



Public Speaking Report: National Association: 03 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Soroptimist International (ROI) annual Public Speaking competition is a cornerstone of SI club activities across the country. It is an outstanding initiative that benefits girls in upper secondary schools and is now entering its 42nd year. We received very positive and encouraging feedback throughout the year from many teachers and schools.

Teachers, schools and participants support the competition with enthusiasm, interest and eagerness. Despite the challenging and complex issues surrounding the competition last year, over one hundred and sixty (160+) girls participated in the local events in November 2021, representing over sixty (60+) schools. Four regional finals hosted by Athlone, Bandon, Castlebar and North Kildare clubs took place in late January 2022 and the national finals took place in the D Hotel, Drogheda in February 2022 hosted by Drogheda SI. We extend congratulations to all of the speakers who presented comprehensive and enjoyable speeches throughout.

None of this would have been possible without the magnificent support of teachers and schools notwithstanding the continually changing contexts and restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. We sincerely acknowledge their continued assistance, support, cooperation and encouragement and look forward to working with them in 2023 to maintain the strong traditions of our public speaking programme.

Wexford SI will host the National Final competition in March 2023 at a date and venue to be confirmed later. At the moment, it is intended that local heats will be held in November 2022 while regional events will take place in January 2023.

We salute the PS convenors in our clubs – they have been rocks of resilience, determination and patience – their efforts ensured the implementation, delivery and successful conclusion of the challenging 2022 competition with both virtual and in-person presentations. A special thanks also to SI members in all clubs who made every effort to accommodate, facilitate and bring the competition to fruition while remaining vigilant and abiding by NPHEA advice and governmental regulations. We recognise unreservedly, the investment of time, energy and enthusiasm that enables and enriches girls' self-esteem, confidence, competence and self-regard.

Information packs for the 2023 competition have been forwarded to the public speaking Convenors in local Soroptimist International clubs. Guidelines, protocols, adjudication checklists, entry forms and topics for 2023 are all included. The topics are based on the **5 P's** of *Soroptimist International Programme Action: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership*. A sixth area is also included: *Friendship (& Volunteering)*. The Convenors will post the details and all information to schools in their catchment areas in the coming days.

We are excited to announce a new patron and benefactor of the public speaking competition for the next three years! **SCF Global Campus** is a global science and engineering education network of academia, industry, government bodies, SMEs and individuals. Learning is gained through seminars, conferences, research exchanges, and internships with a focus on hands-on training. The SCF Global Campus is part of SCF Processing Ltd and is delighted to support the Soroptimist International Republic of Ireland Public Speaking competition. We are indebted to our Membership Officer, Siobhán Matthews and her company for a most generous sponsorship commitment.

My sincere appreciation to SIROI President Miriam Murphy-Wood and the ROI executive for their advice, help, guidance and support throughout the year. Continued good health and best wishes to all.

Anne O'Sullivan, National PS Convenor