

2023 Human Asia English Essay Competition

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the 7th Human Rights English Essay Competition. This competition is organized and hosted by Human Asia, and sponsored by the Ministry of Unification of Korea, Ildong Pharmaceuticals, the Jeongam Foundation, and DYPNF.

Human Asia, established in 2006, is an NGO registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea and which is accredited with partner status to the United Nations Department of Global Communications. Human Asia strives to contribute to the establishment of a regional human rights protection mechanism in Asia and to promote the peaceful coexistence between the diverse cultures of Asia by carrying out human rights advocacy and campaigns, offering educational and training programs to nurture young human rights activists, and other activities.

The 2023 English Essay Competition calls for essays on the theme of ‘North Korea and Human Rights’. With growing concerns on human rights violations in North Korea, raising awareness has become crucial for pushing toward the cessation of violations and providing innovative solutions to human rights issues in the country. The role of the international community, and the regional community in particular, is of great importance. Through this competition, we hope to engage the youth of Asian countries in this discussion.

We need your creative insights into how to revive, strengthen, and extend human rights in Asia that are currently threatened by various phenomena such as environmental degradation, the rise in digital authoritarianism, and religious extremism. You may freely discuss a wide range of topics within the broad scope of human rights in connection to North Korea, including, but not limited to, gender equality and minority rights in the country, North Korean refugees abroad, the role of civil society actors and the international community in tackling issues, and human rights institutions and theories. Any new and innovative ideas are greatly welcome.

This competition will provide an excellent opportunity for regional middle and high school students to conduct research and critical thinking in the human rights field. We look forward to your participation and wish you the best of luck.

Changrok Soh
President of Human Asia

1. General Instructions

A. Goals

- The Human Rights English Essay Competition encourages young people to critically examine human rights issues relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ('DPRK', 'North Korea') and develop solutions related to such issues.
- It allows for young people to conduct independent research and critical thinking, producing academic essays in English.
- As an online event, the competition encourages young people from diverse countries to safely come together and combine efforts in tackling human rights-related issues.
- Ultimately, the competition aims to improve human rights sensitivity and social empathy amongst young people in Asia.

B. Main Theme and Guidelines for the Topic

This year's essays competition theme is "North Korea and Human Rights". Essays should delve into the conditions that improve or limit human rights in connection to this theme. The competition welcomes a wide range of topics, including but not limited to the following:

- Human rights violations in North Korea, including issues such as forced disappearances, torture, detention camps and executions.
- The situation of specific rights in North Korea, including social, economic and cultural rights, as well as of gender equality and the rights of specific groups such as persons with disabilities.
- The role of international human rights mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and treaty bodies, in protecting and promoting human rights in North Korea.
- The role of civil society actors, including human rights defenders and the youth, in protecting and promoting human rights in North Korea.
- The role of the international community, including governments and international organizations, in protecting and promoting human rights in North Korea.

Essays are encouraged to include:

- National, regional and/or international mechanisms, policies, and systems that relate to the human rights issues under discussion.

- Logical, critical and/or theoretical arguments based on factual support.
- Creative yet realistic policy and/or legal suggestions related to the topic.

C. Dates and Deadlines

- a) Registration: April 17th, 2023 – August 31st, 2023, 23:59 (KST)
- b) Essay Submission Due Date: August 31st, 2023, 23:59 (KST)
- c) Announcement of Winners: September 15th, 18:00 (KST)
- d) Awards Ceremony: late September (date to be decided), via Zoom

D. Eligibility

- Participants must be between 13 and 18 years of age who are nationals of Asian countries. ‘Asia’ is hereby defined as listed by the UN (<https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups>)
- Winners of previous editions of the Human Rights English Essay Competition are not eligible to apply.

E. Host organization and sponsor

- Host · Organizer: Human Asia
- Sponsors: Ministry of Unification of the Republic of Korea, Ildong Pharmaceuticals, the Jeongam Foundation, DYPNF

2. Guidelines for Submission

A. Submission process:

- Authors must apply to the competition online and submit their final essay via email.
- i) Enter <https://bit.ly/2023essayenglish> to fill out and submit your application via google forms.
- ii) Submit the final essay by email to submit@humanasia.org

Please title your file and email subject “English Essay_YOURNAME.docx”

B. Writing guidelines:

- Essays must be written in English.
- Essays should be of 2,000-3,000 words in length, excluding the title and references, and written in the following format:

Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1.5-line spacing, normal margins.

- In-text citations, references and a complete bibliography should be included. The bibliography and/or footnotes will not count towards the word limit. There is no set referencing style but referencing style must be consistent throughout.
- Essays can be divided into headings/(sub-)sections as necessary.
- All pages must be numbered.
- Titles should concisely and adequately capture the overall content of the essay.

C. Other:

- Only one entry is allowed per person.
- Authors should always cite the sources of their ideas and data. If plagiarism is detected, essays will be rejected without further review and awards will be revoked.
- Awarded essays shall be presented by the author in the awards ceremony and will be posted in Human Asia's website.

3. Evaluation Criteria

- Strong/clear argument. Readers should easily identify the central argument(s) of the essay and the key area(s) of focus.
- Convincing evidence/logic. Key arguments must be supported by factual evidence. Factual claims should appear throughout the essay and be referenced clearly.
- English language skill. Language should be clear, effective, and precise, with proper use of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence construction.
- Originality. Choice of topic, sources, arguments, and proposed solutions should show sophistication and critical thinking.
- Organization. Orderly organization and presentation of ideas, following a logical sequence for reader's comprehension and including section headings if necessary.

- Proper exploration of solutions. Suggested concrete measures to solve human rights issues in the national, regional or international should be outlined in detail.

4. Awards

A panel of experts will select a total of seven essays within the three following ranks and awards. For all awardees, participation and presentation in the ceremony is mandatory.

- First Prize (1 essay): Award Certificate and Scholarship of 1,000,000 KRW
- Second Prize (1 essay): Award Certificate and Scholarship of 500,000 KRW
- Third Prize (5 essays): Award Certificate and Scholarship of 100,000 KRW

5. Contact

For further inquiries, contact the Human Asia Secretariat.

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