name and their perceptions of grounds management)
- IOG staff and board members (method: an in-depth workshop)

Research also included a nine-month study entitled 'Groundsmanship: Sport's Vital Profession' which is available to view here: <https://www.iog.org/news/iog-industry-research-report-now-available-digital-format>

In addition to the proposed name change, we are working with Stand Agency, our PR partner, to ensure that the way we communicate is also modernised. We recognise that the language needs to be updated (e.g. the word 'groundsman' won't attract women to the profession) and that our communications channels also need refreshing.

### Q3. What other names did you consider? How did you get to this name?

A3. We considered a number of different names through a structured process. We set up a working group which comprised of some of the IOG's senior leadership team, some Board members as well as some members. This working group was taken through a series of workshops, designed by Stand Agency, our PR partner. The workshops presented the evidence of the need for change and also tested our thinking / appetite for change, through a series of exercises. The proposed new name is evidence-based and was reached through a series of exercises, group discussions and market testing.

In November, the Board voted unanimously to change the current trading name and the board commend the name change to the membership.

Q4. Why do you think this new name is better than the old name?

A4. A lot of the member and consumer testing showed that people found the word 'Institute' old fashioned and unappealing. 'Groundsmanship' similarly had issues, as the word itself with the word 'man' in the middle of it, implies a gender biased role.

The new name uses contemporary, commonly embraced words, feels fresh, modern, and unambiguous (i.e. it does 'what it says on the tin'), whilst also staying true to our rich heritage and history.

Q5. What will this mean for me and my membership?

A5. It will be the name, the visual identity and the way we communicate with you that will be changing, but we believe this will attract new members and widen the appeal of our offer.

Q6. Does my IOG qualification still stand under the new name ?

A6. Yes, all previously attained IOG training courses and qualifications/certificates are still valid under the new name and brand.

Q7. What support will you offer to corporate members who will need to update their branding?

A7. We will be able to share the brand guidelines to corporate members, so they can update their assets. Since the Board's decision to propose a new name to members we have been advising new and renewing corporate members of the potential of a change in our name and logo and therefore politely suggesting they hold back on any printing involving IOG logo or reference to the name.

Q8. Why is this the first time I've heard about this?

A8. In July / August 2019, we issued communications via our website, e-newsletter, The Groundsman magazine and social media to consult with all members asking you to contribute your views to this process. All that research has fed into this process, please see Q3 What other names did you consider? How did you get to this name?

Q9. What are the future plans for the organisation?

A9. We will launch the new name and brand to the wider public, with media stories, which is all about how we '**make sport possible**' within our *Grounds for Sport* campaign. We have engaged a PR agency to run a Press Office to raise the profile of grounds managers and our organisation. If you would like to get involved in media opportunities, please email [iog@standagency.com](mailto:iog@standagency.com)



**Q10. Will SALTEX name be changed as a result?**

**A10.** We have no plans to change the name of the show in the foreseeable future but references to IOG would be changed to GMA.

**Q11. What will happen if members do not accept the new name?**

**A11.** The IOG Board is minded that, in order to address the issues within the profession and the industry, change is required particularly in relation to the organisation name and how the IOG presents itself publicly. These changes will benefit our membership by being relevant, forward thinking and elevating the profile and status of the profession and the contribution of professional and volunteer grounds managers. We trust you agree. Should we not get the required majority we will of course reflect and review next steps.

**Q12. When and where is the Extraordinary General Meeting?**

**A12.** This meeting will take place on Thursday 2 April at:

Edgbaston County Cricket Ground  
Room 1882  
Edgbaston Road,  
Birmingham  
B5 7QU

Please arrive from 11am onwards for coffee and networking for a prompt 12-noon start. Lunch will be served after the meeting.

**Q13. How do I vote ?**

**A13.** You can attend the meeting and make your vote in person.

For those of you who cannot attend we have attached Proxy Voting Forms to your invite or, alternatively, you can download voting forms at <https://www.iog.org/iog-extraordinary-general-meeting>

All forms must be signed and posted to the IOG head office:

28 Stratford Office Village  
Walker Avenue  
Wolverton Mill East  
Milton Keynes  
MK12 5TW

All postal forms must arrive no later than **3pm on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.**



**Q14.** Do I need to tell the IOG I will be attending the meeting?

**A14.** Yes. Please provide your details including membership number either phone our Head Office on 01908 312511 or email [iog@iog.org](mailto:iog@iog.org).

**Q15.** Who is eligible to vote?

**A15.** Please note that only paid-up Individual members, and appointed representatives of paid-up Associate members are eligible to vote, either in person or by proxy at the EGM.

**Q16.** Who is not eligible to vote?

**A16.** Corporate Members and Members with Student Status, Under-16 Status and/or Domestic Status are not be entitled to vote but can still attend the EGM.