



AREA CONTEST – DISTRICT 26

How to: Conducting
Hybrid Area Speech
Contests

Toastmasters International announced in July that all Speech Contests at the Area-, Division-, and District-levels *must* be conducted in either a hybrid or online format for the 2022-2023 speech contest cycle.

The District 26 District Executive Committee voted to hold its 2023 Contests in a hybrid format for each level of the contests [i.e., Area, Division, District]. The format selected for a level must apply to all contests that take place at that level.

The contests that will be conducted in Spring 2023 will be the Table Topics and the International speech contests.

Each club in good standing (i.e., a minimum of 8 paid members) is permitted to choose its contestant for each Area speech contest by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with the rules in the [2022-2023 contest rulebook](#), and the contest result is final. Or the club may choose to select members to compete in the area contests. **Clubs may send only one (1) contestant per contest.**

Online and Hybrid contests are an exception to General Rules for all Toastmasters Speech Contests, 2. Eligibility, C, 11, which states, “Each contestant must be physically present to compete beyond the club level. Participation by audio, video, or other remote technology is not permitted beyond the club level.” Other than this exception, the Speech Contest Rulebook must be followed, as far as it is applicable. All contestants and contest officials must be present in real-time for the contest. Online contestants must use a webcam and microphone to ensure they are visible and audible while delivering their speech.

Area Director

A. Preparation [Schedule Contests, Communicate date to clubs, Appoint Contest Chair]

Reserve a facility for your on-site Contests – When choosing a location, be mindful of the need to reserve two separate rooms or a holding area away from the main room. The main room for the contest with the audience and a separate room for **sequestering** the Table Topics Contestants and the Sergeant-at-Arms. The second room can also serve as the on-site ballot counting room. Email the Program Quality Director of your date, time, location, and Zoom link to be placed on the D26 calendar [pqd@d26leaders.org]

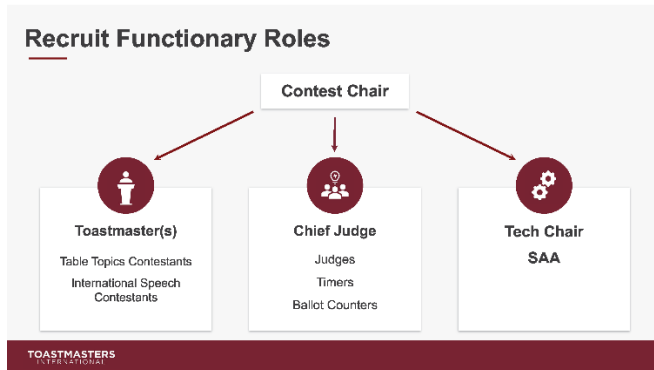
- I. Contact your Division Director to schedule your Contest using the Division’s Zoom Account on the date chosen. [Instructions have been provided to Division Directors and is included below.]
- II. **Ask Division Director to also schedule, two (2) days before the contest, an online Briefing Session for contestants and judges.**
- III. **Communicate date to clubs**
 - A. Notify all of your club Presidents and VPEs of the date for your Area contests. Have them send their contest forms to you. As a courtesy, include in your email the links to the forms that you will need from each club.
 1. [Notification of Winners](#) form for each contest [whether a contest is held, or a contestant is appointed.]

2. Completed [Speech Contestant Profile](#)
3. Complete and sign [Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality](#) [digital signature is acceptable]
4. Ask one of the club Presidents and VPE to serve as contest chair or take on the role yourself. **[Pathways credit is available]**

Contest Chair – organizes the contests and chooses 3 topics for the Table

Topics Contest. [Note if more than one Area contest is taking place, the Contest chair will need to prepare 6 separate sheets with topics to be placed in 3 separate envelopes labeled 1, 2, 3.]

- a. Once appointed, the Contest chair will then select a Zoom Master, 3 sergeants-at-arms [2 onsite and 1 online;] two Contest Toastmasters – 1 for Table Topics and 1 for the International Speech Contest, and an experienced member to serve as the Chief Judge.
- b. Track planning details in a spreadsheet
 - i. Contestants, their speech titles; contest officials, contact info
 - ii. Tasks and action items, timeline, status, responsible person
 - iii. Conduct regular planning meetings
 - iv. **Give the Contestant Profile sheets to the Contest Toastmaster for each contest.**
 - v. **Give the Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality form to the Chief Judge.**



Chief Judge

- B. Your Contest’s Chief Judge will select judges, ballot counters, and timers.
 1. **Area contests** – 5 voting judges, 1 tiebreaking judge, 2 counters, and 2 timers.
 2. Recommend recruiting extra judges to have as a backup, especially for online in case of technical difficulties.
- C. Area Directors or the Contest Chair will need to verify that Contestants meet the Eligibility to compete.

1. Have earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any paths in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience or earned a Distinguished Toastmaster award.
 2. However, a charter member of a club chartered less than one (1) year before the club contest is permitted to compete without having completed this requirement. The club must have officially chartered before the Area contest. To verify, all area contestants' eligibility, Use the Eligibility Assistant - [https://www.Contest Toastmasters.org/leadership-central/eligibility-assistant](https://www.ContestToastmasters.org/leadership-central/eligibility-assistant)
 - i. Must have the contestant's last name and the Toastmasters' membership number to use this tool
- IV. You will want to allow or enable attendees to pre-register in order for the chief judge to see which club members are in attendance to be able to select contest judges.
- V. The Division Director will set up set-up these Custom Questions on the registration form:

REGISTRATION DETAIL PAGE ALLOWS YOU TO Create a form with Custom Questions:

Order	Your Questions	Required
1. Please Indicate how you will attend contest	In-person at [the address for your onsite location] Online via Zoom	✘
2. Club Name(s)		✘
3. Please Select Appropriate Answer	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; background-color: #f9f9f9;"> <p>Answer</p> <p><input type="text" value="Not a Contestant"/></p> <p><input type="text" value="Table Topics Contestant"/></p> <p><input type="text" value="International Speech Contestant"/></p> <p><input type="text" value="Table Topics & International Speech Contes"/></p> <p>Add another answer</p> <p><input type="button" value="Update"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/></p> </div>	✘

Order Your Questions

Required

4. [If you are serving as a contest staff, please select appropriate role.](#)

Not a Contest Staff

Ballot Counter

Chief Judge

Contest Chair

Contest Toastmaster

Timer

Other Role

Sergeant-at-Arms

Voting Judge

Zoom/Tech Assistant

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5 [Enter Phone # in case contest is cancelled.](#)

[require]

- D. Ensure that your Division Director enables the Breakout Rooms for both the briefing session and the contest day:
 - 1. Create 3 Rooms, labeling them as
 - i. Main Contest Room
 - ii. Judges
 - iii. Contestants
- E. If the Breakout Room feature is not visible when you schedule the meeting, it will need to be enabled by going to the Account Management menu item and then to Account Settings to verify that the breakout room is enabled. If not, click to enable.

- B. Briefings [Contestants, Judges, Ballot Counters, Timers] will take place online 2 days before the contest even though the contest is a Hybrid event. See the separate document for contestant briefing which includes the procedure to draw for speaking order. [Use www.wheelofnames.com]
- I. Have contest chair send an email and the Zoom link to the 1st and 2nd place club contestants and to each Contest Toastmaster for the contestant’s briefing session. The Chief Judge and the primary timer are also invited for the contestants’ briefing
 - a. Ask contestants to check in 10 to 15 minutes before the judging team arrives
 - II. Have the chief judge send an email and the Zoom link to the judging team to invite them to attend the briefing.
 - a. Ask the judging team to arrive 15 minutes after the contestants.
 - III. If you’ve selected a Contest Toastmaster for each contest, you or each Contest Toastmaster may conduct the briefing for contestants or you may do it jointly.
 - a. Place all Table Topics and International contestants in the contestants’ Breakout Room.
 - IV. **See separate document for contestant briefing including the draw for speaking order, using the wheelofnames.com [www.wheelofnames.com]**
 - V. **See separate document for Chief Judge’s briefing for Judges, Ballot Counters, and Timers**

C. Contest Day!!! – See Script for Table Topics which outlines the procedure for the “event flow” & International Speech Contests. [Table Topics Contest will take place first at all levels.]

Contest Chair, Chief Judge, Ballot Counters and Timers are encouraged to attend in person. One Timer should bring a laptop to show the timing colors on Zoom. Contestants and Judges can choose to be onsite or online. This can be determined during the Briefing.

- a. The Division Director or Area Director starts the meeting and makes the Zoom Master the Host. The Zoom Master then Opens the meeting at least 45 minutes in advance to

allow for early sign-in by the online contestants and online judges and the sergeant-at-arms.

- b. Zoom Master could be SAA or other designee but should be someone familiar with the platform.
 - c. Area and Division Contests are not recorded.**
 - d. The Zoom Master should be capable of creating and assigning specific attendees to specific breakout rooms
 - e. The Zoom Master/Host ensures that all audience members remain on mute and stop audio and chat for the duration of the contest(s)
 - f. Backup Zoom Master may watch for those who may unmute themselves.
- D. Zoom Master and Assistant helps with renaming contestants who choose to compete online and monitors any online judges in helping them remain anonymous.
- a. Contestants should rename as: contest, speaking order and name [Example: as the third contestant for Table Topics, Kennedy Jones will rename herself as: TT3 Kennedy Jones]
 - b. Judges must remain anonymous.
 - c. Ensure that judges are aware their webcams need to remain off during the entire contest in order to maintain anonymity. Their photos are not to be shown.
 - d. Judges are to rename themselves with the number assigned by the Chief Judge.
- E. Ask online contestants and online judges to arrive early, contestants--30 minutes and judges 15 minutes before is sufficient
- F. Ask audience members to sign in at least 5-10 minutes early. They will be moved to the main contest room.
- G. Zoom Master will Provide guidance at the beginning of the contest to the audience on how the platform is used. [\[See contest flow on Table Topics Script\]](#)
- a. Tell online audience members that they must keep their webcams turned off and microphones muted at all times
- H. **Online Speech Contest Statement (read by Contest Chair or Area Director) at the start of the meeting and screen shared by the Zoom Master**

By attending this remote and hybrid Area speech contest, you agree to the privacy policy of Toastmasters International as well as the unassociated remote hosting service. Some of your personal information, such as name, image, and any shared messages may be shared with other meeting participants and will be recorded by Toastmasters International who may use the recording in the future as it sees fit. Your attendance hereby discharges Toastmasters International from all claims, demands, rights, promises, damages, and

liabilities arising out of or in connection with the use or distribution of said video recordings, including but not limited to any claims for invasion of privacy, appropriation of likeness or defamation.

- I. Both the Table Topics & International Toastmaster Scripts will be available on the D26 website and in this packet.
 - a. Reminder: if there is a Table Topics contestant who is also competing in the International speech contest, the interview for this member will take place after the International Speech Contest.
- J. Protests about speeches may only be made by the Contestants or Judges and must be presented to both the Contest Chair and the Chief Judge before the winners are announced.
 - a. **Judges and Contestants will send to the Contest Chair and to the Chief Judge a text message to the phone numbers provided during the briefing.**
- K. Each online judge should be ready to submit their Official Judge’s Guide and ballot digitally via the agreed upon communication method, which could be
 - a. Complete the entire ballot, then screenshot and crop the bottom section of the ballot and only send the screenshot.
 - b. Complete the bottom section of the ballot and leave the scoring section blank and submit the entire file.
- L. Either way, judges should keep in mind that the scores they gave each contestant should not be submitted.
- M. Ensure that each submitted ballot includes the judge’s signature.
 - a. Online judges may use a digital signature on a fillable version of the ballot.
 - b. They may use a stylus on their device to sign the ballot.
 - c. They may sign the form and then email a legible photo of the signed form.
 - d. They may take a photo of their signature and enter it on the ballot
- N. What to do when there is a **technology failure** or interruption during the speaker’s presentation?
 - a. The chief judge must decide ahead of the contest how long the contest will be paused in the event of a technical issue. Consider what may be a “reasonable amount of time,” both for the contestant to attempt reconnection and for the audience to wait in silence. A good starting place is 5 minutes, but your chief judge may select more or less time.

- b. If a contestant loses connection during the contest but is able to regain connection, they should pick up their speech at the point where they left off. The contest chair can indicate the last word or sentence that was heard so they know where they lost connection.
- c. If a contest official loses connection and you have a backup official to take their place, confirm the process for communicating with the backup official that they are needed.
- d. An alternative means of reaching the contest chair/chief judge in the event of a technology failure, should be established.

O. Complete Technology Failure that Impacts the Entire Contest

- a. The Online Contest Exception from Toastmasters International indicates that an alternative method of communication should be identified should the online platform become completely unavailable to *all users*.
- b. The Chief Judge may determine if it is best to reschedule and reconvene should a complete failure of technology occur.
- c. The District 26 FreeConferenceCall.com number, as follows, is the alternative method of communication:
- d. Free Conference Call # 425-436-6338, Access Code # 886291. This alternative shall allow contest officials to communicate with the chief judge and contestants to communicate with the contest chair.

1st Place Area Winners will receive a trophy

2nd & 3rd Place finishers will receive certificates emailed to them.

All contestants will receive a Certificate of Participation—in person or by email.

Email certificates of appreciation to the judging team.

Contest Toastmaster—After the contest, please get all of the Eligibility forms back from the chief judge. You or the chief judge must prepare the Notification of Winner form for each contest. Then email the Notification along with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners' Contestant Profiles and Eligibility Forms to the appropriate Division Director.