

World Schools Debating Championships 2015

Singapore, 27th July - 6th August



The 2015 World Schools Debating Championships in Singapore are now just a couple of weeks away. 53 teams are registered to take part in the championships, and the organising committee is looking forward to welcoming all our visiting delegates in Singapore very soon.

Arrivals and Departures

Delegates who are flying to Singapore will arrive at Singapore Changi Airport.

Changi Airport has a reputation for being one of the best airports in the world, and your travel through the airport is likely to be fairly quick and hassle-free.

The organising committee is arranging bus transport between the airport and the championship hotels for delegates who arrive on Monday 27th July and depart on Thursday 6th August, *provided that we have been informed of your arrival/departure flights well in advance.*

If you are arriving and/or departing on other dates, then you will need to sort out your own transportation between the airport and the hotel.

Taxis are readily available at the airport. A regular taxi between the airport and the hotel will cost (in Singapore Dollars) about S\$40. If you are travelling in a group, it is also possible to get a 7-seater large taxi. At the airport, you can get a large taxi by going to the Ground Transport Desk in the Arrivals Hall. The hotel can also book you a large taxi if you are travelling to the airport. A large taxi will cost around S\$60.

Hotels

Delegates at WSDC 2015 will be staying at two hotels which are just across the street from each other – the Copthorne Kings Hotel and the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel.

Delegates from the following nations will be staying in each hotel:

Copthorne Kings Hotel

Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, China, Croatia, Denmark, England, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Philippines, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel

Bangladesh, Bermuda, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Lithuania, Macau, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, Qatar, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, United States, Wales and Zimbabwe.

If nations wish to book additional nights of accommodation for their delegation before the night of Monday 27th July or after the night of Wednesday 5th August, they will need to e-mail the reservations department at their hotel to make arrangements for this (*Copthorne Kings Hotel*: rooms.cks@millenniumhotels.com / *Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel*: grprsvns.gcw@millenniumhotels.com).

Details of the hotels are as follows -

Copthorne Kings Hotel

Address: 403 Havelock Road, Singapore 169632

Tel: (+65) 6733-0011

Website: www.millenniumhotels.com.sg/copthornekingssingapore

Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel

Address: 392 Havelock Road, Singapore 169663

Tel: (+65) 6733-0880

Website: www.millenniumhotels.com.sg/grandcopthornewaterfront

Motions

The prepared motions for WSDC 2015 are:

Preliminary Round 1

This House would ban the use of zero-hour contracts

Preliminary Round 2

This House would require defendants in criminal trials to be represented exclusively by public defenders

Preliminary Round 3

This House supports academic tracking in primary and secondary education

Preliminary Round 5

This House believes that cities with significant immigrant populations should actively break up ethnic enclaves

Grand Final

This House believes that governments should provide a guaranteed Universal Basic Income

In response to questions from a few different team coaches, the Motions Committee has released the following clarification regarding the motion for preliminary round 3:

“There are many models of academic tracking, and we are not specifying the model of academic tracking that teams should debate. If teams want to propose specific models of academic tracking, then they should make sure that the models reflect the principle of academic tracking (i.e. separating students by academic ability for certain or all subjects).”

The motions for all other rounds of WSDC 2015 (preliminary rounds 4, 6, 7 and 8, the octo-finals, quarter-finals and semi-finals) will be impromptu rounds for which the motion will be released only one hour before each debate begins.

Preparation for Impromptu Debates

During the preparation hour for impromptu debates, each team will be held in its own preparation space and will not be allowed to speak with the coaches or anyone else other than the 3 - 5 members of their team squad.

Teams are reminded that during the preparation hour for impromptu rounds, they will not be allowed to use the Internet or access any information electronically. Electronic communication devices must be left with the team coach before the team goes to their preparation room, otherwise the team is risking disqualification for that round.

Teams may also not bring any handwritten, printed or published materials with them into their preparation room for impromptu debates with the exception of one English Language dictionary, one bilingual dictionary and one single-volume encyclopaedia or almanac per team. (Teams must bring these books with them if they wish to make use of them – they will not be provided by the organisers.)

Meals

Breakfast for all WSDC delegates will be held in the Ballroom on Level 3 of the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel every morning from 28th July to 6th August. All WSDC delegates will be having breakfast in the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel (delegates staying in the Copthorne Kings will walk over to the other hotel for breakfast – it's a short walk over footbridge across Havelock Road). It will be very important that all delegates attend breakfast as we will be making important announcements during breakfast each morning. Buses will leave for host schools immediately after breakfast, and delegates will also be told which bus they need to board during breakfast.

When we travel out to schools for debate rounds, the host schools will be providing lunch for all WSDC delegates. The host schools are aware that some delegates have particular dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, Halal, etc), and will do their best to cater to these. However please be aware that host schools may not be able to make provisions for every dietary requirement of individual delegates. If you have particular dietary needs (or if you are simply a fussy eater), we would recommend bringing some of your own food with you to each host school just in case they're not able to provide food which suits you. There is a large supermarket in the basement of the Great World City shopping centre, which is within 5 minutes' walk from the championship hotels.

Clothing

Singapore's climate is warm and humid. Be sure to bring some light, comfortable casual clothes for outdoor events and for exploring the city. For some events during WSDC 2015, you will also need sports shoes or comfortable walking shoes. Hats and sunscreen lotion will also be essential items to pack. When it rains in Singapore it tends to rain quite heavily, so bringing a raincoat would also be a good idea. There is a swimming pool at each of the championship hotels, so remember your swimwear.

Debate Rounds in Schools

All schools in Singapore have uniforms and certain standards of dress are expected for visitors. We therefore request that for debates rounds, all WSDC delegates (debaters, adjudicators, coaches, Team Managers and observers) **do NOT wear** shorts, collarless T-shirts, faded denim jeans, any clothing which is torn or frayed, or casual slippers.

Please note that some debates will be held in air-conditioned and can get quite cold, while others will be held in non air-conditioned rooms which can get quite hot. We therefore advise that all delegates bring a smart jacket to each debate venue which they can wear if the room is cold, but also wear an outfit which will look perfectly smart if the jacket is not worn.

Events with Dress Codes

The following events during WSDC 2015 will have specific dress codes -

Opening Ceremony (evening of 28th July): Formal wear (e.g. jacket and tie for men) or formal national costume

Cultural Night (evening of 31st July): If possible, come wearing a national costume or a traditional/ethnic outfit from your nation or region

Semi-Finals (afternoon & evening of 4th August): Audience members are asked to dress in 'smart-casual' clothing (no shorts, collarless T-shirts or casual slippers)

Grand Final & Closing Dinner (afternoon & evening of 5th August): Formal wear (e.g. jacket and tie for men) or formal national costume

Guests-of-Honour

We are pleased to announce that the following Guests-of-Honour will be attending the Opening Ceremony and Grand Final of WSDC 2015:

Opening Ceremony – Mr Tan Chuan-Jin

Mr Tan Chaun-Jin is a member of the Cabinet of Singapore. He was the Minister for Manpower from May 2014 - May 2015, and is now the Minister for Social & Family Development. He was an active debater on the inter-school debating circuit in Singapore in the 1980s.

Grand Final – Mr Vikram Nair

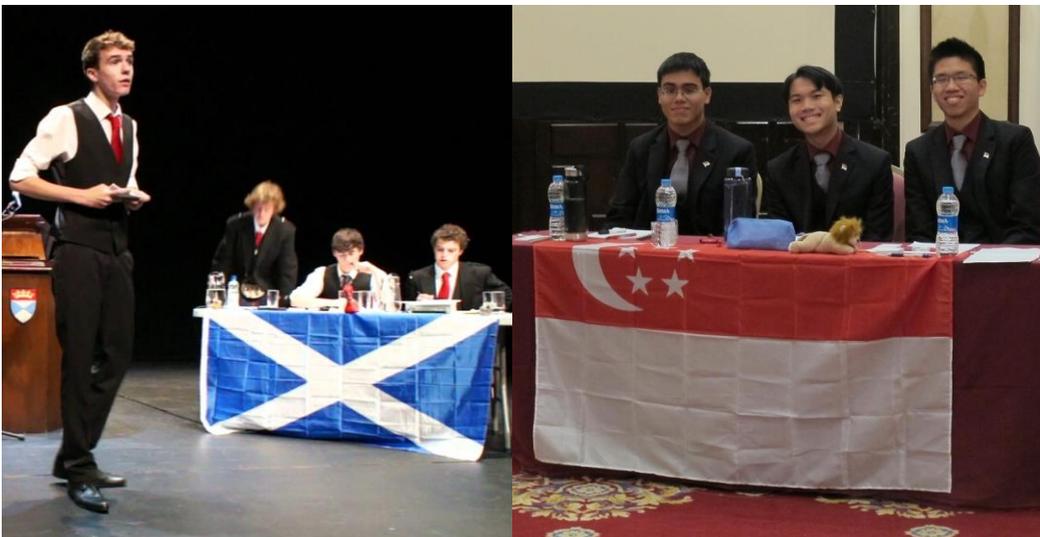
Mr Vikram Nair has been a Member of Parliament in Singapore since 2011. He was an active debater on the inter-school debating circuit in the 1990s, and went on to Cambridge University where he was a Director of Debating at the Cambridge Union Society and was ranked the No. 3 individual speaker at the 2002 World Universities Debating Championship in Toronto.

Cultural Night

The Cultural Night event will be held on the evening of Friday 31st July. Every team will be given a table within the venue to decorate in any way they chose which they feel represents of their nation. Every team is also very strongly encouraged to bring some small souvenirs and/or snack foods from your nation which you can share with members of other teams so that everyone can have a chance to share aspects of their culture with other WSDC delegates.

National Flags

It has become a tradition at WSDC in recent years that every team brings a large national flag with them to the tournament and hangs this flag over the team's desk at the front of the room during each debate. This is something which helps to create a sense of occasion for debates held in schools which are part of a world championship international competition. We therefore very strongly encourage every team to bring a national flag with them to WSDC 2015.



Team Scotland and Team Singapore with national flags at their tables during WSDC debates

Tours

On the afternoon of Saturday 1st August during the middle of WSDC 2015 in Singapore, there are some organised tour options which WSDC delegates can choose to sign up for.

On the morning of Saturday 1st August there will be a bye-round (because there are an odd number of competing teams) involving 8 teams. All other teams will have a free morning. The teams involved in the bye-round will return to the championship hotel by 12.50 pm.

There are then 2 organised tour options which delegates can sign up for:

Option 1

Singapore City Tour

Cost (in Singapore Dollars): S\$40 per person

This tour will depart by bus from the hotel at 2.30 pm. Highlights of the tour will include:

- Little India - A buzzing ethnic district in a historic area, famed for being the cultural home of Singapore's Indian community

- Kampong Glam - A vibrant neighbourhood rich in history and living traditions with strong links to Singapore's Malay community
- China Town - A bustling mix of old and new, filled with shops and markets in an area of Singapore with a strong Chinese heritage
- Bumboat ride and visit to Marina Barage - Take trip down the Singapore River on a traditional wooden fishing boat before finishing up with a visit to the Marina Barrage by the coast facing out towards Indonesia.

The tour will return to the hotel at approximately 6.30 pm.

(Payment for this tour must be made in cash to representatives of Chan Brothers Travel, who will be in the breakfast room at the Grand Copthorne Hotel on Tuesday 28th July and Wednesday 29th July.)

Option 2

National Museum of Singapore

Cost: Free!

Thanks to sponsorship from the National Heritage Board and the Ministry of Education, this tour option is completely free for WSDC delegates. Delegates who sign up for this option will get on a bus at the hotel at 2.00 pm and be taken to the National Museum of Singapore, a museum dedicated to the history of Singapore located in a historic building in the heart of downtown. Along with other exhibitions, you'll have a chance to see the museum's current main exhibition – 'Singapura: 700 Years'. This immersive exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the history of Singapore, from the earliest archaeological findings though to the modern period. You'll also have time to explore the area around the museum if you choose to. Buses will return to the hotel at 4.45 pm.

It is necessary to sign up for these tours in advance. If you have not already signed up for a tour (either by yourself or through your Team Administrator), please e-mail wsdcsingapore2015@gmail.com to find out if it is still possible to register for a tour.

General Information about Singapore

Money

The currency of Singapore is the Singapore Dollar (S\$). At the beginning of July 2015, the exchange rates for the Singapore Dollar were approximately:

US Dollar - US\$1.00 = S\$1.30

Euro - €1.00 = S\$1.50

Pound Sterling - £1.00 = S\$2.10

Money can be changed at the airport, banks and hotels. Most shopping complexes also have licensed money changers (there is a money changer in the Great World City shopping centre near the championship hotels). Credit cards are also widely accepted in Singapore.

Voltage

Singapore's voltage is 220-240 volts AC, 50 cycles per second. If you want to use electrical items which do not conform to these settings, you will need to bring a converter.

Things to do

Singapore offers a wide variety of attractions and distractions which WSDC participants may want to check out in their free time during their visit. One thing Singapore is famous for is its shopping. Great World City shopping centre (with numerous shops, eating outlets and a multi-screen cinema) is within 5 minutes' walk of the championship hotels, and Singapore's best known shopping street, Orchard Road, is just a short bus ride away. Singapore is also famous for its food. From chilli crab, to Hainanese chicken rice, to Malay sambal dishes, Indian roti prata and much, much more, those with adventurous taste buds will not be disappointed. Local food can be sampled cheaply at numerous food courts and hawker centres around the island. Those

who are pathologically addicted to hamburgers, pizza and Coke, will also find that Singapore is also not lacking in McDonalds, Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hut and other major international chains to stop those withdrawal syndromes from attacking. If you're looking for a bit of culture, you'll discover pockets of Old World charm and Asian traditions all over the island at places like China Town, Little India and Kampong Glam. In fact, all you've really got to do is walk down the street in Singapore and you'll see the ethnic diversity, hear the multiple accents, and sense the vibrant cosmopolitanism that makes up the island state.



Reminders

All nations sending teams to WSDC 2015 are reminded to do the following if you have not do so already:

- Make sure that individual registration forms have been completed for every member of your delegation.
(Note: For adjudicators, there are 2 forms to complete – the individual registration form and the adjudicator profile form.)
- Make sure that the details of the arrival and departure flights for every member of your delegation have been submitted. (If you are arriving on 27th July and wish to be picked up at the airport, make sure that we are given this information at least 10 days in advance.)
- Make sure that a signed declaration form agreeing to abide by the WSDC Code of Conduct and the media release for the televised semi-finals and Grand Final is submitted to the organising committee (for delegates below the age of 18, this must also be signed by a parent or guardian).
- Make sure that a copy of the travel insurance certificate for every member of your delegation has been submitted to the organising committee.
- Make sure that a scanned copy of the passport photo/personal details page for every member of your delegation has been submitted to the organising committee.
- Submit the form to apply for English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) / English-as-a-Foreign Language (EFL) status if you believe that any members of your team qualify for this status.

From the Chief Adjudicators:

We're looking forward to seeing all the adjudicators for WSDC 2015 very soon in Singapore! In the meantime, to prepare for the tournament, you might like to view some WSDC debates on video-sharing websites like YouTube. For those of you coming to WSDC for the first time, this will help acquaint you with the quality and diversity of debating you will encounter at WSDC.

The Chief Adjudicators' Panel (CAP) has picked out two practice videos for adjudicators who may wish to

send in scores and reasons for their decision. New adjudicators or those who do not have extensive experience judging at WSDC may wish to use these as practice. Please send in your ballots and explanations for your decision to capwsc2015@gmail.com.

- WSDC 2014 Round 8, Scotland vs Netherlands, 'This House would remove all patents on green technology' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=HabAvonIR8g).
- WSDC 2014 Round 7, Slovakia vs Mexico, 'This House would lift tax exemptions from religious institutions that refuse to recognise marriage equality' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmiptpwFI10).

We'd also like to encourage everybody to re-familiarise themselves with the WSDC rules and guidelines, which can be found at <http://schoolsdebate.com/resources>.

Vernie Oliverio & Tracey Lee
Co-Chief Adjudicators