

FY 2017-2018 Speech Contest Guidance

To: Executive Steering Committee

From: District Director, Finance Manager

Date: August 2017

District 36 Toastmasters allocates resources to fulfill its mission: *We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence*. Toastmasters International encourages districts to prioritize resources towards club growth and retention. Toastmasters International does not recognize speech contest expenses as primary drivers of club growth and retention. Consequently, the district is restricted in how much funds may be used to support area and division contests. To balance against other district needs and to provide assistance to the area and division directors who are critical in achieving our mission, the district will provide the following speech contest resources in fiscal year 2018:

Trophies: To reduce the hosting costs for area and division directors, the district will purchase 4 first place contest trophies for each contest event (*i.e.*, Table Topics, Humorous Speech/Tall Tales, Evaluation and International) at the area and division levels. No additional documentation or approvals are needed in order to receive the trophies. The trophies will be distributed in September and March District Executive Council meetings for the fall and spring contests, respectively.

Reimbursements: The district will reimburse area and division directors for losses incurred up to \$25 for each fall and spring contest. The following actions must be completed in order to be reimbursed for any speech contest losses:

- Complete a budget (Speech Contest Budget vs. Actual). The budget **must be approved via email by all members of the district trio¹ prior to holding the contest**.
- Report actual expenses incurred (Speech Contest Budget vs. Actual).
- Complete an expense report via *Concur*, the electronic reimbursement system. Attach the following documents:
 - Speech Contest Budget vs. Actual
 - Emails showing all members of the district trio's (*i.e.*, district director, program quality director, and club growth director) approval of the budget prior to the contest.
 - Contest sign-in/attendance sheet
 - All itemized receipts for each actual expense reported

The district expects areas and divisions to break even at each contest. Historically, speech contest losses have been minimized when area and division directors charge a nominal entrance fee to cover the cost of refreshments, a generally accepted practice. As a result, **a speech contest loss will not be reimbursed if a nominal entrance fee is not charged to attendees**. Typically, \$5 is charged for area contests; \$10 is charged for division contests.

The district encourages promoting the contests to increase attendance, as well as seeking food donations from local vendors ([Sample Donation Letter](#)) to reduce hosting costs. This has been an effective best practice across the district. In addition, thank you gifts should range from \$5-\$15 per person.

If revenue is generated from an event, the area and division director should apply the excess to the following contest season.

All reimbursements must be submitted timely and are subject to the appropriate documentation noted above and approvals per TI policy. Visit the [Document Library](#) for more information and to obtain copies of the Speech Contest Budget vs. Actual and Sample Donation Letter. Contact finance@district36.org with any questions.