



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

YOUR STEPS IN NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM .....	2
WHAT IS NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM? .....	3
WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL .....	6
• Step 1 – Choose a topic .....	6
• Step 2 – Research & develop your topic .....	8
• Step 3 – Analyze your topic .....	9
• Step 4 – Write a first draft & get feedback .....	10
• Step 5 – Write final draft & submit online .....	11
• Step 6 – Final research & debate .....	11
SAMPLE PROPOSALS .....	12
PRESENTING YOUR PROPOSAL .....	14
RULES & PROCEDURES .....	16
• Structure .....	16
• Debate Timing .....	17
• Amendments and Other Motions .....	18
• Committee Structure .....	18
• Debate Language .....	19
• Recognition .....	21

# YOUR STEPS IN NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

## YOUR MISSION

To increase awareness of national concerns and issues; increase understanding of the Federal Government and its relation to state, national, and international matters; and propose policy solutions to address these concerns.

## THINGS YOU WILL DO IN NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

- Research and author a proposal
- Meet all deadlines
- Be aware and informed of legislative rules and procedures
- Attend a Regional Training session in the spring
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct
- Present your proposal at Youth and Government and work to get it passed
- Debate and defend your proposal

The National Issues Forum (NIF) provides delegates with the opportunity to research, write and advocate for a proposal of their choosing, with a focus on high-level debate. The National Issues Forum provides a complement to the Youth and Government program by extending the focus of the issues debated by participants beyond the borders of New Mexico.

This guide is designed to provide delegates and advisors with information on the National Issues Forum program and to describe a delegate's responsibilities.

# WHAT IS NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM?

## Structure of National Issues Forum

The National Issues Forum (NIF) is a body of Youth and Government delegates who seek to address policy issues of national and international importance. Ideas presented in the NIF will tackle issues that should be handled at the Federal or international policy level. Delegates write and debate proposals, which are broad ideas for change rather than detail-oriented bills that are debated in the legislature. The NIF is structured in a multi-tiered system of progressively larger committees:

- Proposal Sharing Committees - Here all delegates informally share their proposal idea with a small group for feedback and input before First Committee. Delegates may incorporate feedback from peers into their proposal presentation before First Committee.
- First Committee - Here each delegate presents a proposal and each proposal is debated.
- General Assembly (GA) - Only the highest-ranked proposals move on to GA, but all delegates have the opportunity to debate them. Proposals are voted on with a pass/fail system.

## Scoring

In 1st committee, proposals are scored via ranking ballots to determine which proposals move forward for debate. There are 6 criteria for consideration by which proposals are ranked: national/international relevance, debatability, creativity, feasibility, evidence of research, and New Mexico Impact Statement.

## Procedure

- At the conclusion of presentations, all presenting authors will give a 30 second recap of their proposal.
- Delegates will rank the top 8 proposals heard in the committee, using an electronic ballot.
- Program Area Leads will oversee the analysis of scores to determine which proposals move forward to GA.

There will be no ranking in GA—proposals that make it to that stage will be voted on with a pass/fail system.

## Proposal Hierarchy

All member proposals will be heard in each first committee; of those, only 6 proposals will move on from each first committee. A total of 12 proposals will be heard in GA; each of the 12 final proposals will be voted upon and adopted or not adopted.

# Parliamentary Procedure

Even though NIF is not a legislative body in state government, it still follows the norms set forth in parliamentary procedure, which you will need to become familiar with. Setting a framework for conversation and debate ensures each proposal has an equal chance at being heard in a respectful manner. Any time you are in your program area (in First Committees and General Assembly), you will need to use this form of parliamentary procedure to run the meeting. It plays a major role in keeping meetings on an efficient track, using language and a format that is familiar to everyone. Because of that, it's your responsibility to know it well and use it. For the most part, the officers and chairs will lead the meetings and tell everyone what to do. However, since you are an active participant, you will need to know how to get involved! Below are some common actions that you may want to do, or that you might see take place during the meeting.

## **When Is It Your Turn To Present Your Proposal?**

- When the Chair asks if an author is present for your proposal number, you say "Present with prepared remarks".
- Before presenting your opening statement, you must state your last name and delegation.

## **Getting Recognized to Speak During Debate**

- Delegates who are raising their placards will be called on by their last name or delegation.
- If recognized during Non-Debatable Technical Questions (NDTQs), you must state your name and delegation and then ask your non-debatable technical question.
- A non-debatable technical question seeks to clarify facts about each proposal.
- You may only ask one NDTQ per recognition during this time, but may be recognized by the PO multiple times.
- During Con-Pro debate, you must speak in alignment with the intent during which you are recognized. If the Chair announces a "PRO speech" and you are recognized, you must speak in support of that proposal; con speakers must present arguments against or about shortcomings of the proposal. Debate on a proposal must end with a Con-speaker.

## **Yielding Time to Another Speaker or an Author's Closing Statement**

- Only the proposal author and Pro-speakers may yield to the author's summation, and the right to yield must be granted by the Chair before the author or Pro-speaker begins talking for the first time, or before any other motion during their time: "I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO YIELD ANY REMAINING TIME TO (MY/THE AUTHOR'S) CLOSING SPEECH".
- In GA, a speaker debating may yield time to another delegate who will speak from the same viewpoint. That delegate must come up with the delegate who was recognized and display their placard. The right to yield must be granted by the Chair. The recognized delegate must first also request to yield their remaining time to that speaker, and clearly state they are yielding after making their remarks.

- The second delegate is not allowed to make any other motions, and must state their name and delegation before making a comment. "I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO YIELD ANY REMAINING TIME TO THE DELEGATE FROM \_\_\_\_." [remarks]; "I NOW YIELD TO DELEGATE \_\_\_\_."
- In both cases, the Chair and or Clerk is responsible for recording the yielded time and allocating it to either the yielded speaker or author's closing speech, as appropriate.

In short, when recognized by the Chair, state your name and delegation. Then, you may conduct up to two of the following actions:

### **Speak**

- Make your con or pro argument on the proposal. You do not need to reserve this right once you've been recognized.

### **Ask Questions**

- Example: "Will the author yield to a question/series of questions?"

### **Yield to another delegate**

- Example: "I reserve the right to yield my remaining time to Delegate Smith."
- You must state this BEFORE you begin speaking or asking questions.

### **Yield to author's closing**

- Example: "I reserve the right to yield my remaining time to the author's closing statement."
- You must state this BEFORE you begin speaking or asking questions.

### **Responding to the Officers**

Delegates may be called "out of order" by the Chair for:

- Inappropriate language.
- Not using their placard to be recognized or when speaking.
- Failure to follow procedure (not stating name and delegation, debatable NDTQs, speaking con on a pro speech or vice versa).
- Referring to a delegate (or officer) directly or by name.

If you are called out of order, take a seat unless the Chair tells you otherwise.

### **Motions in Committee**

The only motions delegates may make are:

- Motion to recess for \_\_\_\_ minutes.
- Motion to adjourn.

If the Chair recognizes you, you may say "I move to \_\_\_\_." and another delegate must second your motion for it to be recognized and voted on.

NOTE: delegates may not motion to end debate due to the con-pro debate cycle.

# WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL

Each delegate participating in the National Issues Forum is required to write a proposal. Proposals focus on solutions to problems and issues of importance to our nation. They may be national or international in scope. The most important part of writing a proposal is that you choose a topic that is meaningful to you. The strength of commitment you feel toward your proposal will undoubtedly influence your overall experience in Youth and Government. Whether your interests lie in the environment, business, education, or social programs, your proposal should be about something that you believe in.

Writing a proposal is simple if you know a few secrets. The next few pages will reveal some of those secrets.

**A GREAT PROPOSAL IS THE RESULT OF SIX STEPS:**

**STEP 1: Choose a Topic**

**STEP 2: Research It**

**STEP 3: Fill Out Topic Analysis Form**

**STEP 4: Write First Draft and Get Feedback**

**STEP 5: Write Final Draft and Send In**

**STEP 6: Debate it**

## Step 1 – Choose a Topic

You should have some level of passion about the topic when you select it. This can be because you genuinely care about the outcome of the topic, or because you think it is so important that it must be discussed – even if you don't agree with the topic itself and hate the possible outcome. Love the outcome or loathe the outcome – they are the same. Feeling ambivalent about the outcome is dangerous. It will affect your thinking and the depth you go to in your research.

Best way to think of a proposal topic:

- Start with a common problem
- Propose a unique solution
- Take a "sharp turn" on the way to the unique solution to increase interest

Worst ways to think of proposal topics:

- Unique problem – Unique solution
- Important problem – Common solution
- Common problem – Common solution
- Why? – It can be hard to understand
- Why? – Others may also do this
- Why? – Skip for more exciting

Why are these worst? Because nearly all of them will make an audience more likely to move on to other proposals, at the expense of yours. You will need to make people care about your topic enough to listen to why you want to talk about it.

## Sources of Current Issues:

- One of the simplest and most accessible sources of current information is the newspaper. Whether it's the hometown daily or the New York Times, a newspaper can give you a good idea of what issues are on peoples' minds right now.
- See what is trending on your favorite social media platform. There are many causes that leverage social media as a platform to boost their voice, so there is a wide variety of topics represented there. Ask around! Your friends, family, teachers, librarians and peers all have things that matter to them. See if any of their thoughts line up and would be a good proposal idea.

Consider any condition, which exists in your school, family, community, nation, or world. Then propose a solution to end the problem or resolve the issue. It's that simple!



Below is a list of only A FEW topics for inspiration. Delegates can choose a topic not on this list.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| America's participation in trade agreements               | Election Day voter registration                            |
| Banning tobacco products                                  | Ethanol production and utilization                         |
| Campaign finance reform                                   | Flag defamation  |
| Climate change response                                   | Funding for high schools based on dropout rates            |
| Creating a carbon tax                                     | High school graduation requirements                        |
| Debt ceiling regulation                                   | HIV testing in high schools                                |
| Equal Rights Amendment                                    | Immigration policies and reform                            |
| Federal Welfare   | Mandatory voting/7-Day voting period                       |
| Federal mass transportation or highway construction       | National Port security                                     |
| Fighting terrorism and terrorism threats                  | Observance of race and gender-based history months         |
| Firearms/Second amendment                                 | Cybersecurity methods and technology                       |
| Free trade of pharmaceutical products/prescription drugs  | Piracy, on water   |
| The Kyoto Protocol  | Recognizing Hamas and the Palestinian Government           |
| Grace period for adoption                                 | Refugee treatment and resettlement policies                |
| Gun violence  | Renewable energy technology and funding                    |
| Hate Crime Legislation                                    | Required service in the military                           |
| Indecency fines levied by the FCC on broadcast television | Rights of American forces detainees                        |
| Israeli/Palestinian foreign relations                     | School safety  |
| Mandatory minimum sentences                               | Solvency of Social Security                                |
| Oil drilling in the Arctic                                | Sustainable Aviation Fuel Incentives                       |
| National Wildlife Refuge                                  | Stem Cell Research   |
| Option of parole for federal crimes/offenses              | Tax release requirements for public officials              |
| Presidential power to call for a referendum               | Trigger Locks on firearms                                  |
| Presumed consent for organ donation                       | U.S. Humanitarian Aid                                      |
| Affirmative Action in College Admissions                  | U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Disarmament/Nuclear non-proliferation |
| Artificial Insemination database                          | United Nations as primary agent for war on terrorism       |
| Direct election of the President                          | Voting rights, disenfranchisement                          |
| Domestic spying prohibition without warrant               |  |
| Domestic Surveillance                                     |  |

There are many research resources available to you via the internet, your school library, teachers, or local library. Many delegates begin their proposal writing process by reading current periodicals (such as Newsweek or US News & World Report) or newspapers (LA Times, New York Times, Washington Post) in order to get ideas of current national and international issues.

When considering a topic, keep three things in mind – (1) national or international importance, (2) debatability and (3) “cutting edge” of topic. The National Issues Forum is debate-oriented, so you should write your proposal with that in mind. You may have a fantastic policy idea, but if it is universally acceptable, it will be passed over in favor of proposals that will have good discussion.

In this sense, proposals are much different than bills.

## **Step 2 – Research & Develop Your Topic**

Now that you have the beginnings of an idea, you need to do some looking around to be able to develop it fully. If you only have a general topic, you may want help coming up with a more specific application.

Some things that might help are:

- Media sources – State or national newspapers, internet, TV news, radio, issue advocacy websites
- Thinking of things that have personally affected you or someone you know.
- Discussions with local leaders, teachers, family and friends.

Spend some quality time in research. Know what you are saying and all the possible outcomes. Talk to your teachers, librarians, your Youth and Government advisors, your peers. Research and input (thinking through the angles) will help you a lot. You need to be excited and confident about your proposal to be successful and to give it the most exposure at the conference.

You should have some statistics, some facts, and even some informed testimonies by people who are well informed. The more facts you can find now, the better your proposal will be and the easier it will be to address Con speakers during debate. People who have done their work write the best proposals.

## **Tips to Make Your Proposal Spectacular**

- Language: Use respectful language reflecting YMCA values.
- Watch for others your proposal may apply to. If you use the term “cities,” make sure you don’t also want it to apply to towns, counties or school districts.
- Don’t use words that avoid commitment (ex., use “will” rather than “would”, “could” or “might”).
- Don’t use the first person (ex., refer to “the nation” rather than “our nation”, or name specific communities instead of “my community”).

Your proposal cannot exceed two pages (conference requirement) but really shouldn’t be longer than one page, for clarity and conciseness. Your proposal should serve as discussion about issues rather than a statement of policy.

## **Step 3 – Analyze Your Topic**

Use these analysis points to see if your proposal is checking all the boxes.

1. Why is this proposal necessary? Why is it important?
2. Consider if this proposal is in conflict with the Federal Constitution or Federal Law and make sure you address what changes are necessary.
3. Do other countries do this?
4. Has this been tried before in the United States?
5. Who will this proposal affect?
6. Who might be against this and why?
7. Is this a responsibility of government or could it be taken care of in another way?
8. How can this be related to New Mexico in the New Mexico Impact Statement?

## Step 4 – Write a First Draft & Get Feedback

Writing a National Issues Forum Proposal will be simple if you have done your research. Proposals should not be more than one page (typed) and consist of six sections. The proposal format is designed to allow for creativity and persuasive argumentation. Proposals are a written idea, not rigid legislation. Every proposal has six sections. The six sections include: Title, Proposal for Action, Major Areas to be Affected, Justification, Results to be Expected, and New Mexico Impact Statement. All proposals must follow this format and be approved by delegation directors before submission. See the Sample Proposals at the end of this section.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION LAST</b> Give your proposal a short title that is easy to refer to and remember.
<b>Proposal for Action:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION FIRST</b> This is where you state the goal and objective of your proposal. What are the details – what people/institutions will take specific action on your topic. This is also the place where you list out what those specific actions are. Remember you are not writing legislation but a broad proposal intended to be debated – focus is on the topic, not the details. One or two well-constructed paragraphs will do.
<b>Major Areas to be Affected:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION SECOND</b> Tell what people, places or institutions your proposal will affect. This should be brief – a few words to one sentence. Don't go into how these areas will be affected, just tell which areas.
<b>Justification:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION THIRD</b> In paragraph form, tell why there is a need for your proposal. Include clear and concise information that will make a compelling case for your issue – statistics, quotes, etc., but don't overdo it. You only want to provide the basics of your justification – the bulk of your research will come out in your oral presentation and in debate. You can provide your justification in one or two short paragraphs but remember that less is more. The points you make in the Justification section should be your most brilliant and best- reasoned illustrations.
<b>Results to be Expected:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION FOURTH</b> This should be one clear sentence (maybe two), telling what your proposal will do.
<b>New Mexico Impact Statement:</b>	<b>WRITE THIS SECTION FIFTH</b> Provide a brief statement that meaningfully connects your proposal to New Mexico perspectives, communities, challenges, or contributions. Illustrative examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Immigration policy → border communities in NM</li><li>○ Water conservation → Rio Grande compacts</li><li>○ Indigenous rights → Pueblo and Navajo sovereignty</li></ul>

## Step 5 – Write Final Draft & Submit Online

After you've passed your proposal around for feedback and made any necessary changes, you should write your final draft. Once you write your final draft, you will submit your proposal. The template will have a box to enter each section. Copy the content, section-by-section, from your text document and paste it into each corresponding text box.



Make sure you get your proposal submitted before the posted deadline, so your Delegation Director can review and make suggestions for final improvements. Plan ahead in case of technical difficulties.

**IF YOU DO NOT 'FINALIZE' YOUR PROPOSAL AND SEND IT TO YOUR DELEGATION DIRECTOR, IT WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED IN THE SESSION BOOK.**

Please take care that you fully complete the process.

It is strongly encouraged that you bring a printed and digital version of your proposal with you to Youth and Government.



## Step 6 – Final Research & Debate

Even though you have finished writing your proposal, your work is not over! Just because your proposal looks good doesn't mean it is going to pass. You must convince your fellow NIF delegates at Youth and Government that your topic is worth talking about. You gotta know your stuff!

To prepare for your presentation, here are a few things you can do before Youth and Government:

- Interview a city councilperson, schoolboard member, senator, representative, lawyer, or somebody with experience in public policy who can help with the final preparation of the proposal and in organizing debate concerning it.
- Ask these people to attend a meeting of your delegation to critique and comment on the proposals of all the debates.
- Seek out opposing views on the subject and take notes.
- Ask your delegation for time to debate your idea to fine-tune it.

When you debate the topic, keep a few things in mind:

- You are looking for weak points in your proposal so be open for arguments against it.
- Deliberating it with your peers can help you clean up any last messy sections.
- Write down areas that you may need to address as you go along.

# Sample Proposals

## NEW MEXICO YMCA YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL #: 100  
AUTHOR: John Doe  
DELEGATION: Lobo YMCA

### TITLE:

Protecting the planet and skin: banning oxybenzone within sunscreen.

### MAJOR AREAS TO BE AFFECTED:

All U.S. Citizens, The Waterways, Marine Ecosystems, Sunscreen Producers, The Skin Care Industry

### JUSTIFICATION:

Oxybenzone is one of the most common ingredients found in chemical sunscreens; The ingredient contaminates aquatic environments. The state of Hawaii banned sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate (OAO) in 2018. This was because research indicated that OAO found in sunscreen was damaging aquatic waterways. Sunscreen enters aquatic ecosystems when it washes off of a person's body; these chemicals leach into the water and devastate the natural balance of the ecosystem. The damaging effects are most apparent in delicate coral reef environments, but harm can happen in any aquatic ecosystem. The damage includes but is not limited to: bio-accumulation of harmful chemicals, DNA damage, and lower quantity/quality of food sources at the base of the food web. The unbalanced aquatic environment ripples out negative effects within our foodchain, our bodies and more generally the earth. Sunscreen is an important component of any skin care routine, but the type of sunscreen that humans use is more important than they might think. The problem does not stop at our coral reefs. In fact, showering at home causes OAO to end up in American drainage systems, thereby harming local aquatic ecosystems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the administrative agency charged with keeping Americans safe from chemical harm, recognized that OAO are dangerous; in 2019, the FDA revoked oxybenzone's Generally Recognized as Safe and Effective (GRASE) status.

### PROPOSAL FOR ACTION:

To ban the sale, offer of sale, and distribution in the United States of any sunscreen that contains oxybenzone, without a prescription.

### RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED:

The ban will raise much needed public awareness of the danger of these chemicals to US citizens and US waterways. Further, this will bring US policy more in line with scientific knowledge regarding these chemicals. The ban will require the creation and use of sunscreen that is both good for people and safe for aquatic ecosystems. While there will be an impact on private industry, the impact will be largely positive as companies investigate and utilize reef safe and other green sunscreens. In turn, this will create a sunscreen industry that is sustainable for the future.

### NEW MEXICO IMPACT STATEMENT:

This ban will ensure the protection of New Mexico residents and New Mexico ecosystems from the harmful effects of oxybenzone products.

# **NEW MEXICO YMCA YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL #: 101

AUTHOR: Tony the Tiger

DELEGATION: Sugarland

## **TITLE:**

To abolish the use of animals as political party mascots in the United States.

## **MAJOR AREAS TO BE AFFECTED:**

The Republican and Democrat parties and all their State-run counterparts, The Modern Whig Party, the Prohibition Party, any other national or state political party that uses an animal mascot, and party members of these various organizations.

## **JUSTIFICATION:**

In 2008, the XcelEnergy Center in St. Paul, Minnesota was host to the largest political party convention in United States history, the Republican National Convention. That same year, Denver Colorado hosted another large political gathering, the Democratic National Convention. These events were attended by hundreds of thousands of people, who used countless number of flyers, stickers and various other decorations and materials that used depictions of defenseless animals. When these events ended, thousands of injured and neglected animals were recovered from the floors of the stadiums.

These animals, such as the “Republican Elephant” and the “Democrat Donkey” are often stacked in piles waist high, until they can be distributed to party members at various events and meetings. They are put on stickers and banners, often hung at dangerous heights for extended periods. In addition, other less regulated national political parties, like the Modern Whig Party, that uses an Owl mascot, and the Prohibition Party, that uses a Camel – may be using these animals in other ways that are adverse to the health of the animal. Elephants and Donkeys deserve the same humane and ethical treatment that a human mascot would, whether they be in print form or in other forms of media.

## **PROPOSAL FOR ACTION:**

Animals in the United States that are used as political party mascots shall immediately be given ethical and humane treatment by their users. These animals will be allowed frequent and fulfilling periods of relaxation to reduce stress and ensure longevity. Any noncompliance or continued abuse will be illegal. Any use of animals as political party mascots in the United States will become illegal following the next federal election.

## **RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED:**

Political parties will immediately begin a gradual decline in the frequency of use of animal logos.

## **NEW MEXICO IMPACT STATEMENT:**

Animal residents of New Mexico, including inhabitants of zoo and wildlife parks in New Mexico, will benefit from the protections of this proposal and earn the respect that they deserve.

# PRESENTING YOUR PROPOSAL

In the National Issues Forum, every author presents their proposal and has the opportunity to comment on other proposals throughout the conference. At Regional Training and at Conference, you will be offered training on how to present your proposal, however some key details are listed below.

## Things to Know:

- Delegates will have 2 minutes during the First Committee to present their opening introduction speech on your proposal to the committee.
- Your 2 minutes are for supporting your proposal and presenting additional evidence. Do not restate or read your written proposal. Delegates may write and read their opening introduction.
- You will have the opportunity to yield a portion of your presentation time to your closing summation.
- There is also a scheduled 2-minute question period for non-debatable, technical questions only.
- You will be allowed a 2-minute summation (plus any yielded time).

## Ranking Procedures and Evaluation Criteria

As part of the proposal advancement process, every proposal is ranked at the end of the committee session. Each participant should keep notes throughout committee on the proposals they have heard. There are six criteria for ranking the top 6 proposals in your committee. It is to your benefit to consider the ranking criteria when preparing your proposal. All proposals are evaluated and ranked based upon the following criteria:

- **Evidence of Research** – Is there research cited? Is it evident that the author has the facts to support the proposal and gives a well-prepared presentation? The ideal presentation would be both informative and well supported.
- **Debatability** – Is there ample room for argumentation on the proposal? Does it spark emotional or logistical debate? Ideally proposals will encourage intense and energetic debate on both sides of the issue presented.
- **Feasibility** – Did the proposal author describe a practical way of enforcing or implementing the action to be taken? The ideal presentation will detail methods for implementing the suggested policy changes.

- **National/International Relevance** - Is the issue of national or international importance? Determining the relevance of a particular issue is subjective. This criterion is partially intended to downgrade proposals that are not national or international in scope (i.e. issues that are purely local or state).
- **Creativity** - Does this proposal present a new or creative way of looking at an issue? The ideal proposal will be both creative and practical in the way in that they address the issue at hand.
- **New Mexico Impact** - Does the proposal meaningfully connect its national or international issue to New Mexico perspectives, challenges, or contributions?

**NOTE:** For a more detailed breakdown of scoring, please reference the "Rules & Procedures" section.

# RULES & PROCEDURES

## Structure

### 1. Presiding Officers

- a. The Presiding Officers are the State Auditor, State Treasurer, and Commissioner of Public Lands, elected the prior year by the Youth and Government participants. Presiding Officers are expected to select all appointed officials and attend training sessions to prepare for Youth and Government. The Presiding Officers will serve as chairs of General Assembly.

### 2. Appointed Officials

- a. Committee Chairs will be selected by the Presiding Officers to serve as chairs of Proposal Sharing Groups and First Committees.
- b. Appointed officers are required to attend training sessions identified by the Presiding Officer.

### 3. Delegates

- a. Delegates of the National Issues Forum must be registered participants in the Youth and Government conference. Membership is open to students in grades 9 to 12.
- b. Delegates are expected to prepare one proposal each, and attend one Regional Training in advance of the conference.

### 4. Placards

- a. A placard bearing the last name of each delegate will be provided and delegates must raise their placards to be recognized to speak.

### 5. Proposals

- a. A proposal may not be introduced until it has been reviewed by the State Office and is in compliance with the Code of Conduct. Proposals should consider a topic of national or international importance and will be assigned to a committee by the State Office prior to conference.
- b. Proposals will be evaluated on electronic ballots by delegates in the Committees.
  - i. Each delegate of the committee may submit one completed electronic ballot per committee.
  - ii. Ranking Ballots are used to rank each proposal in order of highest demonstration of the following criteria:
    1. National or International Importance
    2. Evidence of Research
    3. Feasibility
    4. Creativity
    5. Debatability
    6. New Mexico Impact Statement

# Debate Timing

## 1. First Committee

### a. Proposal Timing – Proposals should be heard in the following manner:

- i. 2 minute introduction speech by author.
- ii. 2 minutes of Non-Debatable Technical Questions by the committee.
- iii. 5 minutes of con/pro debate (1 minute each, begin and end with a con speech).
- iv. 2 minute closing speech by author.

### b. Yielding Time

- i. During the author's opening speech, the author may yield time to the Chair at any point.
- ii. After 1 minute of speaking, the author may yield remaining time to their closing, but this right does not need to be reserved by the proposal author.
- iii. During Con-Pro debate, a speaker may yield time at any point to the chair or to questions. After speaking for 30 seconds, a speaker may yield remaining time to the author's closing summation, as long as they reserved that right when they were first recognized. The speaker must reserve this right upon being recognized by the chair and stating their name and delegation.
- iv. During the author's opening speech, the committee chair should give 1 tap given to indicate 1 minute is left, 2 taps may be given to indicate 30 seconds are left.

## 2. General Assembly (GA)

### a. Proposal Timing – Proposals should be heard in the following manner:

- i. 3 minute introduction speech by author.
- ii. 3 minutes of Non-Debatable Technical Questions by committee.
- iii. 10 minutes of con/pro debate (2 minutes each, begin and end with a con speech).
- iv. 2 minute closing speech by author.
- v. Standing Vote: Pass/Fail.

### b. Yielding Time

- i. For an Author: An author may yield time to the Chair at any point. After 2 minutes an author may yield time to their summation speech, this right does not need to be reserved by the proposal author when they begin speaking.
- ii. For a Speaker During Debate: A speaker may yield their time to the Chair at any point. The speaker may yield to the author's summation speech or another NIF delegate, as long as they reserved that right when they were first recognized.
- iii. To Another Delegate During debate: In order to Yield time to another speaker, the speaker who is recognized must tell the Presiding Officer that they will be yielding time to delegate "Last Name" before making a statement or asking questions.  
Example: "Will the author yield to questions? And I reserve the right to yield the remainder of my time to delegate 'Smith.'"

- iv. Clarifications: A speaker is limited to two actions: they may ask questions of the author and yield to the author's summation, or make a statement and yield to another delegate, but not more than two actions in one speech. A delegate who has been yielded time from another delegate can only take one action (i.e. ask questions of the author or speak).
- v. During the author's speech: The presider may give 1 tap to indicate 1 minute left, 2 taps may be given to indicate 30 seconds are left.

## Amendments and Other Motions

- Amendments
  - First Committee
    - Amendments are only permitted to be made by the proposal author before presentation of a proposal.
    - Amendments must be made before the proposal is considered in First Committee.
    - Amendments must be submitted online in the amendment form so that they may be published in the online docket.
  - General Assembly
    - Amendments are not in order in General Assembly.
- Motions to Recess or Adjourn
  - Motions to Recess or Adjourn are only in order between proposals.
  - Any member of the NIF may make a motion to recess or adjourn if recognized by the chair. The motion may be voted on at the discretion of the chair and requires a second by another delegate and a voice vote.

## Committee Structure

### 1. Proposal Sharing Groups

- Committee Chairs who are Appointed Officials will preside over proposal sharing groups.
- This is an opportunity for committee members to informally share their proposals and receive feedback and suggestions from others.
- Proposal Sharing Groups will be randomized, different from First Committee, and do not rank proposals.
- Proposal Sharing Groups take place on the morning of day 1 of conference, before Opening Session.

## 2. First Committee

- a. Committee Chairs who are Appointed Officials will preside over First Committee.
- b. Proposals heard in First Committee will be scored on electronic ranking ballots. Each member may submit one ballot at the end of First Committee.
- c. The first six proposals with the highest rank in each First Committee will be debated in General Assembly.
- d. First Committee will take place on the afternoon of Day 1 and morning of Day 2 of the conference.

## 3. General Assembly (GA)

- a. The State Auditor, State Treasurer, and Commissioner of Public Lands will preside over GA.
- b. Proposals heard in GA will be voted upon by members of the Assembly. Each member has one vote per proposal.

## 4. Special Circumstances

- o Ties in Ballot Ranking: In the case of a tie to two decimal points in the average ballot score, both proposals will move forward.
- o Combining Proposals: There will be no combining of proposals of similar topic, each author will need to present their idea separately to the committee.

# Debate Language

To be recognized to speak, you must raise your placard and await selection by the Chair.

**Q:** When I am recognized to speak during non-debatable technical questions, what do I say?

**A:** (This is a period of quick, back-to-back questions to gain more insight into the author's proposal. Debatable, opinion-based questions will be called out of order.)

**Presiding Chair:** "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."

**You:** "Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA Delegation."

[Ask your non-debatable, fact-based question.]

**Q:** When I am recognized to speak during con-pro debate, what do I say?

**A:** (Pro-speakers should speak in favor of the proposal: Con-speakers should share concerns or speak against the proposal.)

**Presiding Chair:** "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."

**You:** "Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA Delegation. [Then you speak for the allotted amount of time.] I yield my time to the chair."

**Q: How do I ask a question or series of questions during con-pro debate?**

**A: Presiding Chair: "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."**

**You: "Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA Delegation. Will the author yield to a Question/Series of questions?"**

**Presiding Chair: [to the author] "will the author yield?"**

**Author "Yes/No"**

**You: [Ask your question(s).]**

**Q:How do I speak and ask a question?**

**A: (You must ask the person you are questioning first, and then make a statement.)**

**Presiding Chair: "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."**

**You: "Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA Delegation. Will the author yield to a question/series of questions? And I reserve my right to speak afterwards."**

**Presiding Chair: [To the author ] "Will the author yield?"**

**Author: Yes**

**(If the author says "yes", you may proceed to ask questions, and then make a statemnet. If the author says "no", you may still make a statement.)**

**Q: How do I, as a pro-speaker, yield time to the author's summation?**

**A: (You must state your intent to the chair first.)**

**Presiding Chair: "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."**

**You: 'Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA delegation I reserve the right to yield any remaining time to the author's closing speech.' [Then you must speak for at least 30 seconds]**

**You: "I now yield my remaining time to the author's closing."**

**Q: How do I yield time to another delegate to speak on my pro or con speech?**

**A: You must state your intent to the chair first. The speaker you bring up must speak in the same intent, (i.e. if you were recognized for a pro speech, they must give a pro speech).**

**Presiding Chair: "The Chair recognizes delegate Lindquist."**

**You: "Thank you, Sam Lindquist, Lobo YMCA delegation. I reserve the right to yield any remaining time to delegate Smith from the Lobo YMCA delegation." [Then you speak for a minimum of 30 seconds.]**

**You: "I now yield to delegate Smith." [This delegate has only as much time as is remaining on this speech.]**

**Remain standing with the delegate you yielded to until they finish speaking.**

## **Recognition**

The National Issues Forum Presiding Officers will recognize exceptional participation by delegates of the NIF. Recognition for such participation will take place during the Closing Session of the Youth and Government conference.

## **Passed Proposals**

The Presiding Officers will jointly recognize those proposals and authors that have been passed by the voting members of the General Assembly and notarize the passed proposals.

## **Outstanding Statesperson Award**

The Outstanding Statesperson Award is given to a delegate who exemplifies the traits most revered in the NIF. An individual receiving this award is well-spoken in committee, maintains decorum and upholds the Code of Conduct, facilitates lively debate, presents opinions professionally, is attentive to the flow of discussion, and gives other delegates due respect in and out of debate. This award will be voted by the members of the National Issues Forum branch.

## **Outstanding Proposal Award**

The Outstanding Proposal Award is given to the author of a proposal that best demonstrates the intent of the National Issues Forum. This award is selected for closely meeting the six criteria of ranking, being National Importance, Evidence of Research, Feasibility, Creativity, Debatability, and New Mexico Impact Statement. An author earning this award is also recognized for their presentation of their idea, and for demonstrating the best example of proposal writing all delegates should aspire to. This award will be voted by the members of the NIF branch.