

Debate Site Selection FAQ Sheet

How does the Coalition determine the number of debates and the dates?

The number of debates is based on a combination of considerations including how many key races will be on the ballot, their competitiveness and the Coalition's production capacity. Dates are also determined by a combination of factors, such as proximity to the election, media partner programming and alignment with national debates or other key political broadcasts.

What races will be featured in 2018?

The Coalition will host debates for U.S. Senate and WA-8th.

How many debates will there be in 2018? Where? When?

The Coalition will host 3 debates—2 debates for U.S. Senate and 1 for WA-8th. The following sites and co-hosts will host debates in 2018: Gonzaga University, Community Colleges of Spokane, Eastern Washington University, University of Washington, Washington State University-Spokane, and Whitworth University (for a U.S. Senate Debate at Gonzaga University); Pacific Lutheran University (for a U.S. Senate Debate); Central Washington University, Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, Ellensburg School District, Kittitas School District, Thorp School District, Cle Elum-Roslyn School District, Easton School District, and Associated Students of Central Washington University (for a WA-8th Debate at Central Washington University). Debate dates will be finalized this summer.

What is the process for deciding?

Following the deadline to submit bids to host, a Coalition committee reviews the applications and, as necessary, conducts an in-person or telephone meeting with applicants to address further questions. The Coalition's Governance Committee is responsible for final selection.

What are the criteria used to choose host organizations?

Consideration is given to the host site's ability to provide a safe and suitable venue, meet the logistical needs of a high-quality live broadcast, provide in-kind and/or financial contributions for their debate, engage with other local partners, market to and attract a diverse live audience to the event and represent the nonpartisan values of the Coalition. Selection of the final set of host sites is also based on cost considerations, creating geographic diversity and a range of venue sizes and types.

How do organizations learn about the opportunity to participate?

Information is featured on websites, social media and other communications by Coalition Founder Seattle CityClub and by Coalition members. Coalition members also proactively contact potential organizations to suggest they apply to host a debate.

How do organizations apply to host a debate?

In late spring, Seattle CityClub posts an online application at bit.ly/WADebate, during which time organizations, or partnerships of more than one organization, respond to a set of questions on venue suitability and logistics such as seating capacity, staging, lighting and audio/visual resources, power, security and insurance, volunteer staffing and other event needs. They are also asked to submit information about their ability to promote attendance at the event in their local community, especially among populations typically underrepresented in the political process, and their willingness to partner with other organizations.

What support can host organizations anticipate from the Coalition?

The Washington State Debate Coalition and its founder, Seattle CityClub, provides host organizations with guidance and resources throughout the planning process of their hosted debate. Host organizations can anticipate receiving the following resources from the Coalition: logistics coordination including candidate communications, registration support and attendee reminders, sample marketing materials and signage, and day of staff support. Hosts will work closely with the Coalition's Executive Producer to coordinate set up and logistics for the media broadcast. Additional resources may vary, depending upon the sites' identified resources and available funding, as well as the Coalition's budget.

If an organization is not selected one year can they apply in a future year?

Yes. If a host organization is not selected because it does not meet minimum qualifications, the Committee will let it know. Otherwise, an organization should assume that non-selection was based on other factors such as balancing geographic and venue diversity and should know that it is encouraged to apply again. A host organization must apply each year it would like to be considered; applications will not automatically carry over.

How can I be notified of opportunities to host a debate?

Information on the Washington State Debate Coalition, including a link to the hosting application when it is open, can be found at bit.ly/WADebate. If you would like to be notified when applications open each year, or if you have questions, contact Seattle CityClub at cityclub@seattlecityclub.org or 206.682.7395.

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