

MIPLG 2026 DEBATE COMPETITION GUIDELINES

1. The theme for the 2026 debate competition is **“The Athlete’s Brand: Balancing Image Rights, IP Law and Publicity in the Sports Industry”**

The competition shall be in four stages described below as follows:

- a. Preliminary Stage (Essay submission)
- b. Stage 2 (Quarter-finals)
- c. Stage 3 (semi-finals)
- d. Stage 4 (Finals)

2. Participation:

To participate in the competition, each team must consist of two students of the same African tertiary institution, both registered on the MIPLG community and network. The participants are to register on the MIPLG website and follow MIPLG on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter for updates on the competition.

Upon joining the MIPLG Community, the team shall be eligible to register for the competition.

Entry into the competition shall be done by completing the competition form on the MIPLG website and providing the requested data which shall include

- i. Full names of team members.
- ii. Country.
- iii. Email addresses and phone numbers
- iv. Name of the university where the team members are currently enrolled.
- v. High-resolution passport image of each team member.
- vi. A valid means of school identification
- vii. Submission of an essay on the topic provided below.

3. Preliminary Stage

- i Each participating team shall submit a written essay on the topic **“The Athlete’s Brand: Balancing Image Rights, IP Law and Publicity in the Sports Industry”**
- ii Entries must be submitted on or before 23:59hrs (GMT +1) on Wednesday, July 15, 2026, to our website: <https://myiplawguide.com/miplg-international-debate-2026/> .

iii Submitted Essays must comply with the following:

- a. A maximum of 1500 words excluding footnotes and references.
- b. Font type must be Times New Roman; font size is 12 for the body of the work and 10 for footnotes.
- c. Shall not contain any graphical representation.
- d. Converted and submitted in PDF format.

iv Qualifying teams shall be selected at this stage for the next round by the judges and will be announced via our website and social media handles.

4. Quarterfinals

- i The topic for this stage shall be published, and qualifying schools shall compete over a debate before a panel of judges on a date to be communicated at that stage.
- ii The teams shall be grouped and would compete for the available spots at the semifinal stage of the competition.
- iii The debate guidelines to be released at the beginning of the debate shall apply as the Rules guiding the quarter-final stage.
- iv The winner of each group shall proceed to the semifinals.
- v The Qualifying schools for this stage will be published on our website and social media handles.

5. SEMI-FINALS

- i. The topic(s) for this stage shall be published at the conclusion of the quarterfinal stage. The semi-final stage shall comprise of an oral debate before a panel of Judges.
- ii. The debate guidelines to be released at the beginning of the debate shall apply as the Rules guiding the semi-final stage.
- iii. The semi -final teams shall be paired and would compete for the available slots in the finals.
- iv. The qualifying schools from this stage for the finals shall be published at the conclusion of the semi-final debates.

6. FINALS

- i. The topic(s) for this stage of the competition will be published at the conclusion of the semi-final stage. The semi-final stage shall consist of an oral debate before a panel of Judges.
- ii. The debate guidelines to be released at the beginning of the debate shall apply as the Rules guiding the final stage.
- iii. The Judges shall comment on the debate at the end of the session and may declare the results.
- iv. Results shall be published on the MIPLG website and social media handles after the official announcement.

AWARDS:

1. Winners

- i. Three hundred United States Dollars (USD\$300.00)
- ii. Slots on the MIPLG Career Development and Mentorship Scheme (CDMS).
- iii. WIPO IP Course/Training Award.
- iv. Certificates of recognition.

2. Second Place

- i. Two hundred United States Dollars (USD\$200.00)
- ii. Slots on the MIPLG Career Development and Mentorship Scheme (CDMS).
- iii. WIPO IP Course/Training Award.
- iv. Certificates of recognition.

WHAT THE JUDGES LOOK OUT FOR:

1. Originality
2. Persuasiveness and coherence of arguments
3. Clarity of expression
4. Relevance to the theme or topic
5. Quality of research and recommendations.

Also applicable to the Oral Debate

6. Appearance and composure of the competitors. Competitors must be dressed appropriately.
7. Expression and advocacy skills.

MIPLG 2026 Debate Committee