



THE QUEEN'S COMMONWEALTH ESSAY COMPETITION 2017

Briefing Note

The Royal Commonwealth Society has been running the Commonwealth Essay Competition since 1883. This schools' international writing contest – the world's oldest – is a highly regarded and popular pan-Commonwealth education project. Each year, the RCS crafts the essay topics so that they will lend themselves to aspects of school curricula and provide opportunities for creative writing. Past winners include Mr Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore and writers Elspeth Huxley and Mei Fong.

In 2015, the flagship programme of the RCS was renamed '[The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition](#)', in honour of HM Queen Elizabeth II's role as both Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the Royal Commonwealth Society. The Competition is run in partnership with [Cambridge University Press](#), which is a sponsor. For 2017 the theme is *A Commonwealth for Peace*, with topics encouraging young people to reflect on the Commonwealth as a network of and for democracy, tolerance and consensus.



From left: 2016 winners Tan Wan Gee, Esther Mungalaba and Gauri Kumar with HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

The Essay Competition gives nationals and residents of all Commonwealth countries and territories aged 18 and under an opportunity to express their views about the world, share their dreams for the future and develop their creative writing skills. Participants continue to demonstrate their ability to stimulate and provoke discussions about important issues like poverty, sustainable development, gender inequality and universal education.

Categories

Junior Category (under 14s)

Junior Prize Winner
Junior Runner up
Gold Awards
Silver Awards
Bronze Awards

Senior Category (Aged 14-18)

Senior Prize Winner
Senior Runner up
Gold Awards
Silver Awards
Bronze Awards

Prizes

- Winners flown to London for a week of activities and an Award Ceremony
- Publication of the winning entries on the RCS website and in the Commonwealth Voices magazine
- Downloadable Certificates for every participant and school

Review of 2016 in numbers

- Approximately 13,500 entries
- Nearly every Commonwealth country
- 133 judges from across the Commonwealth
- 10 Final Panel judges and 1 Chair

Aims and Objectives for 2017

- At least 15,000 entries
- Participation from all Commonwealth countries
- More diversity in the schools and individuals participating
- More in-country media coverage to celebrate young people's achievements



Students at Kulachi Hansraj Model School celebrate their success.

Promotion of the Competition

The RCS promotes The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition throughout the year. Circulating, relaying and sharing information about the competition is welcome and provides an opportunity to celebrate a success story in your country.

The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition has its own Social Media accounts on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Both can be found using the handle [@CWEssayComp](#).

We will also be publicising the competition on RCS Social Media using [#CWEssayComp](#). RCS can be found on Twitter [@TheRCSLondon](#) and Facebook [@thercs](#).

Suggested Messaging: Facebook

Calling all citizens and residents of the Commonwealth aged 18 and under! The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition wants to hear your thoughts on 'A Commonwealth for Peace'. Learn more about the theme, topics, guidelines and prizes at bit.ly/1MSQp3f.

Suggested Messaging: Twitter

What does A #Commonwealth for Peace mean to you? Have your voice heard w/The Queen's @CWEssayComp bit.ly/1MSQp3f @TheRCSLondon #Commonwealth4Peace

Timeline of the Competition

Dates	Events	Key activity
September 2016 – 1 st May 2017	From the launch to the submission deadline	Promotion of the competition and submission of entries
1 st May 2016 – Beginning of August 2017	From the submission deadline to the announcement of the results	Judging of the entries
Beginning of August 2017 – October 2017	From the announcement of the results to the Award Ceremony	London Winners' Week and Award Ceremony, launch of new competition

If you would like more information on the competition or have questions, please contact Anja Nielsen, Programmes Officer at the RCS. Email: anja.nielsen@thercs.org | Tel: +44 (0)20 3727 4306