

Call for Papers: 2025-2026 Student Essay Contest on Youth Civic Engagement

Hosted by C-Dem and the Centre for the Study of Political Behaviour, University of Western Ontario, and funded by the Max Bell Foundation

C-Dem and the Centre for the Study of Political Behaviour invite submissions for the **2025-2026 Student Essay Contest on Facilitating Youth Civic Engagement**. This national contest is open to **graduate and undergraduate students currently enrolled at a Canadian university**.

We are seeking original research papers that explore innovative approaches, barriers, or strategies related to increasing the civic participation of youth in Canada. Submissions may approach the topic from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including but not limited to political science, sociology, education, media studies, or public policy.

Contest Details:

- **Submission Deadline:** January 16, 2026
- **Winner Announcement:** February 23, 2026
- **Award Presentation & Public Lecture:** March 26, 2026 at the University of Western Ontario

Prizes and Recognition:

- **Two winners** (one undergraduate, one graduate)
- **\$500 cash prize** for each winner
- **Travel and accommodation subsidy** to attend the award ceremony and present their paper at a special reception hosted at Western University
- Winners' papers may be featured in C-Dem and Centre publications or platforms

Eligibility:

- Open to current undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at any Canadian post-secondary institution
- Papers must be original, unpublished, and authored solely by the submitting student

Submission Requirements:

- Academic research paper of **2,500–5,000 words**
- Double-spaced, 12-point font, with appropriate citations
- A separate cover page including: name, institutional affiliation, program and level of study, contact information, and paper title

Submit your paper and cover page as a single PDF to: admin@c-dem.ca

Subject line: *2025-2026 Essay Contest Submission – [Your Name]*

We look forward to your submissions and to celebrating student scholarship on one of the most pressing issues in Canadian democracy.