

# Towards an ASC project for the Cultural Olympiad

It is hoped to have a Public Speaking project included in the Cultural Olympiad. For clarification, the 'Olympiad' period is mid-2008 through mid-2010 i.e. the four years leading up to London 2012 and, as with the ancient Olympics, activities such as dance, music, theatre and other arts are included.

We need to identify a project that will (a) be good for ASC and member Clubs (i.e. higher profile, more members), and be easily managed, and (b) be acceptable to the Cultural Olympiad organisers with whom SE District President Richard Johnson is in touch. Much of the information that follows is taken from the organisers' guidelines.

London 2012 will integrate the cultural aspects of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games into a single cultural programme. It is hoped by ASC to include a 'public speaking' project that will "embrace the Olympic movement values of 'excellence, respect and friendship' and the Paralympic movement vision to 'empower, achieve, inspire'", and also promote our Clubs and their Association.

The Cultural Olympiad is for everyone and all projects should:

- celebrate the whole of the UK welcoming the world – our unique internationalism, cultural diversity, sharing and understanding;
- inspire and involve young people; and
- generate a positive legacy – for example through cultural and sports participation, audience development, cultural skills, capacity building, urban regeneration, tourism and social cohesion and international links."

This approach also aims to ensure that there is purpose, character and identity to the London 2012 culture programme. Accordingly, the project put forward by the Association of Speakers Clubs should reflect and support "at least three of the following Cultural Olympiad themes:

- bring together culture and sport;
- encourage audiences to take part;
- animate and humanise public spaces – through street theatre, public art, circus skills, live big screen sites;
- use culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and well-being;
- honour and share the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- ignite cutting edge collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors; and
- enhance the learning, skills and personal development of young people by linking with our education programmes."

From the ASC/Club perspective, the project should:

- Promote effective speaking, communication, the proper conduct of meetings and related skills;
- Increase Club membership and retention;
- Broaden the profile of Club membership;
- Be interesting, challenging and original;
- Be within the capacity of ASC and its member clubs to organise; and
- Be suited to obtaining sponsorship not only to cover costs but also to increase publicity.

We've had discussions at both SW and SE District meetings and in outline, suggestions received to date include:

- A. An international Speakathon throughout the actual period of the 2012 Olympics, involving every country, speeches of 3 minutes duration...
- B. Training sportspeople to give presentations and to be effective when interviewed.
- C. Nationwide contest based on origins of each Olympic sport.
- D. Speech contest between UK sports clubs.
- E. Worldwide Public Speaking and Debating Festival with contests for adults, university and school students and other groups;
- F. Enabling artists and sportspeople to speak well about what they do;
- G. Transforming 2,012 terrified non-speakers into confident communicators

Comments on these and also your alternative suggestions will be welcome. Please respond to:

[mdouse@oceanfree.net](mailto:mdouse@oceanfree.net) and to [Richard.johnson433@gmail.com](mailto:Richard.johnson433@gmail.com)

Good wishes and many thanks

**Mike (your NDO)**