



FY26 SFAC One-Time Request

Speech & Debate

10/23/2025

1. Executive Summary

The University of Houston has been selected as the host site for this year's American Debate Association National Championship Tournament. Hosting this tournament, which is the second largest of its kind and serves as the capstone to the competitive year, is considered a tremendous honor for any program. It brings hundreds of competitors from roughly a hundred schools across the country to compete in a three day tournament that ends with two crowned national champions, in Varsity and Novice debate.

This tournament comes with many direct benefits to the university. Along with the national prestige and attention such an event carries with it, there are direct economic benefits to the campus (for instance, the hotel rooms alone will bring tens of thousands of dollars directly to the University Hilton), competitive benefits that come with 'home field advantage', and benefits of accrued good will from the community. We have also won the Junior Varsity and Novice divisions of this tournament three of the past five years, and have been finalists in the other two.

This is also an important part of the process to get programs to attend our 'regular season' debate tournament, and lets us bid on other, larger, national championship tournaments.

Along with this, the team is also working with the University's Advancement office to arrange an alumni reunion event during the tournament, bringing seventy years of alumni of the speech and debate program back to campus to show off the campus, the team, the tournament, and much more. The end-goal is to use this as a prime fundraising moment to help add support to the program in times ahead.

This does not come without costs. For the ADA National Championship the host school is expected to provide food, refreshments, 'swag', and competition rooms, amongst other things. In our experience in hosting this cost comes out to about \$25,000 to our program.

As such, the program is asking SFAC for a **supplemental one-time increase for the 2026 Fiscal Year of \$15,000**. While this amount does not cover the entire cost of hosting the tournament, it will cover the cost with our already existing hosting budget and enable us to engage in the support for our advancement fundraising that we'd like to continue alumni support. It will also serve as a good baseline to help other arms of the University (e.g. the Honors College, the Provost's office, etc.) supplement this amount.

2. Rough Budget Breakdown

Per discussions with CEDA leadership, and contracts with the tournament hotel, this represents a rough breakdown of costs:

Cost Center	Amount
UH Alumni Event	\$5,000
Food for competitors and awards banquet, supplemented	\$7,000
Administrative costs + Hosting Gifts	\$3,000