



**Commonwealth
Universities' Debating
Championship (CUDC2025)**
*Fostering open discussions
to provoke a new thinking*



19th – 26th June 2025
Kigali-Rwanda

CUDC
Commonwealth Universities Debating Championship



INTRODUCTION

Today the Commonwealth has expanded and currently enjoys a league of 56 independent and equal states, as a result of its culture of the recurrent invention which has enabled it to not only extend its borders but also remain relevant in the ever-changing world. This is evident in the numerous programs and events that have been initiated and implemented contributing to the strong coalition and bond among its member states' citizens.

This innovative spirit has continued to inform successive leaders to come up with ideas championing several global programs and campaigns aimed at making the world more inclusive and fairer. Today with young people being the majority of the association's total population (1.5bn), it is cardinal to prepare them to lead if the same spirit and culture are to be maintained and sustained. Although involving young people topped the list of the recommendations of Commonwealth Heads of State during the recent meeting held in Rwanda, finding a working strategy will need pragmatism and innovativeness.



Engaging and bringing young people together doesn't only answer the question of sustainability but also enables them to bestow the intentions and benefits of the association. In line with the recent meeting theme, "***One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth***" cannot be attained without having the youth leading the journey. But winning and earning the trust of young people necessitates continuous and concerted effort and this has to be approached with a strategy capable of enforcing and reinforcing their active and even participation.

As the association celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), it is fitting to keep legacy programs that engage them to assess while informing themselves on the progress made. However, the youth cannot be empowered to carry on this assessment unless they are part of the process.

It is in a similar spirit and background that ***Commonwealth Universities' Debating Championship*** was initiated as a post-CHOGM engagement event for young people, specifically university students to discuss, share ideas and inform themselves about the recommendations and other decisions made by the Commonwealth Heads' of States since they are the first-hand custodians.

The Championship aims to celebrate young people by involving them in constructive and challenging discussions on issues like climate change, access to education, skills, employment, democracy, gender equality, and others with the purpose of fostering open discussions to provoke new thinking in political, social and economic arena.

It is also dedicated to creating an even space to enable and promote fair and equal participation of the 56 Commonwealth member countries' university students to learn from each other while appreciating the diversity and cultural richness of the association. At the same time helping in finding solutions to the issues that the world is facing today through the art of debate.

THE COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES' DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIP

Commonwealth Universities' Debating Championship (CUDC) is a flagship program that was initiated by Aspire Debate Rwanda in partnership with the University of Rwanda with endorsement from Commonwealth Secretariat, Ministry of Education of the Republic of Rwanda and Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). The post-CHOGM engagement CUDC activities seek to bring youth, specifically students from Higher Learning Institutions (Universities, colleges or tertiary institutions) with in the Commonwealth member countries together to discuss and share ideas, information and knowledge on the recommendations of the previous Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.



In addition, the championship is an annual post-CHOGM event program that go further to be a launchpad in establishing good interpersonal relationships amongst participating students, creating a formidable platform for culture exchange, awareness on global, regional and national challenges among university students from all the 56 member countries in an engaging way that encourages even participation. Thus, shaping a Commonwealth youth as a global citizen.

The 2nd edition of CUDC comes after successful organisation of the first edition that was held in Kigali from 26th – 31st May 2024 which attracted 12 Universities from 8 commonwealth countries. It intends to encourage young people to have a deep involvement in policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation as a prerequisite to intensely hold their leaders accountable. The 2025 championship will happen under the same theme as CHOGM2024. Since the championship has not established a firm stratum, the 2nd edition will still be hosted in Kigali – Rwanda again. However, it is planned to be a rotational event hence giving other member states a hosting opportunity.

THE RATIONALE

Commonwealth Universities' Debating Championship (CUDC2025) aims at engaging and bringing together university debate teams from the commonwealth member states under one roof to share and exchange knowledge, information and ideas on world, regional and national issues that they perceive vital to have a sustainable world that delivers to everyone while encouraging active and even participation.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

- To foster cooperation, partnership and knowledge sharing among universities as a way of engaging young people in the implementation of the post-CHOGM agenda.
- To create a platform specifically for university students to exchange culture, knowledge and experience.
- To facilitate and enable students openly but constructively discuss issues they deem vital for their well-being.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Increased knowledge of previous Commonwealth Heads of states decisions and meetings recommendations amongst university students.
- More confident, eloquent and articulate young people with a global citizen perspective.
- Increased knowledge among university students on climate change, fair trade, gender equality and inclusion, and a fast-changing disruptive world with the emerging threat of pandemics that have proven to be the most factors that are shaping the world.

FOCUS OF DEBATE MOTIONS

In line with the recommendations and commitments of CHOGM2024. The championship debate motions or topics will be formulated around the areas below: -

- Youth Inclusiveness
- Democracy and Climate Justice
- Women's empowerment and participation.
- Sustainable Trade, investment and development

VENUE

The championship will be hosted physically on the premises of one of partner University in Rwanda for all preliminary debate rounds except the Opening ceremony and grand finale which will be hosted either at Kigali Conference and Exhibition Village (**KCEV**) or one of the selected hotels. The opening and closing sessions will also be live-streamed on YouTube and other social media platforms.

TEAM PARTICIPATION

The 2nd edition of the Championship envisions to host over 120 Institutions of High Learning from the 56 Commonwealth member states.

REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

Registration shall be **\$320** per head (*The registration fees include accommodation, airport pickup and drop off, meals, tournament materials*). Registration of participants shall be facilitated via an online platform (www.thecudc.org) and the registration deadline is **28th March 2025, 17:00 GMT**. Registration fee is exclusive of bank charges and shall be paid in US dollars, on the account to be shared through an automated email response given after filling registration form. All the registrants must provide the following: -

- Scanned copy of a valid student identity card
- Scanned and stamped recommendation letter from his/her university/College
- Passport-size photo for his/her badge.
- Scanned copy of passport.

METHODOLOGY

All the Higher Learning Institutions present will go through parallel Nine (9) preliminary rounds. After these rounds, the best-performing teams will advance to Quarter-finals. All the remaining rounds from Quarters to the Grand final will be decided using a knockout principle. The championship will follow the British Parliamentary Debate Format of two debaters per team and 4 teams per debate session. The competition will be presided over by two (2) Chief Adjudicators (CAs) supported by five (5) selected Deputy Chief Adjudicators (DCAs). The CAs will be nominated among the best in the commonwealth countries. We believe that their experience from years of fair and competitive adjudication puts them in control of overseeing the tournament as well as training other adjudicators for a successful competition. The nomination will be done to reflect a fair representation from all debating unions across the Commonwealth but with a keen interest in quality. DCAs and Independent Adjudicators (IAs) will go through an open online application process. Support adjudicators will be provided by each participating university through team registration.

SCHEDULE OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP

THE COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES' DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIP 2025	
19 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrival of delegates• Registration and Check-In
20 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Briefing & Training, Master's Debate• Open ceremony at Night.
21 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Round 1, 2, Training during lunch• Round 3
22 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Round 4, 5, Training during lunch• Round 6, Commonwealth Night
23 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Round 7, 8, Training during lunch• Round 9
24 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excursions (Day out: Beach Party or Akagera National Park Trip)
25 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarter, Semi-finales• Grand finale (Dinner time)
26 JUNE 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Departure back home

AGENDA

To be Hosted in Kigali-Rwanda