



National Catholic Forensic League

Instructions to Bidders for the

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 Tournament Director and the NCFL Event Manager for guidance through the bidding process.

Below, 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 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 the necessary commitments, and follow through on them for, the NCFL community to provide a successful, efficient, and enjoyable tournament experience for all participants

Section 1 – Bid Schedule and Process

- All bids by a local diocesan league to host the National Catholic Forensic League (NCFL) 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.
- All bids must be addressed to the President of the NCFL at his or her email address (please see <https://www.ncfl.org/executive-council.html> 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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/or 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 may include, the NCFL’s Hotel and Housing Vendor.

- 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.
- Presentations by the selected bidders can be made at either the NCFL Executive Council's Annual Spring or Fall Meeting. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 NCFL 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.
- In the intervening years between approval of a bid, and the Fall before the tournament, the host diocesan league director should be in contact with the NCFL Tournament Director and NCFL Event Manager to communicate any updates, questions, or anticipated issues.
- By September 15th of the year prior to each National Tournament, and again by January 15th of the year of the 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.

- 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

- 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.
- The successful proposal will have, at a minimum, the following sections:
 - Cover Letter
 - Executive Summary
 - Competition Facilities
 - Hotel Facilities
 - Transportation Arrangements
 - Food Arrangements
 - Budget Estimate
 - Steering Committee
- 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 delivered electronically that is able to be printed in a format easily readable, with 8.5 x 11 inch standard pages.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- The plans for providing adequate competition rooms for the preliminary rounds of the tournament to include (based on 2019 numbers):
 - For Lincoln Douglas Debate: 65 competition rooms, a tab room, an equity break-out room near the tab room, a quiet room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and at least one all-gender restroom.
 - For Public Forum Debate: 65 competition rooms, a tab room, an equity break-out room near the tab room, a quiet room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and at least one all-gender restroom.
 - For Policy Debate: 65 competition rooms, a tab room, an equity break-out room near the tab room, a quiet room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and at least one all-gender restroom.
 - For Student Congress: 15 competition rooms, a tab room, an equity break-out room near the tab room, a quiet room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge, and at least one all-gender restroom.
 - For Speech: 40 competition rooms per event for a total of 240 competition spaces, a tab room large enough to seat 75, an equity break-out room and a protest break-out room near the tab room, a quiet room near the tab room, a student lounge/cafeteria, a judge lounge large enough to seat 150, an Extemp prep room large enough to fit 275 students at tables, and at least one all-gender restroom.
- The plans for providing adequate competition rooms for the elimination rounds of the tournament, including large rooms to accommodate at least 150 persons for each final round, to include:
 - For Lincoln Douglas Debate: 16 competition rooms, a tab room, student lounge/cafeteria, and a meeting room large enough for approximately 150 people.
 - For Public Forum Debate: 16 competition rooms, a tab room, student lounge, a meeting room large enough to fit 150 people, and at least one all-gender restroom.
 - 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, a meeting room large enough to fit 150 people, and at least one all-gender restroom.
- For Student Congress: 4 large competition rooms with seating at tables for 30 people, plus chairs for observers behind, a tab room, student lounge, a large meeting room to hold at least 150 people (this meeting room can be one of the competition rooms), and at least one all-gender restroom. At least one of the competition rooms should allow up to 100 observers in theater 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 150 for standby judges, a tab room large enough to seat 75 at tables, a protest break-out room, an equity break-out room, a quiet room, a prep room large enough to seat 48 students at long tables (preferably two students per table), a student lounge, and at least one all-gender restroom. Rooms for at least two of the final rounds should accommodate more than 600.
- The plans for providing adequate rooms and spaces to support the tournament to include:
 - Tournament registration on Thursday and Friday;
 - Storage for pre-tournament preparation (trophies, etc) ;
 - Tournament preparation rooms beginning Monday at a central location;
 - Mass facilities (with a plan to accommodate 1000 persons);
 - Postings will be done Online. If financially possible, appropriate video screens and technology will be provided at the Postings Party.
 - 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).
- The competition sites for the tournament. The number of sites, 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.
- The rental, custodial, and security costs for each site should be discussed.
- The willingness of each competition site to enter into contracts with the local host diocesan league should be discussed. The contract mechanisms, insurance requirements, parties, and timelines should be discussed.
- The plans for the tournament support activities to include:
 - Tournament Registration;
 - NCFL Executive Council Meeting;

- NCFL Diocesan Directors Workroom near the Tournament Registration area, and a location for a possible Diocesan Directors Meeting if needed (in general this will be done Online the week before, so this will only be used if an urgent need arises);
 - Saturday Night Mass, or Masses;
 - Saturday Night Postings and Party if desired;
 - Sunday Night Awards.
- Detail plans to print any materials required before and during the tournament.
 - Optionally, the Host may 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.
 - Indicate each facility's willingness to provide the various Equity accommodations that NCFL is implementing such as All Gender Restrooms, Quiet Rooms, etc.
 - 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 hotel facilities to be used throughout the tournament. The tournament host will collaborate with the NCFL Tournament Director, NCFL Event Manager, and NCFL’s hotel and housing vendor to secure bids and contract(s) with local hotel(s).

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 Manager and Conference Direct Representative. Conference Direct will provide the candidate hotels with a Request for Proposal. Their support team will help to build and negotiate a comprehensive hotel package on which the host will report in the bid. Contracts will be signed by the NCFL after approval of the Host Diocesan League’s proposal to host the national tournament.

At a minimum, the following information should be addressed in the bid package. Most of this information will be provided by the Conference Direct team based on their negotiations on NCFL’s behalf with the hotels.

- Provide the plans for securing 1,500 rooms in the immediate vicinity on the peak nights, Friday and Saturday, with approximately 4,500 room nights across the entire event. Provide details about how many of the rooms will be “double-double” rooms. The NCFL requests approximately 75% 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Indicate each facility’s willingness to accept, and process for accepting, tax-exempt certificates from other states.
- Indicate each facility’s willingness to provide the various Equity accommodations that NCFL is implementing such as All Gender Restrooms, Quiet Rooms, etc.

- Indicate each facility's participation in tournament activities such as Tournament Registration, Diocesan Directors' Meeting, Preliminary Rounds, Elimination Rounds, Masses, Parties or Receptions, and Awards Ceremony.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- Identify the local airport(s) for the proposed host city. If the proposed host city is not a major metropolitan area, detail the air service currently provided in terms of number of flights arriving and departing each day. And provide information on alternative ways to easily access the city from a nearby major airport, such as train, bus, etc.
- 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.
- Indicate if shuttles to the housing facilities are provided, either by the facilities, the community, or the host league.
- 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.
- Detailed plans for providing tournament transportation from the housing facilities to the competition sites on Saturday and Sunday of the tournament. Indicate arrangements for transportation to and from tournament activities such as Masses, Parties, and the Awards Ceremony. Identify plans for meeting the ADA transportation needs of students and judges. 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.

- Detail plans for providing a quick “cash and carry” or “buffet breakfast” for tournament participants at the competition sites for both Saturday and Sunday. Given the early hours that we start on Saturday and Sunday, we have found that we cannot depend on the hotels to have enough food and coffee available for everyone.
- Provide information on the breakfast food plans to be provided for the Judges’ Lounges at each competition site on Saturday. When the Judges’ Lounge is in a hotel, the arrangements will be handled by the NCFL Event Manager; when the Judges’ Lounge is in a school, the local host committee will be responsible.
- 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. When the Tab Room is in a hotel, the arrangements will be handled by the NCFL Event Manager; when the Judges’ Lounge is in a school, the local host committee will be responsible.
- 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.
- 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.
- Provide information on the food establishments at each housing facility. This information should include seating capabilities, hours of operations, and average meal costs.
- 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.

- 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.
- Site Fees: Rental, custodial, and security costs for the sites and equipment used for any tournament events.
- Printing Costs.
- Food: Tab Room breakfast, lunches, snack breaks, (and light dinners for debate tabs) for both days of the competition and breakfast in all Judges’ Lounges on Saturday. (All other meals will be cash & carry.)
- Entertainment (if any): Costs of any coach/student social events being planned.
- Mass expenses: Honoraria, site fees, etc.
- The NCFL will be responsible for providing or contracting for the following necessary expenses for the Grand National Tournament: Awards; Tab Room supplies; 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.

- Indicate, by name, the local diocesan league coaches who will be key members of the planning group and members of the steering committee.
- 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) -- lectors, music, singers, gifts, etc.
- Buses -- 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.
- Food -- arranging for contestant and judge lunches for Saturday; arranging for food concessions stands at each school venue; arranging for food for tab rooms on both days; coffee/donuts/etc for judge lounge area(s).
- Sightseeing/Activities -- organizing optional activities (theater, reception, sightseeing, etc.) for participants at the tournament.
- Local Fundraisers -- coordinating the purchase and sale of T-shirts, mugs, etc., and assembling volunteers to sell at competition and hotel venues; any other possibilities of local league fundraising schemes.
- Contributions / Local benefactors -- seeking donations to the cause!
- Service Project — Since 2017 the NCFL has looked to leave each host city better than when we found it. Please identify one to two local community based service projects that the NCFL can support with donations of funds and/or goods/supplies, and coordinate with those organizations and the NCFL Leadership to enable the collection of those donations.
- Hired / Local Judges -- assembling a pool of hired judges to be available 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. The NCFL will work with the Local League to assign judges and provide input on expected needs. Based on 2019 numbers, we anticipate needing to hire approximately 125 judges.
- Logo Selection Committee -- receive and vote on a design for program cover / logo.

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.

- General Information -- staffing desks at each hotel and competition facility to give general information.
- Food & Souvenir sales – staffing tables at hotels and competition venues to sell food, drinks, and snacks, and tournament tee shirts and other souvenirs.
- Saturday and Sunday Competition Site Events -- responsible for smooth site operations, communicating with local and national leadership.
- 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.