



Nornickel has become the general partner of Russian grandmaster Ian Nepomniachtchi, a contender for the world chess champion title.

The sponsorship was announced during a ceremony at the Botvinnik Central Chess House in Moscow attended by Ian Nepomniachtchi, Larisa Zelkova, Nornickel Senior Vice President for HR, Social Policy and Public Relations, and Mark Glukhovsky, Executive Director of the Russian Chess Federation.

### **Nornickel VP Larisa Zelkova and Ian Nepomniachtchi at a friendly game of chess**

The 31-year old native of Bryansk, Nepomniachtchi is one of the world's most acclaimed chess players. He is a two-time Russian champion and has twice won the World Team Chess Championship with Team Russia. This year Nepomniachtchi qualified to play against the reigning world champion Magnus Carlsen of Norway after winning the Candidates Tournament that had taken two years to complete due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

**Andrey Filatov, President of the Russian Chess Federation:** "I am very glad that a major company like Nornickel is supporting chess and helping our outstanding grandmaster Ian Nepomniachtchi to prepare for the World Chess Championship match. Having the support of a reliable partner is extremely important for Ian ahead of the final training stage and the championship match in Dubai."

**Larisa Zelkova, Senior Vice President — HR, Social Policy and Public Relations at Nornickel:** "Young, talented, and ambitious boys and girls are Russia's main asset that will determine its future. Helping them understand and unlock their potential and cultivating the right set of values is a strategic objective that Nornickel pays great attention to. We believe that Ian Nepomniachtchi is a great role model for our youth, having nurtured his talent through hard work and perseverance. He has overcome numerous challenges during his sporting career and is now just one step away from becoming the world's No 1 chess player. One of Russia's brightest chess prodigies, Ian Nepomniachtchi proudly represents our country at the global stage. Hopefully, with Nornickel's support he will be able to further unlock his enormous potential and achieve his goals in chess."

**Russian grandmaster Ian Nepomniachtchi:** "I am very pleased that Nornickel has become my sponsor and has provided very substantial assistance in preparing for the World Championship match. This is the most important competition for any athlete and preparing for it requires a lot of effort, time and resources. Thank you very much for your support."

The World Chess Championship match will take place in Dubai from 24 November to 16 December 2021 at the Dubai Exhibition Centre. It will be a best-of-14 match. The winner has to gain 7.5 points. In case of a draw, the contesters will play a tiebreak on 15 December 2021. The prize fund is EUR 2 mln. Carlsen has been the World Chess Champion since 2013, when he beat India's Viswanathan Anand in Sochi.

#### **For reference:**

Nornickel is a partner of the International Chess Federation (FIDE), International University Sports Federation (FISU), the Russian Football Union, the Russian Olympic Committee, the Russian Futsal Association, the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, the Night Hockey League and the Russian Curling Federation. On top of that, Nornickel owns the CSKA professional basketball club and the Norilsk Nickel futsal club.

*27 October 2021*