



## **international debate education association**

---

### **Preamble to the Accreditation Process and Standards**

#### **I. The Mission of IDEA**

The International Debate Education Association (IDEA) believes that free and unabated discussion is essential to the establishment and preservation of open, democratic societies. Through debate and speech activities — powerful tools for encouraging analytical thinking, personal expression, and tolerance for the opinions of others — IDEA provides students and teachers with the opportunity to examine issues affecting their lives and their communities, and empowers them to participate confidently in public discourse.

The following set of standards has been created to ensure the quality of all programs carried out under the auspices of IDEA. In addition, this document articulates a ‘Code of Ethics’ that IDEA hopes its members, partners, and affiliates will embrace.

IDEA offers international accreditation to both NGO's and trainers. NGO's, moreover, can themselves locally accredit clubs, resource center, trainers, teachers, coaches, and judges through the process. This process is outlined in [NGO Accreditation Process and Standards](#) and detailed in [Affiliate Accreditation Process](#). Local accreditation of this nature can occur either during the NGO's "provisional accreditation period" or after the NGO has received formal accreditation. Please note that if no NGO exists to accredit a club, resource center, trainer, teacher or coach locally, IDEA can do so directly.

IDEA possesses no investigative agency, nor any coercive authority over its members by which it will enforce these standards; they are extended simply as guidelines and principles of accreditation to which IDEA's members should hold themselves accountable. IDEA appeals to all of its members, partners, and affiliates to review the standards, adapt them to their local circumstances, and then accept them voluntarily.

#### **II. Scope of the Standards**

The General Assembly (GA) of the Dutch-registered International Debate Education Association (IDEA-NL) retains ultimate authority over these standards. The standards and rules outlined in this document apply to all members of IDEA-NL.

These standards have also been voluntarily and independently endorsed by the Board of Directors of the United States-based International Debate Education Association (IDEA-USA). IDEA-USA has adopted these standards as guidelines for its activities, including those IDEA-USA-sponsored activities performed in conjunction with IDEA-NL. Moreover, IDEA-USA will employ these standards for accrediting trainers, clubs, coaches, and judges in the United States.

#### **III. Modification of the Standards**

The standards listed herein are not all-encompassing, nor do they comprise a set of unalterable rules. They will no doubt evolve and take shape over the course of time, drawing upon the feedback and experience of IDEA and its members.

Proposed changes to this document or the addition of events must be submitted, in written form, to the IDEA-NL Accreditation Committee at least one month prior to the annual General Assembly meeting. For information regarding the composition of the Accreditation Committee, please refer to [NGO Accreditation Process and Standards](#).

The Accreditation Committee will review all proposed changes to this document and will present its recommendations in writing to the members of the General Assembly, at least one month before the annual meeting. The General Assembly must approve changes to the document by a majority vote. If a change is passed, it will be immediately binding on IDEA-NL members. The change will then be submitted for approval to the IDEA-USA Board of Directors. In the event that the IDEA-USA Board does not approve the change, that change will have no effect on the operations and procedures of IDEA-USA.

11/2004