

**Rotary** **YOUTH**  
**SPEAKS** *A Debate*  
**COMPETITION**



[ROTARYGBI.ORG](https://rotarygbi.org)

Hosted by

**Rotary**  
Great Britain & Ireland 

# Information Pack for 2023 – 2024

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## Introduction

Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate is organised and promoted by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (Rotary GB&I). It is a team competition with each team comprising three young people who prepare and deliver a 15-minute debate on a topic of their choice in front of an audience.

There are four stages to the competition, each designed to support and encourage the development of effective communication skills.

## Aims and Objectives

The competition aims to offer young people:

- experience in speaking on a public platform as a member of a team
- an incentive to formulate ideas on topical subjects and to put these forward while being in opposition to another speaker
- discipline in dealing with a topic in a limited time
- the opportunity of learning and practising high standards of expression, presentation and appearance
- impartial feedback and assessment of their performance by experienced judges

## Who can take part?

The competition is open to teams of 3 young people in the age groups shown below on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023. They may be a team that simply decides to enter themselves or they may be from any group or community organisation including schools and colleges, home educated, other young peoples' community organisations, for example, community RotaKids, community Interact, Scout Groups, Girl Guides, etc. It should be noted that some intermediate entrants may be 14 and some senior entrants may be 18 at the time of some or all the stages of the competitions e.g., a competitor who may be 17 on 31<sup>st</sup> August but turns 18 on 1<sup>st</sup> September is allowed to enter.

Each team will comprise of three students in education, apprenticeships, work or volunteering in two age groups:

Intermediate	11 to 13 years old
Senior	14 to 17 years old

**Teams should enter the competition organised by the local Rotary club through their respective group, or community organisation or privately, as detailed above.**

Local Rotary clubs can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website [www.rotarygbi.org](http://www.rotarygbi.org).

Teams may participate in a competition held by a Rotary club outside of their geographical boundary but may compete in only one club event.

## The Four Stages of the Competition

Entrants need to complete an entry form, available from their local Rotary club and submit it to the local organiser, by the date and time specified by them.

### Local Heats

These are organised by local Rotary clubs and are generally between September and December. The winning team in each age group is entered into a Rotary district competition.

Local Rotary clubs can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website [www.rotarygbi.org](http://www.rotarygbi.org).

### District Competitions

These are organised by each Rotary District for the winning teams in each age group from the local heats for each category. They are generally completed by mid-February. In the case of a high number of entrants, it may be necessary to hold preliminary rounds prior to a District Final. Any preliminary rounds must be completed within the same guidelines. The **winning team** in each age group in the District Finals is then entered into the Cluster Final.

### Cluster Finals

The Cluster Finals are organised by several Rotary Districts together and are generally completed by end March. The **winning team** in each age group in the Cluster Finals is then entered into the National Final.

Clubs sponsoring competitors are responsible for assisting competitors with travel costs to the Cluster Final venue.

### National Final

The National Final is organised by Rotary GB&I and will be held on either the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> April subject to availability at a venue to be advised

Rotary GB&I does not fund expenses of the Cluster winners to attend the National Final. Sponsoring clubs are responsible in the first instance.

**The dates for local heats, district and cluster finals competitions will be determined locally. Entrants should check dates with their local Rotary club in the first instance.** Any entries submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

## Competition Guidelines

### Task

Each team should prepare and deliver a 15-minute debate on a topic of their choice in front of an audience. Teams should note that Rotary is a non-religious and non-political organisation, and this should be respected by competitors. Subjects chosen for debate should not set out deliberately to cause offence to others. Teams may choose to change the topic for debate at any subsequent level of the competition.

Each team will consist of three members with each taking a specific role: a Chairperson, a Proposer (speaking for the motion) and an Opposer (speaking against the motion). The team should remain the same throughout each stage of the competition. In exceptional circumstances substitutions may be made, subject to the approval of the organiser.

The Team will be allocated a total of **15 minutes** to present their debate. The timing of each part will not be monitored but it is recommended that both the Proposer and Opposer speak for 5 minutes with the Chairperson taking up the remaining 5 minutes for the introductions and summing up.

## Judges

The judges will be people with appropriate skills appointed by the organisers at the club, district and cluster levels accordingly.

At the National level the judges will be appointed by Rotary GB&I and will not be Rotarians.

The judging criteria is as set out below.

## Judging Criteria

The judging criteria and scoresheet can be found at the back of this Information Pack.

Judges will deduct one point for:

- each complete 15 seconds over the allocated time of 15 minutes
- each complete 30 seconds under the allocated time of 15 minutes.

A Rotarian with no interest in the participating teams will review the scores to ensure accuracy before the results are announced.

After the judges have determined the result of the competition one or more judges will comment on their observations of the competition before announcing the result.

The judges will not enter any discussion or correspondence regarding their decision; the decision of the judges will be final and not subject to any appeal.

## Questioner

The questioner, who shall not be one of the judges, will be appointed by the competition organiser to ask a question for either or both the Proposer and Opposer. To remove any potential bias the questioner needs to be an independent person. They may be a Rotarian or partner of a Rotarian not involved in any of the clubs in that round of the competition.

## Recognition

At all stages of the competition, competitors will receive a certificate of participation.

## How to enter

To enter a local heat, contact your local Rotary club which can be found by using the club finder facility in the top left-hand corner of the Home Page of the Rotary GB&I website [www.rotarygbi.org](http://www.rotarygbi.org). In case of difficulty, contact the Youth Speaks: A Debate team [youth-debate@rotarygbi.org](mailto:youth-debate@rotarygbi.org) for assistance.

Entrant teams are required to complete an entry form listing each member of the team and submit it along with their photographs, to the stage organiser by the time specified. Should the team need to change any of its members between stages due to lack availability, then an updated entry form/s and photograph/s need to be submitted to the event organiser prior the start of that round.

## Competition Procedure

### Arrival

Before each competition, the organiser will conduct a ballot to determine the order in which each team will participate which will be notified to teams on their arrival. Organisers have the right to adjust the order should teams arrive late.

Prior to the start of the competition the organiser will confirm that all the teams are fully aware of the competition procedure as described below.

### Arrangements

A master of ceremonies will invite each team in the order of the ballot to come to the front or to the stage to make their presentation.

The team should be led to their positions by the Chairperson who should sit with the Proposer on their right and the Opposer on their left. This is a team competition and each member must conduct themselves appropriately by being attentive to the others when they are speaking.

The team **MAY NOT** use any props, including PowerPoint or similar presentations. Nor may they enter a dramatic performance as this is a public speaking competition.

Notes may be used, however, their use should not be too obvious. If electronic media is used for this purpose, it must be used only as a reminder of the content of the speech and not as a prop or as a live means of presenting or sourcing information.

Where a venue would benefit from amplification, static microphones will be provided for team members to use. A sound test will be arranged prior to the competition. If any team member fails to use any provided static microphones and their words are inaudible, the judges will deduct marks.

The team members will perform their roles in the following order:

### Chairperson

When the team is ready and has been given the signal they are able to start, the Chairperson will stand. The Chairperson should control the debate. They should open the meeting and welcome the audience, introduce the speakers and their chosen topic.

### Proposer

The Proposer will put forward relevant arguments for the motion. The speech should be structured with an introduction, points for the motion and a conclusion.

### Opposer

The Opposer should put forward relevant arguments against the motion. If possible, they should pick up on some of the points put forward by the proposer. The speech should be structured with an introduction, points against the motion and a conclusion.

### Chairperson

When the speakers have finished the chairperson should invite a question from the audience. At this point the time clock will be paused.

### Proposer/Opposer

The Proposer and/or the Opposer, as appropriate, should reply to the question. The response should be limited to two minutes which will be timed but does not count toward the 15-minute timing. After they have answered the time clock will resume.

### Chairperson

The chairperson should close the debate with an appropriate summing up.

### Timings

The Team will be allocated a total of **15 minutes** to present their debate. Timing of each part will not be monitored but it is recommended that both the Proposer and Opposer speak for 5 minutes with the Chairperson taking up the remaining 5 minutes for the introductions and summing up.

Answering questions from the audience **will not be included in the timing of 15 minutes** but any answer should be **limited to two minutes and this will be timed separately**. A reply to the question which exceeds the stipulated time will be taken into consideration by the judges.

A signal will be given to indicate that the Team can start the debate with a further signal being given at 14 minutes and a final one at 15 minutes.

A system of lights or coloured cards will be used to indicate times:

Green – start; Amber – one minute to go (14 minutes); Red – end of allocated time (15 minutes).

The Team should not stop suddenly at the final signal but should be aware that time over the limit will be penalised by 1 point for each complete 15 seconds over the allocated time of 15 minutes and 1 point for each complete 30 seconds under the allocated time of 15 minutes.

### Results

After the judges have determined the results of the competition a judge will comment on their observations before announcing the result.

### Rotary Youth Competitions and other opportunities for young people

Youth Speaks: A Debate is one of a number of competitions for young people organised by Rotary GB&I. The others are: Young Artist; Young Chef; Young Musician; Young Environmentalist; Young Filmmaker; Young Photographer; and Young Writer. There are also annual Rotary Young Citizen Awards, a number of clubs organise Technology Tournaments and there are several Rotary specific programmes including RotaKids, Interact, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Developing Future Leaders and more. To find out more about these competitions and other opportunities please contact your local Rotary club in the first instance for what is happening locally and also take a look at <https://www.rotarygbi.org/projects/young-people/>.

## Working with Children

Rotary GB&I has adopted this statement of policy in working with children, vulnerable adults and those with disability:

*The needs and rights of the child, the elderly, the vulnerable and those with disability take priority. It is the duty of every Rotarian to safeguard to the best of their ability, the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact during their Rotarian duties.*



## ROTARY YOUTH SPEAKS: A DEBATE - JUDGES' SCORE SHEET

Team:			Topic for debate:		
MEMBER	ASPECT	MARKS	POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED	COMMENTS	SCORE
CHAIRPERSON	Delivery	5	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, confident and relaxed manner. Engage audience.		
	Manner and control of debate	5	Polite but business-like handling of meeting, showing appropriate attention.		
	Process	5	Welcome audience. Explain structure of meeting and introduce speakers and topic for debate.		
	Summing up and close of proceedings	5	Take question from floor. Close debate appropriately, including thanks to both speakers.		
PROPOSER	Delivery	10	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, confident and relaxed manner. Engage audience.		
	Subject and Construction of topic	25	Content of the speech and logic. Develop the topic and demonstrate clear thinking. Show knowledge and understanding of topic. Conclude by summarising points and why you are proposing the topic.		
OPPOSER	Delivery	10	Effective use of voice, clear enunciation, confident and relaxed manner. Engage audience.		
	Subject and Construction	25	Develop relevant arguments to points raised by proposer while also showing a knowledge and understanding of the topic. Conclude by summarising why you are opposing the subject.		
TEAMWORK	General	5	Posture, stance, mannerisms, general appearance, observance of formalities.		
	Question/Answer	5	Ability of Proposer/Opposer to answer question appropriately.		
	Timing of presentation		Marks to be deducted in this section for mismanagement of time.(Maximum of 3 points)		
<b>Possible Score: 100 points</b>				<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	



## Rotary Youth Speaks: A Debate - Time Sheet

Lights: **Green** – start; **Amber** – one minute to go (14 minutes); **Red** – end of allocated time (15 minutes).

- **For The Question Pause the Clock – AND - Resume After The Question Has Been Answered**
  - The time for answering the question should be no more than 2 minutes and this should be timed separately
- Deduct one point for each complete **15 seconds over** the allocated time of 15 minutes
- Deduct one point for each complete **30 seconds under** the allocated time of 15 minutes.

Team Name	Intermediate/ Seniors	Time Speaking ( Reference only)			Total Time	Points Deduction
		Chair	Proposer	Opposer		