

# Odyssey inclusive

Odyssey of the Mind for Neurodiverse Students  
Dr. Lynn Larsen



**AD Meeting for the  
2025 Season**

Odyssey of the Mind 

# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Meeting Agenda

- **Welcome! Please put your name/state in the chat**
- **Brief Odyssey Inclusive program overview**
- **LT Adaptations**
- **Spontaneous**
- **Coach and Judge Training**
- **Tournament Time!**
- **Team and Scoring Forms**
- **Getting started with Odyssey Inclusive in your state**
- **Work in Progress**



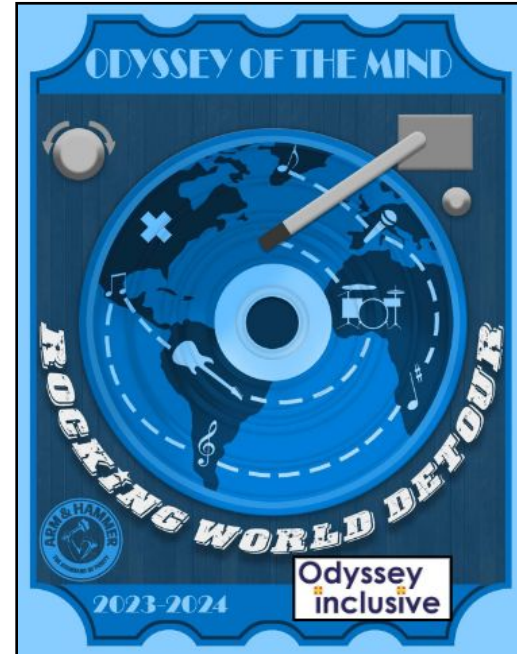
# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Brief Program Overview

- **What was covered in the overview of the program [in this video](#)**
  - Odyssey of the Mind program designed specifically for neurodiverse students (K - age 22)
  - Each season, a chosen Odyssey of the Mind problem is adapted with three performance options. Teams choose which option is best for them.
  - 3 LT options (full script, MadLibs, script outline)
  - Appropriate assistance allowed
  - Spontaneous problems, also with three options, are provided.
  - Students with and without disabilities can participate on a team together. At least 50% of the team must be students with disabilities (as defined by local/state/federal guidelines).
  - Teams perform at the regional (or state) tournament and are scored/awarded similarly to Primary. Teams do not advance.



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - LT Problem Adaptations

- For the 2024 season, [problem 5 was adapted](#) with the same cost limitation for teams.
  - Various aspects of the problem were adapted (e.g., teams selected band merch items from a list)
  - Some LT scored elements became Style elements.
  - Style categories were pre-selected, while allowing for team creativity and individuality.
  - Teams were allowed to alter the script/story as needed.
  - Basic ideas for props, scenery, costumes provided
  - Scoring similar to Primary (stars)
  - No specified time limit - teams encouraged to stay under 15 minutes



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Spontaneous

- Odyssey of the Mind spontaneous problems are adapted for Odyssey Inclusive teams.
- Directions are simplified and coaches are provided with three options for each problem, which give differing levels of accommodation. The coach decides which option is most appropriate for their team.
- [Practice spontaneous problems](#) were provided for OI coaches.
- Tournament spontaneous addressed in a later slide.



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Coach & Judge Training

- Coach and judge online training modules were developed for Odyssey Inclusive, based on the Colorado/SoCal online training modules.
- Completion of these is followed by a live training (in person or via Zoom).
- Coach training addresses all of the important basic aspects of working with an Odyssey Inclusive team.
- Judge training includes:
  - features of the Odyssey Inclusive program,
  - characteristics of students with disabilities,
  - scoring Odyssey Inclusive long term and spontaneous performances, and
  - appropriate interactions with and feedback to students with disabilities.
- These training materials will be used by all Odyssey Inclusive coaches/judges. The in person training/webinar can be customized for any needs particular to your association.



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Tournament Lessons Learned

- Be sure that performance venues and awards are accessible
- Have a primary competition mindset
- For scheduling, allow more time for each performance. SoCal's team performances each went about 15 min.
- Be flexible and accommodating
  - Examples from SoCal: performance venue, length of performances, scheduling, spontaneous, awards ceremony

● [A tournament spontaneous problem](#) was piloted for 2024.

- At the tournament, the coach(es) come into the spontaneous venue first, review the problem options with the head judge, and select the most appropriate option for their team.
- The spontaneous judges then set up the room for that option and the team is invited in.
- Directions can be modified as necessary for the team.



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Team and Score Forms

- **Team Forms** - [video overview](#) for coaches (does not include the team questions form)
  - Team Required list (includes which LT option was chosen and an additional team question)
  - Style form (has the 4 mandated categories)
  - Cost form (same as OM)
  - Assistance Form (completely new)
  - Team Questions Form (completely new)
  - 2 copies of the script
- **Score/Judging forms**
  - Staging - has a question about noise tolerance
  - Timekeeper - not a time requirement
  - Long Term - similar to primary
  - Style - same as OM but with mandated categories
  - Coach summary form - similar to primary
  - Spontaneous - includes sticky notes





# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Starting the program in your state

- Review the steps on the [Start Up Guide](#)
- Be sure to have the support of your association board and agree as a board what the structure of the program and program leadership will be
- Once your association has formally agreed to host Odyssey Inclusive, please send an email to Lynn and Sammy
- Decisions about where to start the program in your association should be based on many factors: supportive region, accessible tournament venue, established and strong relationships with an Odyssey school district, etc.
- **Start SMALL** - recommend a pilot program with a small number of teams then scale up the following year



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Program Coordinator

- Designate someone with *expertise in and knowledge of special education* to be the OI coordinator
  - This choice will be **critical** to the success of the program!
  - Role should at least be on the level of a state problem captain, but it is more involved (decide at the state level)
  - Have this person fill out [this form](#) for review
  - This person will be responsible for:
    - Conducting appropriate outreach for the program
    - Working closely with special education teachers, parents, and programs
    - Coordinating and hosting separate coach and judge training - working with coaches
    - Meeting with the OI National Program Director
    - Managing teams and judging at the tournament



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Things to keep in mind

- More (and different) coach support is necessary
- Different type of program outreach
- Need for accessible performance venues/materials
- May need to accommodate when/where performances take place due to transportation and student availability
- Although based on OM, elements of the program are quite different.
- Experienced OM judges may or may not be able to adapt to OI.
  - Judges do not have to be knowledgeable about special education to be great OI judges! Judge training modules address characteristics of students with disabilities and how to appropriately interact.
- Program worked well with one performance venue/judging team for LT and spont OR as two separate venues and judging teams
- Everything needs to be flexible and adaptable - appropriate assistance is OK!
- Look for grant opportunities - many grants available for programs geared towards students with disabilities



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Work in Progress

- Work has begun on the 2025 OI problem - adaptation of the 2016 P5 Fins, Fur, Feathers, and Friends
  - Plan to have problem synopsis ready for release around World Finals.
- Program Guide Draft is complete and under review
- Odyssey Inclusive website mock up is complete and under review
- One-pager for outreach
- [Pin sales](#) as a fundraiser (taking pre orders now for mailing after world finals)
- Will update coach and judge training over the summer
- Hoping to establish an panel with special education content experts to ensure that we are providing appropriate access to the program components



# ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE - Thank you!

- Many thanks to everyone who helped out during the pilot season!!!
- [Photos and videos from the SoCal tournament](#)
- Resources
  - Lynn's email: [OdysseyInclusive@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:OdysseyInclusive@odysseyofthemind.com)

Questions?

