



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2017 DEBATE SPONSOR APPLICATION

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Thank you for your interest in sponsoring the 2017 Citywide Debates! The New York City Campaign Finance Board is pleased that your organization is willing to step forward and help New Yorkers learn about their candidates for mayor, public advocate, and comptroller.

Our goal is to significantly expand opportunities for New York City voters to watch and participate in the 2017 debates through social media and other digital platforms. We are excited that you are committing to help us achieve that goal with your application.

In previous years, broadcasters and other organizations have worked together to co-sponsor debates. Past sponsors have included television and radio broadcasters, print and online media outlets, civic and issue advocacy organizations, and academic institutions.

The CFB welcomes group applications, however please only submit one application listing all proposed partners.

Please include a cover sheet that contains the following information:

- ◆ Full name of the lead organization
- ◆ Address of organization
- ◆ Website of organization
- ◆ Primary contact person
- ◆ List any co-sponsoring organizations

Please clearly indicate which question your answer applies to when compiling your responses. Feel free to attach any information not addressed in the application that you believe is relevant to your qualifications as a debate sponsor.

All applications must include a signed verification form signed by a member of the lead organization. Digital and/or scanned signatures will be accepted.



**Completed applications are due by Friday, February 17.**

Applications may be submitted via hand-delivery, mail or email. Please address applications to:

Katrina Shakarian, Debate Coordinator  
New York City Campaign Finance Board  
100 Church Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Electronic submissions should be emailed to [kshakarian@nyccfb.info](mailto:kshakarian@nyccfb.info)

If you have any questions about the Debate Program or the application, you may contact Katrina Shakarian at the email address above or at (212) 409-1772.

We look forward to considering your application.





# 2017 DEBATE SPONSOR APPLICATION

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## ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

For group applications, please designate one organization as the lead organization for the group and a primary contact at that organization. This primary contact will be responsible for coordinating the debate application process **for the entire group**. Each co-sponsoring organization in an applicant group should provide responses to the “Organizational Information” questions. These responses from co-sponsors should be submitted as separate documents as part of the application.

1. **Organization Name**
2. **Address**
3. **Website(s)**
4. **Contact:** Name, title, phone number and email address. (For the lead organization in a group application, this person will be responsible for communicating with the CFB on behalf of the entire group.)
5. **Mission:** Describe the mission of your organization.
6. **Affiliations:** The debate law specifies that no organization affiliated with any political party, any holder of public office, or any candidate for public office may sponsor a debate.  
Please confirm that your organization is eligible to sponsor a CFB-sanctioned debate.
7. **Endorsements:** The debate law also specifies that a debate sponsor cannot endorse a candidate in a pending primary or general election until after the debate it sponsors for the primary or general election is held.  
  
Will your organization be endorsing candidates for New York City offices in the 2017 elections?  
If the answer is yes, please explain when your organization plans to make endorsements.
8. **Contributions:** Does your organization make contributions to any candidates for New York City office? Does your organization make (or plan to make) contributions to other organizations that support or oppose candidates for New York City office? If the answer is yes, please explain your organization’s policy for making contributions.

9. **Experience:** Describe your organizations' experience in sponsoring debates among candidates. Include information regarding the election date, office sought, the number of participants, broadcast and media coverage, co-sponsors, and publicity. If your organization does not have any experience sponsoring debates, you may submit information regarding any experience you believe is relevant to your organization's ability to sponsor a debate.

## SCHEDULE & LOCATION

10. **Schedule:** Please consult the following chart and take into account cultural concerns such as religious holidays and major events, when proposing your 2017 debate schedule. Describe how your organization would accommodate a scheduling change in the date or time of the debate(s), if such a change becomes necessary. Describe the specific circumstances under which your organization might seek to change the date(s) of the debate(s).

Please account for the following potential debates in your proposal. For the primary elections, debates may potentially be held among candidates for the nomination of each or any of the eight parties on the New York City ballot. (It is unlikely that all of these debates will be held. For reference, in 2013 there were 11 CFB debates.)

### A PROPOSED 2017 DEBATE SCHEDULE:

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Disclosure Statement Filing Date*                                | Friday, August 11      |
| Democratic Comptroller (1 <sup>st</sup> )   Primary Election     | Monday, August 21      |
| Democratic Public Advocate (1 <sup>st</sup> )   Primary Election | Tuesday, August 22     |
| Democratic Mayoral (1 <sup>st</sup> )   Primary Election         | Wednesday, August 23   |
| Republican Mayoral (1 <sup>st</sup> )   Primary Election         | Thursday, August 24    |
| Democratic Comptroller (Leading Contenders)   Primary Election   | Monday, August 28      |
| Public Advocate (Leading Contenders)   Primary Election          | Tuesday, August 29     |
| Disclosure Statement Filing Date*; Eid al-Adha                   | Friday, September 1    |
| Labor Day  | Monday, September 4    |
| Democratic Mayoral (Leading Contenders)   Primary Election       | Wednesday, September 6 |
| Republican Mayoral (Leading Contenders)   Primary Election       | Thursday, September 7  |
| Primary Election Day   | Tuesday, September 12  |

\* Debate schedule should take into account filing dates listed above. Financial criteria to determine candidate eligibility must use data reported in most recent candidate statement.

## A PROPOSED 2017 DEBATE SCHEDULE:

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Comptroller (1 <sup>st</sup> )   General Election       | Tuesday, October 24   |
| Public Advocate (1 <sup>st</sup> )   General Election   | Wednesday, October 25 |
| Mayoral (1 <sup>st</sup> )   General Election           | Thursday, October 26  |
| Disclosure Statement Filing Date                        | Friday, October 27    |
| Hurricane Sandy Anniversary                             | Sunday, October 29    |
| Comptroller (Leading Contenders)   General Election     | Tuesday, October 31   |
| Public Advocate (Leading Contenders)   General Election | Wednesday, November 1 |
| Mayoral (Leading Contenders)   General Election         | Thursday, November 2  |
| General Election Day                                    | Tuesday, November 7   |

11. **Location:** For each debate you wish to sponsor, supply a location. Have debates been held at this location before? If so, state the year and nature of the debates. Sponsors are responsible for ensuring that debates may be broadcast from proposed locations.

**Note: Potential runoff election:** If no candidate receives forty percent of the vote in a primary election, a runoff election is held to determine the nominee two-three weeks after the primary. If a runoff election is conducted one additional debate will be held between those two candidates. If your group is selected to broadcast a primary election debate, you will also need to broadcast the runoff debate on either 9/18, 9/19, or the week of 9/25.

## DEBATE FORMAT

12. **Format and ground rules:** Describe in detail the debate format and ground rules your organization is proposing for each debate. Address these and other considerations in drafting your proposal.
- ◆ Determination of speaking order
  - ◆ Speaking and response times
  - ◆ Opening and/or closing statements
  - ◆ Would questions be posed by moderators, panelists and/or members of the public?
  - ◆ Any restrictions for candidates, such as props or notes

The CFB may select a diversity of debate formats, and may ask applicants to modify their proposals.

13. **Moderators/Panelists:** Provide the name and qualifications of the moderator(s) and/or panelist who would conduct each debate, and their occupations. If you cannot provide the name(s) at this time, please describe the criteria and procedures your organization would use for selecting the moderator(s) or panelist(s).
14. **Diversity of Questions:** How will you ensure that the questions your moderators and panelists pose to the candidates reflect the interests and diversity of New York City's electorate?

## PUBLIC ACCESS

15. **Audience:** Would an audience be invited to attend each debate? If so, explain how many audience members would be invited and the process your organization would use for selecting audience members, including a process for tickets sales (if any).
16. A pillar of CFB's mission is to enhance the role of New Yorkers in elections. The following questions will discuss the accessibility of the debates (if any).
  - a) **Broadcast Access:** Describe your plans for broadcast or other media coverage of each debate. The Board encourages potential sponsors to consider ways to utilize both old and new media to broadcast the debates across multiple platforms and provide the public with the widest possible access to the debates. Provide specific information if possible.
  - b) **Debate Promotion:** Describe in detail your advertising and publicity plans to let New Yorkers know about your debates.
  - c) **Engagement:** Describe in detail your plans to engage the audience before, during and after the debate. Social media is now a crucial piece of the debate-watching experience for many people. For a growing number of New Yorkers, the Internet is now their primary means for watching live events. How do you plan to reach and engage New Yorkers, both online and in-person?
  - d) **Language:** The CFB performs outreach to the diverse communities of New York City. Past CFB debates were broadcast simultaneously in Spanish and included sign-language interpretation. The debates have been rebroadcast in Korean, Russian, Punjabi, Hindi, Greek, Mandarin, Cantonese, and other languages.

Please describe your plans to reach non-English speakers. Will you provide a simultaneous Spanish broadcast? Sign language interpretation? How will you facilitate rebroadcast in other languages of the debates?
17. **Fundraising:** Describe any fundraising plans you would implement, if necessary, to underwrite the cost of the debate(s). In your discussion, list potential sources for financial support from outside your organization, including the amount(s) you would anticipate raising, and any in-kind donations you could expect to receive.

Be aware that donations from any political party organization, holder of public office, candidate for public office, or organization that supports or opposes candidate for public office may disqualify your organization from eligibility to sponsor a debate.
18. **Evaluating the Debates:** In its post-election report to the Mayor and City Council, the Campaign Finance Board is required to evaluate the Debate Program. Describe how you would assist the Board in evaluating the 2017 Debates, such as providing viewership statistics or other indications of New Yorkers' engagement.

## DEBATE GUIDELINES

19. **First debate criteria:** For the first primary and general election debates, the law provides that:

- a) Any participating candidate who meets the criteria in (b) must participate in the debates<sup>1</sup>
- b) Candidate must have raised and spent an amount equal to 2.5% of the spending limit for the office sought by the last filing date prior to the debate:
  - ◆ Mayor: \$174,225
  - ◆ Comptroller/Public Advocate: \$108,925
- c) Any non-participating candidate who meets the criteria in (b) may be invited to participate

In addition, the law provides that nonpartisan, objective, and non-discriminatory criteria may be used to determine eligibility. If your organization is applying to sponsor a first primary or general election debate, what, if any, additional criteria would you propose to determine the eligibility of candidates to participate in the first primary and first general election debates?

20. **Second debate/“leading contender” criteria:** The law provides that the second primary and second general election debates will include only those candidates who the sponsor has determined are the “leading contenders” for the office on the basis of nonpartisan, objective, and non-discriminatory criteria (this criteria will be set forth in an agreement between the sponsor and the Campaign Finance Board).

If your organization is applying to sponsor a leading contender primary or general election debate, explain in detail the criteria your organization will propose for selecting “leading contenders” (e.g., funds raised, number of contributors, polls, etc.). If one of the criteria would require candidates to reach a financial or polling threshold, describe in detail what the threshold would be, and how and when you would determine whether the candidates had met that threshold. When proposing criteria, consider the possibility that reliable public polling may not be readily available for all candidates who appear on the ballot. Be advised that different criteria may be used for different offices, as long as those criteria are nonpartisan, objective, and non-discriminatory.

**A note on non-participating candidates:** The law also permits sponsors to invite non-participating candidates to take part in any of these debates, as long as they have satisfied all the nonpartisan, objective, and non-discriminatory criteria applicable to participating candidates, as discussed above. If a non-participating candidate declines an invitation, the debate shall go on as scheduled — except in the event there is only one participating candidate who qualifies for any debate, in which case that debate shall be cancelled.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to participating candidates (i.e., candidates who join the Campaign Finance Program) include “limited participating” candidates (i.e., self-funded candidates who agree to join the Program and limit their spending).

 VERIFICATION

I submit this form on behalf of the Applicant Organization(s) in application to sponsor or co-sponsor one or more debates for the 2017 citywide elections for New York City.

I verify that \_\_\_\_\_ [“Applicant Organization(s)”] \_\_\_\_\_ is/are not affiliated with any political party or with any holder of or candidate for public office and has not endorsed any candidate in a pending 2017 primary or general election for citywide office in New York City.

I further verify that the Applicant Organization(s) will not endorse a candidate for a New York City citywide office in the 2017 elections prior to the broadcast of all debates sponsored or co-sponsored by the Applicant Organization in the pending primary or general elections.

I further verify that, in the event the Applicant Organization(s) is/are selected to sponsor or co-sponsor one or more debates for the 2017 elections, the staging, promotion, coverage of, and all other aspects of implementing the debate(s), will be in conformance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws (including the Americans with Disabilities Act).

I further verify that, in the event the Applicant Organization(s) is/are selected to sponsor or co-sponsor one or more debates for the 2017 elections, the cost of staging, promotion, coverage of, and all other aspects of implementing the debate(s), will be solely the responsibility of the sponsor(s).

I understand that the City of New York shall indemnify each sponsor for any liability of such sponsor arising out of the acts or omissions of the City of New York in connection with the selection of candidates for participation in any of these debates based on the financial eligibility requirements as set forth in section 3-709.5(5)(b)(i) of the NYC Administrative Act.

I further verify that the Applicant Organization(s) will indemnify and hold harmless the City of New York for any liability arising from the acts or omissions of the Applicant Organization in the staging, promotion, coverage of, and all other aspects of implementing these debates.

I further verify that I, on behalf of the Applicant Organization(s), have read, understand, and will comply with the provisions for determining who may participate in the primary and general election debates, including those for determining “leading contenders,” as set forth in the NYC Administrative Code §3-709.5.

I understand that the Campaign Finance Board may request additional information from the Applicant Organization(s) before it evaluates this application. I further understand that this application is a public record that, by law, may be made available for inspection and comment.

**Lead sponsor signature:**

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**Organization:**

**Date:**

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**Name:**

**Title:**

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