



The National Catholic Forensic League's Instructions to Bidders for the Annual NCFL Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament

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Introduction

The NCFL encourages bids to host the Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament from all local leagues that are registered as members of the NCFL. Any local league interested in hosting the tournament should contact the NCFL Grand Tournament Director and the NCFL Event Coordinator for guidance through the bidding process.

Attached, please find instructions, requirements, format, and timeline for the bids of local diocesan leagues to host the tournament. The NCFL Executive Council will initially review all bids submitted to determine their compliance with these instructions. It is important to follow the schedule and requirements attached. Bids that are not compliant with these instructions or are not delivered at the times specified do not have to be considered by the Executive Council.

Any member local diocesan league of the NCFL is invited to submit a proposal, or bid, to host the NCFL's Annual Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament. The instructions following will serve as the basis for evaluating competing bids to ensure that the local league can make commitments to, and follow through on them for, the NCFL community to provide a successful, efficient, and enjoyable weekend for all participants

Section 1 – Bid Schedule and Process

1. All bids by a local diocesan league to host the National Catholic Forensic League’s (NCFL) Annual Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament must be for a single, specific year. All information in that bid must apply to the year being “bid” for. The Annual Tournament is held the Friday through Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in May each year.
2. All bids must be addressed to the President of the NCFL at his or her email address (please see <http://ncfl.org/officers> for contact information). All bids must be received by the President of the NCFL not earlier than August 1st of the year five years prior to the tournament, and not later than January 5th of the year three years prior to the tournament date being “bid” for. For example, a bid to host the 2020 Tournament, should be sent to the President of the NCFL to arrive between August 1st, 2015, and January 5th of the year 2017. Bids received outside of this specified timeframe are considered not compliant with these instructions and do not have to be reviewed by the NCFL Executive Council.
3. At the bidder’s option the bid may include an offer to host the NCFL’s Annual Fall Diocesan League Moderators Meeting immediately prior to the Grand National Tournament being bid for. If the bid for the Grand National Tournament is accepted, the offer to host is also accepted.
4. The NCFL Executive Council will review all bids for compliance with these instructions. The President of the NCFL will notify bidders not considered compliant as soon as possible. Non-compliant bids do not have to be considered further and are not eligible for presentation to the NCFL Executive Committee. At the sole discretion of the NCFL Executive Council, non-compliant bids may be made compliant and resubmitted for further consideration by a date specified by the President of the NCFL.
5. The NCFL Executive Council may prepare questions for any or all bidders. These questions will be submitted to the bidders for reply by a date specified by the President of the NCFL. The NCFL Executive Council can use the answers to these questions as the basis for further selection or de-selection. As part of this process, the NCFL Board may require that the NCFL Tournament Director and NCFL Events Planner perform a Site Visit to the location bidding to see the proposed competition sites and hotels, and hold detailed discussions with the Host League. This visit would be arranged with, and include, the NCFL’s Hotel and Housing Vendor.
6. The NCFL Executive Council will select no more than three bids for presentation to the NCFL Executive Committee. Bidders invited to present their bids to the NCFL Executive Committee will be notified not later than three weeks prior to the Executive Committee meeting at which they will present their bid.
7. Presentations by the selected bidders will be made at the NCFL Executive Council’s Annual Spring Meeting. A bidding Diocesan League may request in their original bid submission that their presentation be made at the NCFL Executive Council’s Annual Fall Meeting. This request will be approved or denied by the NCFL Executive Committee as part of the bid review process. Each presentation can be oral and/or visual in nature with handouts and audio/visual aides as necessary. Each presentation should not exceed fifteen minutes in length. Questions from the Executive Committee will be accepted after the completion of each bid and will not be timed. The presentation can be of any format desired by the bidding league. At a minimum, the bid submitted to the NCFL Executive Council with any revisions since the original submission should be

provided to all members of the NCFL Executive Committee as a handout or displayed electronically during the presentation.

8. A bidding diocesan league is not permitted to send any mass-mailings or group solicitations to the Executive Council, Executive Committee, or NCFL membership. This prohibition applies during the years that a bid is being prepared and evaluated. Any diocesan league doing so will have its bid removed from consideration by the Executive Council and Executive Committee.

9. A bidding diocesan league is not permitted to provide gifts, souvenirs, memorabilia, etc. to NCFL Executive Council or NCFL Executive Committee members that exceed \$75 per person in total fair market value for all gifts during the years that a bid is being prepared and evaluated. Any diocesan league doing so will have its bid removed from consideration by the Executive Council and Executive Committee.

10. After all presentations have been completed, the NCFL Executive Committee will select one bidding diocesan league, from those presenting bids in accordance with these instructions, to be the host diocese for the Annual Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament. This selection will be in accordance with all existing Constitutional provisions and By-Laws of the NCFL at the time of selection.

11. By January 5th one year prior to each National Tournament, the host diocesan league for the tournament must provide to the NCFL Tournament Director a revised budget estimate and status of preparations for the tournament.

12. By January 5th of the year of each National Tournament, the host diocesan league must provide to the NCFL Tournament Director a final budget estimate and status of preparations for the tournament. This status should specifically include availability confirmations for all tournament site facilities. Special attention should also be paid in this update to organization, transportation, printing, and food arrangements.

13. In the event a host diocesan league previously awarded a bid cannot meet its obligations, or no bid is received for a year, the NCFL Executive Council is empowered to select a host diocesan league in a manner it sees fit.

Section 2 – Bid Preparation Instructions

1. The host local diocesan league and the NCFL share the responsibility for the successful running and completion of the Annual Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament. The two units must work closely together during the three years prior to the tournament to prepare. Because of this, the NCFL expects the proposal from the local diocesan league to be a thoughtful presentation of the efforts the local league will make in preparation for, and during, the tournament.

2. The successful proposal will have, at a minimum, the following sections:

(1) Cover Letter

(2) Executive Summary

(3) Competition Facilities

(4) Hotel Facilities

(5) Transportation Arrangements

(6) Food Arrangements

(7) Budget Estimate

(8) Steering Committee

3. The proposal shall be a concise presentation of the issues, conclusions, and the offering league's capabilities to host the tournament. The proposal shall be in a format easily readable, with 8.5 x 11 inch standard pages.

4. The Cover Letter. The cover letter is to be attached to the proposal, signed by an official authorized by the local diocesan league to commit the league to host the Grand National Tournament. The cover letter should include the name, address, and phone number of a single point of contact authorized by the local diocesan league to respond to questions from the NCFL.

5. The Executive Summary. The executive summary should set out in short form the highlights of the bid. This is not intended to be the section to discuss the details, but rather to provide a central place to provide an overall impression of the "tournament weekend" that the local diocesan league is proposing.

6. The desired content of each detailed section is outlined in the following sections of the instructions. The proposal must detail how the bidding league anticipates meeting the needs of the NCFL community and the approximately 4,500 attendees at the tournament.

Section 2.1 – Competition and Support Facilities

This section should detail the competition facilities to be used throughout the tournament. At a minimum, the following items should be discussed.

1. The plans for providing adequate competition rooms for the preliminary rounds of the tournament to include (based on 2013 numbers):

- For Lincoln Douglas Debate: 70 competition rooms, a tab room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 450 people.
- For Public Forum Debate: 70 competition rooms, a tab room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 650 people.
- For Policy Debate: 80 competition rooms, a tab room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 500 people.
- For Student Congress: 12 competition rooms, a tab room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 300 people.
- For Speech: 40 competition rooms per event for a total of 240 competition spaces, a tab room large enough to seat 75, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, a meeting room large enough to seat 800, an Extemp prep room large enough to fit 275 students at tables, and a ballot sorting room.

2. The plans for providing adequate competition rooms for the elimination rounds, including large rooms to accommodate at least 150 persons for each final round, of the tournament to include:

- For Lincoln Douglas Debate: 16 competition rooms, a tab room, student lounge/cafeteria, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 175 people.
- For Public Forum Debate: 16 competition rooms, a tab room, student lounge, and a meeting room large enough to fit 200 people.
- Based on space availability, Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum can share competition rooms and the meeting room. This requires flighting of double octofinals, but is commonly done.
- For Policy Debate: 16 competition rooms, a tab room, student lounge, and a meeting room large enough to fit 200 people.
- For Student Congress: 3 large competition rooms with seating at tables for 30 people, plus chairs for observers behind, a tab room, student lounge, and a large meeting room to hold at least 150 people (this meeting room can be one of the competition rooms). At least one of the competition rooms should allow up to 100 observers in theatre seating for Finals.
- For Speech: 24 or 48 competition rooms (which will determine the need to double flight the octofinal rounds), a meeting room large enough to seat 750, a tab room large enough to seat 100 at tables, a prep room large enough to seat 48 students at long tables (preferably two students per table), a student lounge, a postings area for the tournament to post breaking students in, and a ballot sorting room. Rooms for the Final Rounds of Duo and DP should accommodate more than 600.

3. The plans for providing adequate rooms and spaces to support the tournament to include:

- Tournament registration and packet distribution on Friday;
- Storage for pre-tournament preparation (trophies, programs, etc) ;
- Tournament preparation rooms beginning Monday or Tuesday at a central location;
- Mass facilities (with a plan to accommodate 1200 persons);
- Saturday night postings;
- Saturday night postings party if desired, note that this party should not be planned to begin until Mass is completed;
- Awards Assembly (with a plan to accommodate at least 2400 persons).

4. The competition sites for the tournament. The number, name, location, rooms available at each site, distance from hotels and from each other should be discussed. The preference is that each site be air conditioned, please confirm that, or indicate if a site is not air conditioned.

5. The rental, custodial, and security costs for each site should be discussed.

6. The willingness of each competition site to enter into contracts with the local host diocesan league should be discussed. The contract mechanisms, parties, and timelines should be discussed.

7. The plans for the tournament support activities to include:

- Tournament Registration and packet distribution;
- NCFL Executive Council Meeting;
- NCFL Executive Committee Meeting;
- Communication between tabulation rooms and staff on Saturday and Sunday;
- Saturday Night Mass, or Masses;
- Saturday Night Postings and Party if desired;
- Sunday Night Awards.

8. Detail plans to print the Tournament Program, Speech ballot packets, and Congress ballots, on-site registration packets, on-site copying of Debate schematics, event and judge information sheets.

9. Detail any plans for tourist activities in and around the host city. These plans should be completely voluntary, may have a cost associated with them, and should not conflict with any official tournament activities. Provide information on local tourist activities an attending group could pursue individually.

10. Provide information on costs to be incurred by the local league and/or NCFL for the competition facilities in the budget discussion.

Section 2.2 – Hotel Facilities.

This section should detail housing facilities to be used throughout the tournament. These may be hotels and/or dormitories depending on the availability and plans of the bidder. The tournament host will collaborate with the NCFL Tournament Director, NCFL Event Coordinator, and NCFL’s hotel and housing vendor to secure contract(s) with local hotel(s) (and possibly college dorm rooms if appropriate) to house the participants at the contest. This section should detail how the bidding league plans to meet the housing needs of the attendees at the tournaments.

Please note, the NCFL has contracted currently with Conference Direct to provide hotel contract negotiation and housing services. The tournament host should begin the search for hotel accommodations by meeting with the NCFL Event Coordinator and Conference Direct Representative. Conference Direct will provide the candidate hotels with a Request for Proposal. This support team will help to build and negotiate a comprehensive hotel package on which the host will report in the bid.

At a minimum, the following information should be addressed in the bid package.

1. Provide the plans for securing 1,800 rooms in the immediate vicinity on the peak nights, Friday and Saturday, with approximately 5,250 room nights across the entire event. Provide details about how many of the rooms will be “double-double” rooms. The NCFL requests approximately 80% or more be “double-double” rooms. Indicate each facility’s ability to provide rollaway or additional beds in guest rooms. Detail how many hotels and locations will be used and indicate the distances between each and to other tournament sites.
2. Provide information on the current rates for each hotel. Detail the process and timeline for locking in rates at each facility. Indicate how many days before and after the tournament the rates will be in effect.
3. Indicate the complimentary room night policy of each housing facility. It is expected that the NCFL Executive Council’s hotel rooms will be covered in a complimentary room night block. The NCFL Executive Council’s block should total between 50 and 80 total room nights.
4. Indicate each facility’s plans for providing security personnel to patrol halls and common areas. Indicate each facility’s plans, if any, for a curfew on students.
5. Indicate each facility’s willingness to accept, and process for accepting, tax-exempt certificates from other states.
6. Indicate each facility’s participation in tournament activities such as Tournament Registration, Diocesan Directors’ Meeting, Preliminary Rounds, Elimination Rounds, Masses, Parties, Postings, and Awards Ceremony.

7. Provide information about the concessions each facility will offer to secure the NCFL's business. These can include complimentary wifi, discounted pricing on audio visual needs, complimentary parking for tournament personnel, special menus for students, extended restaurant hours, reduced rates, meeting space, etc.

8. Indicate each facility's elevator configurations, availability, and ability to handle moving the tournament attendees during the peak periods of tournament movement such as breakfast, departing and arriving buses, postings, and awards.

9. Provide information on costs to be incurred by the local league and/or NCFL for the housing facilities in the budget discussion.

Section 2.3 – Transportation Arrangements

This section should detail transportation availability to and from the local diocesan league for the tournament and arrangements for transportation during the tournament. At a minimum, the following should be addressed.

1. Provide a current list of airfares to the proposed host city from representative cities around the country with member dioceses. Possible cities to use for comparison are: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Miami, New Orleans, Kansas City, Baltimore, Washington DC, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Houston, etc.
2. If the proposed host city is not a major metropolitan area, detail the air service currently provided in terms of number of flights and seats arriving and departing each day. Indicate if there are plans to add special flights to support the tournament.
3. Provide information about the rental car and van facilities at the nearby major airports. If the proposed host city is not a major metropolitan area, indicate the amount of cars and vans available at the airport most attendees will be expected to use.
4. Indicate if shuttles to the housing facilities are provided, either by the facilities, the community, or the host league.
5. Indicate if any contracts will be necessary to support travel to and from the proposed host city and transportation from the airport to the housing facilities.
6. Indicate any special travel agents in the proposed host city that will serve as agents for the tournament attendees. Indicate what organization or persons a travelling league should contact to arrange for group transportation from the nearby airports to the housing facilities.
7. Detail plans for providing tournament transportation from the housing facilities to the competition sites on Saturday and Sunday of the tournament. Indicate any arrangements for transportation of Diocesan Directors for Tournament Registration and the Diocesan Directors Meeting. Indicate arrangements for transportation to and from tournament activities such as Postings, Masses, Parties, and the Awards Ceremony. Provide costs for these services in the budget discussion.

Section 2.4 – Food Arrangements

This section should detail food availability and plans for providing food to tournament participants throughout the tournament. At a minimum, the following should be addressed.

1. Detail plans for providing a quick “cash and carry” or “buffet breakfast” for tournament participants at the hotel/housing facilities and/or competition sites for both Saturday and Sunday.
2. Provide information on the breakfast food plans to be provided for the Judges’ Lounges at each competition site on Saturday.
3. Provide information on the breakfast food, lunch arrangements, and “snack” plans for the Tab Rooms at each competition site on each day of the tournament.
4. Provide information on the lunch plans for tournament participants and judges for each day of the tournament, including plans for pre-ordering and distribution of lunch tickets, if applicable.
5. Provide information on local food establishments near the tournament competition sites and housing facilities. This information should include types of restaurants, anticipated operating hours, average meal costs, distances from sites, etc.
6. Provide information on the food establishments at each housing facility. This information should include seating capabilities, hours of operations, and average meal costs.
7. Provide information on costs to be incurred by the local league and/or NCFL for the food arrangements in the budget discussion.

Section 2.5 – Budget Estimate

The host local diocesan league and the NCFL share the responsibility for the finances of the Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament. The local host should be in continuous consultation with the NCFL Executive Council regarding expenditures and plans for the operation of the Grand Tournament in order to ensure a realistic operating budget. The local league may pursue its own fundraising activities during the course of the tournament. If, however, the expenses of the tournament exceed the receipts, it is expected that the local league will contribute from their fundraising activities towards offsetting the deficit.

This section should provide a realistic, thorough, and complete estimate of the budget for hosting the Annual NCFL Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament in the proposed host city. Each line item should indicate if the dollar values are in present day dollars or in the anticipated dollar value of the year a league is bidding to host in. At a minimum, please provide the anticipated costs of the following.

1. Transportation: Buses to transport all tournament participants between the tournament housing facilities and any and all tournament events (registration, preliminary and elimination rounds, coach/student social events, Awards Ceremony, etc.). Please note that due to recent changes in insurance laws, and how the term “common carrier” is defined, the use of county or district school buses has become problematic. You should not count on being able to use these without having in-depth conversations with the appropriate authorities.
2. Site Fees: Rental, custodial, and security costs for the sites and equipment used for any tournament events.
3. Printing Costs: Costs of printing 4,500 copies of the tournament program booklet, the I.E. ballots and critique sheets, on-site copying of Debate schematics.
4. Food: Tab Room breakfast, lunches, and snack breaks for both days of the competition and breakfast in all Judges’ Lounges on Saturday. (All other meals will be cash & carry.)
5. Entertainment (if any): Costs of any coach/student social events being planned.
6. Tab Room Supplies: Costs of providing tab room materials such as staplers, pens, poster board, etc.
7. Mass expenses: Honoraria, site fees, etc.
8. The NCFL will be responsible for providing or contracting for the following necessary expenses for the Grand National Tournament: Awards; Debate Ballots for Policy, Public Forum, and L-D Debate; required insurances. These expenses should not be included in the bidding diocesan league’s budget estimates.

Section 2.6 – Steering Committee

This section should provide the names and affiliations for all members of the host diocesan league's steering committee for hosting the tournament. At a minimum, the following should be addressed.

1. Indicate, by name, the local diocesan league coaches who will be key members of the planning group and members of the steering committee.

2. Indicate the commitment of the local diocesan league coaches to the bid being offered and the group's commitment to following-through if the bid should be chosen by the NCFL Executive Committee.

Section 3 – Committees and Task Descriptions

Long term committees and tasks

Below are the major tasks that the local host committee is responsible for in the months & years preceding the tournament. The host director may wish to encourage local personnel to sign up for one of each type of committee. In consultation with the NCFL President and Tournament Director, some of the duties may be assigned to NCFL officers.

- Mass -- arrange for the site(s) for Mass(es), and arrange for all aspects of the Mass(es) -- lecturers, music, singers, gifts, etc.
- Busses -- investigating bus company costs and signing with one, coordinating the transportation from hotel to tournament sites, and shuttles among sites as necessary. Coordinating committee of bus volunteers to help with crowd control, etc, on both Saturday and Sunday.
- Website and Publicity -- communication with leagues, students, and coaches around the country in months before the contest.
- Food -- arranging for contestant and judge lunches for Saturday; arranging for breakfast buffet(s) at hotel(s); food for tab rooms on both days; coffee/donuts/etc for judge lounge area(s).
- Program -- assembling all necessary items for program, including appropriate maps of sites, welcome letters from appropriate dignitaries (Bishop, Mayor, etc.), tournament schedules, locations of all tournament related events, directions to competition sites, addresses for all sites, and listing of competitors by diocese. Creating layout for program. Arranging for the printing of program.
- Sightseeing/Activities -- organizing optional activities (theater, reception, sightseeing, etc.) for participants at the tournament.
- Local Moneymakers -- coordinating the purchase and sale of T-shirts, mugs, etc., and assembling students to sell at contest and at hotel; any other possibilities of local league moneymaking schemes.
- Contributions / Local benefactors -- seeking donations to the cause!
- Hired / Local Judges -- assembling a pool of emergency judges in all areas of contest. Coordinating hired judges with hiring coaches, arranging for payment. Local league will collect fees from hiring coaches, but are responsible for paying hired judges.
- Logo Selection Committee -- receive and vote on a design for program cover / logo.
- Ballot printing -- duplicate NCFL speech ballots and critique sheets, collate and stuff into ballot envelopes.

Volunteer assignments during tournament week

Below are the major tasks that the local host committee is responsible for during the week of the tournament. The host league will want to ensure the availability of approximately 150 volunteers at peak times (Saturday & Sunday). In consultation with the NCFL President and Tournament Director, some of the duties may be assigned to NCFL officers.

- Assignment Cards Preparation -- On the Thursday prior to the tournament, the host league will need to provide a small group of volunteers to assist with sorting assignment cards and stuffing into appropriate League packets.
- Registration Committee -- counting out and sorting registration materials for each League; manning the registration desk on Friday of the weekend, assisting making any changes in schematics due to registration changes.
- General Information -- manning desks at each hotel and competition facility to give general information.
- Souvenir sales – manning tables at hotels and competition venues to sell tournament tee shirts and other souvenirs.
- Timers/Pages/Runners/Ballot Collectors -- assembling and organizing a large force of students from the League to work on Saturday and Sunday. Run a briefing session for the students sometime before the contest.
- Saturday On-Site Events -- responsible for smooth site operations, communicating with local and national leadership, working with students and adults to determine that judges show up, rounds are underway, and that ballots are returned.
- Sorting & Stuffing -- Saturday and Sunday working with students and adults to see that ballots and results sheets are sorted by diocese. Several volunteers will need to be on duty after the awards ceremony to distribute ballot packets to diocesan directors.
- Awards -- transporting trophies from storage to awards assembly site, setting them up -- Sunday of the contest.

If there is any particular aspect of a National Tournament which you have noticed in your own experience that is omitted here and you would like to work on it, please feel free to suggest it.