



**Ministry of Tourism  
& Trade Development**  
Cayman Islands Government

**CAYMAN ISLANDS**  
GRAND CAYMAN | CAYMAN BRAC | LITTLE CAYMAN

**2026 TOURISM AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME**

**SPEAK-OFF PRELIMINARY VIDEO COMPETITION**

**INFORMATION PACKET**



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## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

As part of our local tourism awareness programme, the Cayman Islands Ministry of Tourism and Trade Development & Department of Tourism will host the 2026 Tourism Speak-Off Competition. The competition is open to students ages 14 to 17 years of age who are currently enrolled in a homeschooling programme or a Cayman Islands secondary school.

The winning student will be designated “Tourism Ambassador” for a period of one year, as part of their prize. The “Tourism Ambassador” may be given the opportunity to take part in suitable tourism activities throughout the year including the Ministry of Tourism and/or Department of Tourism-sponsored events. The 2026 Tourism Ambassador will have the opportunity to represent the Cayman Islands and participate in the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Tourism Youth Congress held in Georgetown, Guyana from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2026.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the competition and the Tourism Ambassador programme are to help develop students’ in-depth knowledge of tourism and the issues which impact the business locally, regionally, and internationally, giving them valuable experiences through their interaction with each other. In addition, students will develop useful communication, reasoning, and public speaking skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

The 2026 Tourism Speak-Off Competition will be conducted in the format of a Board of Directors meeting, where participants will be discussing and responding to topical tourism issues. Each participant’s goal is to persuade each other, the audience, and the panel of judges that their ideas have the greatest merit.

## PROGRAMME GOALS

- To ensure that secondary school students develop an accurate understanding of and respect for the importance of tourism to the country.
- To expose students to the various elements of the tourism product
- To assist students in becoming more involved and aware of Caymanian, Caribbean, and world tourism issues
- To provide support for the Cayman Islands Government’s Human Capital Development goals



## BENEFITS

- Increased awareness of the connections between tourism and other industries
- Greater appreciation of the tourism industry in the Cayman Islands, the Caribbean, and globally
- Enhanced understanding of tourism's importance to the Cayman Islands
- Development of strong communication and public speaking skills
- Strengthened critical-thinking and reasoning abilities
- Improved social confidence and interpersonal skills
- Advancement of language arts and presentation skills

## CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSION

- Must be a student enrolled in a homeschool programme or a Cayman Islands secondary school.
- Must be between 14 and 17 years of age as of 1 October 2026.
- Demonstrates active involvement in academic or extracurricular activities such as debates, general knowledge competitions, or similar programmes.
- Has demonstrated interest in, or knowledge of, tourism and related issues.
- Must not have previously won the Tourism Video Competition or served as Tourism Ambassador.

## OVERVIEW: PRELIMINARY VIDEO COMPETITION RULES & GUIDELINES

- Participants interested in entering the competition must submit a video presentation on one of four (4) topics provided at the end of this document.
- Video presentation must be audible, well-lit, and of good quality.
- Video presentation must be 3 minutes maximum.
- Business or smart school-appropriate attire to be worn in Video Presentation.
- Students' presentations will be judged according to the criteria set out in the Judging Guidelines.

**VIDEO COMPETITION SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MONDAY, MARCH  
23RD, 2026**



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*Note: Finalists will participate in 'Know Your Cayman Islands' training with the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, along with Toastmasters training, prior to the final competition. Finalists will then present at the 2026 Tourism Speak-Off Final event, where the 2026 Tourism Ambassador will be selected.*

## 2026 TOURISM PRELIMINARY VIDEO COMPETITION TOPICS

Students select and present on one of the following topics.

### 1. **The 3 New S's of Caribbean Tourism:**

Sustainable Tourism is defined by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) as “Tourism that makes optimal use of social, natural, cultural and financial resources for national development on an equitable and self-sustaining basis, to provide a unique visitor experience and an improved quality of life through partnerships among government, the private sector and communities.” – One Caribbean, 2020

Traditionally, Caribbean tourism has been centered on Sea, Sun, and Sand. However, modern trends are reshaping the tourism landscape to focus on innovative, sustainable, and inclusive approaches.

***Question:*** *As the Tourism Ambassador, share your thoughts with your peers on three (3) key strategies or innovations that can transform tourism in the Cayman Islands. Focus on effectively integrating smart technologies, ensuring sustainable practices, and promoting social inclusion to enhance the overall visitor experience while benefiting local communities.*

### 2. **Leveraging Heritage Tourism for Development:**

“Encouraging and supporting heritage tourism is one of the best things we can do for Caribbean Island nations. It has positive economic impacts at the grassroots level, establishes and reinforces identity, differentiates you from other islands in the Caribbean, helps to preserve a nation's cultural and historical heritage, and facilitates harmony and understanding amongst peoples.” – Scher, 2022

Heritage tourism refers to travel that centres around experiencing the cultural, historical, and natural treasures of a destination. It involves visiting places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. This type of tourism often includes exploring historical sites, museums, monuments, and traditional events.



**Question:** *As the Cayman Islands Tourism Ambassador, present to your colleagues the Ministry's research on the potential for developing 'Living History Experiences' as a unique tourism product for the Cayman Islands destination. Include three (3) actionable recommendations for implementing or enhancing such experiences.*

**3. Connecting the Caribbean with Sustainable Transport:**

“Sustainable transportation is not just about reducing emissions; it's about creating a resilient and efficient system that supports the economic and social well-being of Caribbean communities.” – Smith et al., 2023

Tourism stakeholders from Caribbean Tourism Organization member countries have emphasized the importance of improving transportation links between destinations to facilitate multi-destination travel. This enhancement can significantly improve the visitor experience and contribute to the growth of the regional economy.

**Question:** *As the Cayman Islands Tourism Ambassador, present to your colleagues a recommendation for an innovative and sustainable transportation option that can be developed or improved to enhance connectivity within the Caribbean region. Outline three (3) key strategies to effectively support and implement your recommendation.*

**4. Digital Transformation in Tourism:**

“Digital transformation is not just about technology; it's about reimagining how we create value for customers and how we can enhance their travel experiences through innovative solutions.” – UNWTO

Digital transformation is revolutionizing the tourism industry, reshaping how businesses operate and how travelers experience their journeys. It involves integrating digital tools into every aspect of tourism - from marketing and booking to customer service and on-the-ground experiences.

**Question:** *As the Cayman Islands Tourism Ambassador, share with your colleagues three (3) technological advancements that your destination's tourism sector has utilized to enhance its unique travel experiences. Highlight the impacts these advancements have had, such as their effects on tourism businesses, local communities and the overall visitor experience.*



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## JUDGING

Participants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Content (40 Points):** Judges will assess the relevance and depth of the content presented, focusing on how well the student addresses the chosen topic. Emphasis will be placed on the clarity, persuasiveness, and evidence of research in the presentation.
2. **Knowledge/Presentation (30 Points):** This category evaluates the students' grasp of the subject matter and their ability to convey it effectively. Judges will consider the clarity of the presentation, the organization of ideas, and the overall coherence of the message.
3. **Creativity (15 Points):** Creativity will be judged based on the originality and depth of thought demonstrated in the presentation. Judges will look for innovative approaches, unique perspectives, and fresh insights into the topic.
4. **Delivery (10 Points):** Students will be evaluated on their oral communication skills, including clarity, fluency, and confidence in delivery. Judges will also consider aspects such as grammar and articulation.
5. **Originality (5 Points):** Entries must be the original work of the student, presented in their own words. Judges will assess the degree of originality, including the incorporation of personal experiences and thoughtful observations



## PRIZES

### 1<sup>st</sup> Place:

- Designated “Cayman Islands Tourism Ambassador” for 1 year.
- Represent the Cayman Islands in a youth ambassador capacity at the 2026 Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Tourism Youth Congress in Georgetown, Guyana
- CI\$1,000
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Trophy
- Two tickets on Cayman Airways (any destination)
- Department of Tourism Gift Bag – Premium Items

### 2nd Place:

- CI\$500
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Trophy
- Two tickets on Cayman Airways (Sister Islands)
- Department of Tourism Gift Bag – Premium Items

### 3rd Place:

- CI\$250
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Trophy
- Gift certificate for Grand Cayman helicopter tour
- Department of Tourism Gift Bag – Standard Items

### 4<sup>th</sup> Place:

- CI\$100
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place Trophy
- Gift Certificate for 2 to a local restaurant
- Department of Tourism Gift Bag – Standard Items



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## IMPORTANT DATES

- April 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026: KYCI Workshop and Toastmasters Training for Finalists (exact dates tbc)
- May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Tourism Ambassador Speak-Off (Final Event)

## CONTACT

Please contact us at [competition@caymanislands.ky](mailto:competition@caymanislands.ky) if you have any questions.