

THE ETHICS CENTRE

YOUNG WRITERS'
COMPETITION 2026

Presented by



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WHAT DOES AN ETHICAL SOCIETY LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

The Ethics Centre is committed to amplifying young people's perspectives on what an ethical society looks like to them. Our annual writing competition is an exciting chance for young writers to share their ideas with a wide, engaged audience.

The winner of each age category will receive a prize pack valued at \$500, comprising a \$250 cash prize and a \$250 Rhodia voucher. They will also have their essay published digitally by The Ethics Centre.

Two runners-up in each age category will also have their essays published digitally by The Ethics Centre.

The deadline for entries is 1 November 11:59pm.

[APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN](#)

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for exceptional non-fiction writing on a choice of topics, with entry available in two age groups: ages 13-17 and ages 18-29.

The judges will be looking for originality, well-researched perspectives and well-reasoned persuasive arguments. Your voice and style should be engaging, and you should be able to draw out ethical implications or issues from your chosen topic.

You can read the finalists from previous years [here](#).

You are welcome to incorporate first-person perspectives and self-reflection. Charity for alternate views, intellectual humility, and an acknowledgement of and/or responses to counterarguments will be well regarded. You are free to use whatever method of citation you like (bibliography, footnotes, in-text, etc.).

Entries will be judged by a panel of editors and philosophers from The Ethics Centre.



WHAT CAN YOU WRITE ABOUT?

ENTRANTS SHOULD CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ESSAY QUESTIONS:

- What ethical issue is being overlooked today?
- What is an ethical position that you disagree with?
- What ethical view have you changed your mind about?
- What is an ethical issue that is often misunderstood?

ENTRY CRITERIA

- Your submission should be your original work — not be plagiarised or written by AI
- Your submission should not have been previously published publicly (including by other competitions)
- Word limits are 800 words for ages 13–17, and 1200 words for ages 18–29
- Only one entry is permitted per person
- Submissions must be made before 1 November 11:59pm
- Writers must be aged from 13–29 years as of 1 November 11:59pm
- Entrants under 18 will need to permission from a guardian to enter
- Open to Australian residents only
- See previous page for judging criteria



PRIZE DETAILS

THE FIRST PRIZE WINNERS IN EACH AGE GROUP WILL RECEIVE:

- Prize pack valued at \$500, comprising a \$250 cash prize and a \$250 Rhodia voucher
- Digital publication of their essay by The Ethics Centre
- Featured on The Ethics Centre social media channels
- A certificate recognising their achievement
- An invitation to pitch up to three additional articles (as paid contributors) to The Ethics Centre for publication in the following 12 months

TWO RUNNERS-UP IN EACH AGE GROUP WILL RECEIVE:

- Digital publication of their essay by The Ethics Centre
- Featured on The Ethics Centre social media channels
- A certificate recognising their achievement
- An invitation to pitch up to three additional articles (as paid contributors) to The Ethics Centre for publication in the following 12 months

KEY DATES

Applications open now until 1 November 11:59pm.

Winners and runners-up in each category will be announced in early December and published digitally by The Ethics Centre over the following six months

ABOUT THE ETHICS CENTRE

The Ethics Centre is an independent not-for-profit that, for over 30 years, has advocated for a more ethical society. Across all our work, we are motivated by shared goals: to bring people together, create space for transparent conversations, and support the development of a skillset that enables people to live and act according to their values.

We want to facilitate equal opportunity access to ethics, which means making sure that we are conversing with and representing people who are often overlooked. We are committed to developing a range of initiatives that help young people navigate the ethical challenges they face in an increasingly complex world.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Entries must be submitted to this [form](#) by 1 November 11:59pm. Any entries received after this closing time will not be eligible. Only one entry is permitted per person.
- We reserve the right to disqualify any entrants who infringe a third party's intellectual property rights or breach the competition terms and conditions.
- This competition is not open to employees of The Ethics Centre, or their immediate family members.
- Collection, use and distribution of information adheres to The Ethics Centre's privacy policy.
- Winners will be notified by early December via email and announced to The Ethics Centre's email database and social media channels.
- Prizes will be posted; winners must provide their postage address for delivery.
- The prize is not transferable to another person. Vouchers are not exchangeable for cash or any other prize.
- Edits to essays are at discretion of The Ethics Centre editors prior to publication.
- The judges' decision is final.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS, PLEASE EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS@ETHICS.ORG.AU

