



Hosting a Competition on Your Own Campus

What a host actually has to supply, what the association supplies, and the three ways to do it that are smaller than founding a conference.

Hosting sounds like the largest possible version of this and is often the smallest. Associations want hosts, several of them pay hosts, and the hardest parts, the scoring and the rules, are usually done by the association rather than by you.

Four ways to host, from smallest to largest

- **Host somebody else's travelling simulation.** Several university-run simulations move between campuses. Taking one for a year means you supply rooms and local organization while the owning institution brings the design, the materials and the staff. This is by far the smallest lift and the best first time.
 - **Run an invitational under license.** In college mock trial you can run your own invitational using the association's case by filling in a form and paying \$8.00 per team per trial. A four-round, twenty-four team invitational costs \$768 in license fees. You owe the association a tabulation summary within thirty days. In moot court, invitationals are listed on the association's site simply on request.
 - **Take over a regional that needs a host.** The National Council on US-Arab Relations publishes a standing list of named regional Model Arab League conferences that currently have no host. You inherit an existing, branded, already-scheduled conference rather than inventing one.
 - **Bid for a sanctioned tournament.** The largest version, and the one with a real application. Details below.
-

What a sanctioned mock trial host has to provide

This is the only published room-by-room host specification in any of these families, which makes it the right planning template even if you are hosting something else entirely.

- Capacity for at least 24 teams of six to ten students, plus coaches and spectators. Regionals may take up to 30 teams.
- At least **12 trial rooms**. A courthouse is strongly preferred. If you use classrooms, they must have tables with separate chairs, and student desks are not acceptable; the rooms have to be big enough for an attorney to move around in.
- A room that safely seats 250 to 300 people for opening and awards.

- A room that seats all the judges, with projection, for a judge orientation before each round.
- A captains' meeting room, which may double as something else.
- A tabulation room for about 30 people with at least one long table.
- Facilities accessible to students, judges and spectators alike.
- **Two to three judges per trial per round**, sitting or retired judges or attorneys. This is the part that is actually hard, and the recruitment plan is a scored part of the proposal.
- Food for judges: coffee and a continental breakfast before morning rounds, and sandwiches and drinks before afternoon and evening rounds. Judges are volunteers and this is how you keep them.

What the association supplies, so you do not have to

- Two on-site representatives at the association's expense, who run the captains' meetings, instruct and assign the judges, tabulate, pair the rounds and enforce the rules. **You do not have to supply scoring or tabulation staff.**
 - Ballots, tabulation cards, trophies and individual awards, shipped to you.
 - Contact details for every team assigned to your tournament, and the forms for collecting rosters.
 - **A stipend of \$4,500 for a regional host and \$6,000 for an opening-round host.** The money moves to the host, not from it.
-

What the proposal has to contain

Proposals are due by a priority deadline of July 1 for the following season, and later ones are considered as needed. Organizers who commit to at least three years are preferred.

- A signed letter on official letterhead from a faculty member or administrator confirming that the institution supports it. Start this early; it is the item most likely to sit on somebody's desk.
 - The venue address and cost, photographs of the trial rooms, and parking. If it is a courthouse, any security and insurance requirements the courthouse imposes.
 - A judge recruitment plan with a timeline, the size of the pool you are drawing on, your contacts and email lists, and turnout data if you have hosted before.
 - A budget covering facilities rental, furniture rental, climate control, catering and the cost of recruiting judges.
 - Nearby lodging with a walking-distance analysis, transportation from the nearest airport, and restaurants near the venue and the hotels.
 - Your proposed dates and format, from the association's fixed weekends.
-

How the money works

Three different funding models appear across these associations, and it is worth knowing which one you are in before you build a budget.

Hosting a moot court tournament waives your school's annual membership fee for that year, though the authorization letter is still required.

Hosting a Model UN conference, where there is no association

No governing body exists, so nothing is standardized and no hosting handbook is published. What the large conferences have in common is worth copying:

- They are run by a student organization, not by a department. Several are incorporated as nonprofits in their own right; others run through the university's own student affairs office and financial plumbing, which is the simpler route for a first attempt.
 - They are staffed enormously. One conference reports more than 270 student staff for about 800 delegates, better than one staffer for every four delegates. If you cannot field staff at something like that ratio, run a smaller conference rather than a thinner one.
 - They hold the room block with a penalty rather than a request, because a hotel-based conference loses money when delegations sleep elsewhere. A campus-based host has no such lever and should price lodging differently from the start.
 - They publish a refund ladder and hold country assignments until fees clear.
-

Before you commit

1. Can you field the judges or the staff? This, not the rooms, is what sinks a first attempt.
2. Do you have the venue for a fixed weekend you do not control, a year out?
3. Who signs for the institution, and have you asked them yet?
4. Is there an existing conference that needs a host, or one that travels, which would get you the same experience at a quarter of the risk?
5. Can you commit to three years? Associations prefer it, and the second year is where the work finally pays off.

Every requirement, fee and stipend in this document is published by the association concerned and was verified on October 17, 2026. Where an association publishes no specification, this document says so rather than inventing one. Links to every association are at politicalsimulations.com/competitive-sims.