



## Ngā Ture Kōrero – Speech Requirements

- **Language** – Speeches can be delivered in English and/or te reo Māori. Speakers are welcome to speak in other languages as well, so long as this content is repeated in either English or te reo Māori.
- **Length** – Speeches should be around 8 minutes long. Timing signals will be given at 7 and 8 minutes. The judges may take the length of a speech into account if it is very long or very short.
- **Equipment** – Handheld microphones and lecterns are not used. Speeches will be amplified at the national final using a lapel microphone.

## Thoughts on the 2026 Theme from the 2025 Race Unity National Champion

*For me, a metaphor that can capture and amplify the theme is the key to crafting my speech. I am sharing my initial thoughts on a metaphor to spark your creativity.*

Listening is vital. It is at the heart of human connection. And, like our heartbeat, listening is soft and steady. The heart sustains everything we are and everything we do. Listening plays that exact same role in our communities. It is commonly overlooked, but that is where all human connection stems from, right?

We often celebrate the big things, the loud, revolutionary things, but change, unity, true harmony can start with listening. That is like the role our heart has in our body. Replenishing all the amazing parts of our body is the heart - quiet, and steady. Behind the scenes, listening is that quiet act that keeps our communities alive. Just like our heartbeat, let's be honest, we only truly notice its importance when it's no longer there.

Just like us, without our hearts, we cannot sustain ourselves; we will not be alive. Just like that, listening keeps our connections and communities alive.

Another possible metaphor is rhythm and harmony. Listening starts with a pause, turning down my volume to hear your voice. When you really listen, you are letting someone know they matter; they are special, and that their story has a place to belong.

