

[Commission on Presidential Debate (U.S.)]

Our Mission

The Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) was established in 1987 to ensure that debates, as a permanent part of every general election, provide the best possible information to viewers and listeners. Its primary purpose is to sponsor and produce debates for the United States presidential and vice presidential candidates and to undertake research and educational activities relating to the debates. The organization, which is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) corporation, sponsored all the presidential debates in 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008.

To meet its ongoing goal of educating voters, the CPD is engaged in various activities beyond producing and sponsoring the presidential debates. Its staff prepares educational materials and conducts research to improve the quality of debates.

Further, the CPD provides technical assistance to emerging democracies and others interested in establishing debate traditions in their countries. In recent years, the staff worked with groups from Bosnia, Burundi, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Haiti, Jamaica, Lebanon, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, and the Ukraine, among others. Finally, the CPD coordinates post-debate symposia and research after many of its presidential forums.