

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

Revised at the NCFL Executive Committee's Fall Meeting, 1999

Revised Based on NCFL 2007 Houston Numbers by R. Burdett, May 30, 2007

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Introduction

Since the early 1990's, the selection of the host diocesan league and city for the National Catholic Forensic League's (NCFL) Annual Grand National Speech and Debate Tournament has become a competitive effort. Up until the late 1980's, nearly any "rational" bid was accepted, as there weren't that many local dioceses bidding. In the 1990's, with the expanding size of the tournament, the increasing interest of local communities in participating in the hosting, and the recognition of the revenue that hosting the tournament brings to a local city, the bid and selection process became competitive. In the interests of thoroughness, fairness, and inclusion, the NCFL chose to formalize the process and define the contents of a bid to host the tournament. After two selections using this process, some weaknesses were identified in the process. The NCFL has chosen to revise the process to address these weaknesses.

Attached, please find the revised 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 local residence or business address as given on the NCFL Letterhead or an alternate address specified by the President. All bids must be received by the President of the NCFL not earlier than September 1st of the year five years prior to the tournament, and not later than January 2nd of the year three years prior to the tournament date being "bid" for. For example, a bid to host the 2005 Tournament, should be sent to the President of the NCFL to arrive between September 1st, 2000, and January 2nd of the year 2002. 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. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.

7. The NCFL will reimburse each local diocesan league selected to present a bid to the Executive Committee up to \$500 in printing costs for the bid materials. Receipts must be submitted to the NCFL Treasurer at the Executive Committee Meeting at which the bid is presented. No further compensation or reimbursement will be made to bidding leagues, whether they win or lose their bid. Any costs incurred to present the bid (such as audio/visual equipment rental) will be the responsibility of the bidding league.
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 \$25 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 2nd one year prior to each National Tournament, the host diocesan league for the tournament must provide to the President of the NCFL a revised budget estimate and status of preparations for the tournament.
12. By January 2nd of the year of each National Tournament, the host diocesan league must provide to the President of the NCFL a final budget estimate and status of preparations for the tournament. This status should specifically include availability confirmations for all hotel and 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 2007 numbers):
 - 216 rooms for speech events (36 rooms per event)
 - 55 rooms for Lincoln-Douglas Debate
 - 55 rooms for Public Forum Debate
 - 85 rooms for Team Debate
 - 8 rooms for Student Congress
 - 1 room for 240 persons seated at tables (preferably) for Extemp Prep
 - 5-10 rooms for Tabulation, with at least 1 at each competition site
 - Judge's Lounges and meeting areas, with at least 1 at each competition site
 - Storage and ballot sorting areas
2. The plans for providing adequate competition rooms for the elimination rounds, including large rooms to accommodate at least 75 persons for each final round, of the tournament to include:
 - 24 or 48 rooms for Speech Elimination Rounds
 - 16 rooms for Lincoln-Douglas Debate Elimination Rounds
 - 16 rooms for Public Forum Debate Elimination Rounds
 - 16 rooms for Team Debate Elimination Rounds
 - 3 rooms for Student Congress Elimination Rounds
 - 1 room for 48 persons seated at tables for Extemp Prep
 - 5-10 rooms for Tabulation
 - Judge's Lounges and meeting areas
 - Storage and ballot sorting areas
3. The plans for providing adequate rooms and spaces to support the tournament to include:
 - Tournament registration and packet distribution
 - Storage for pre-tournament preparation (trophies, programs, etc)
 - Mass facilities (with a plan to accommodate 1200 persons)
 - Awards Assembly (with a plan to accommodate 2400-3000 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.
5. The rental, custodial, and security costs for each site should be discussed.
6. The willingness of each 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
 - Sunday Night Awards
8. Detail plans to print the Tournament Program, I.E. ballots and critique sheets, I.E. Schematics, Judges and Students Assignment Cards, on-site copying of Debate schematics, the tournament results packets, and the host league's newsletters.
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 contract with local hotel(s) (and possibly college dorm rooms if appropriate) to house the participants at the contest. This section should detail the how the bidding league plans to meet the housing needs of the attendees at the tournaments. At a minimum, the following information should be addressed.

1. The plans for securing 1600+ rooms in the immediate vicinity. Provide details about how many of the rooms will be “double-double” rooms. The NCFL requires approximately 70% 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 35 and 55 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 special menus for students, extended restaurant hours, telephone arrangements, reduced rates, meeting space, etc.
8. Indicate each facilities 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, 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 any 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 housing facilities and/or competition sites for both Saturday and Sunday.
2. Provide information on the breakfast food and “snack” plans to be provided for the Judges’ Lounges at each competition site on each day of the tournament.
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.
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 the tournament program booklet, the I.E. ballots and critique sheets, the I.E. schematics, student and judge assignment cards, on-site copying of Debate schematics, the tournament results packets, and the host league’s newsletters to local diocesan leagues before the tournament.
4. Food: Tab Room breakfast, lunches, and snack breaks (if any) for both days of the competition.
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. Postage: Costs of mailing local league newsletters to the diocesan league membership of the NCFL.
8. Mass expenses: Honoraria, site fees, etc.
9. The NCFL will be responsible for providing or contracting for the following necessary expenses for the Grand National Tournament. These expenses should not be included in the bidding diocesan league’s budget estimates.
 - (1) Awards
 - (2) Debate Ballots for Policy, Public Forum, and L-D
 - (3) Student Congress Ballots
 - (4) Insurance
 - (5) Tournament registration materials and mailing of those materials

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

Some of these committees are long range, some are in the few weeks preceding the contest, and some are during the course of the contest itself. 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.

1. Assignment Cards Preparation -- about two weeks before the tournament, after schematics are prepared, printing the few copies of schematics required, printing the judge and student assignment cards, preparing the speech ballot packets for distribution, stuffing into appropriate League packets.
3. Timers/Pages/Runners/Ballot Collectors -- assembling and organizing a large force of students from the League to work on Saturday, smaller group for Sunday. Run a briefing session for the students sometime before the contest.
4. Mass -- arrange for the site(s) for Mass(es), and arrange for all aspects of the Mass(es) -- lectors, music, singers, gifts, etc.
5. Busses -- investigating bus company costs and signing with one, coordinating the transportation from hotel to tournament sites, and shuttles among sites as necessary.
6. Awards -- transporting trophies from storage to awards assembly site, setting them up -- Sunday of the contest.
7. Registration Committee -- counting out and sorting registration materials for each League; manning the registration desk on Friday of contest, making any changes in schematics due to registration changes.
8. Website and Publicity -- communication with leagues, students, and coaches around the country in months before the contest.
9. Results Committee -- on Sunday preparing the Preliminary Rounds Results Packet, and then on Sunday evening preparing the Elimination Rounds Results Packet, printing and stuffing the results packets into the diocesan league packets.
10. General Information -- manning a desk at hotel to give general information.
11. 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).
12. Saturday On-Site Events -- manning walkie-talkies, working with students and adults to determine that judges show up, rounds are underway, and that ballots are returned.

13. Sorting & Stuffing -- Saturday and Sunday working with students and adults to see that ballots and results sheets are sorted by diocese.
14. Program -- assembling appropriate maps of sites, soliciting welcome letters from appropriate dignitaries (Bishop, Mayor, etc.), arranging for the printing of program.
15. Sightseeing/Activities -- organizing optional activities (theater, reception, sightseeing, etc.) for participants at the tournament.
17. Local Money-makers -- 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.
18. Housing -- dealing with hotel re: registration, check-in procedures, elimination room set-ups, etc.
19. Contributions / Local benefactors -- seeking donations to the cause!
20. Hired / Local Judges -- assembling a pool of emergency judges in all areas of contest.
21. Logo Selection Committee -- receive and vote on a design for program cover / logo.
22. Ballot printing -- duplicate NCFL speech ballots and critique sheets, collate and stuff into ballot envelopes.
23. Ballot Distribution -- Saturday morning, manning tables to distribute speech ballot envelopes to speech judges.
24. 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.