

# SCIENCE ESSAY COMPETITION 2017



THE RUSSIAN WRITING CENTERS CONSORTIUM IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE THEME FOR THE SCIENCE ESSAY COMPETITION 2017 IS **SCIENCE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

We are asking young scientists to look back over some of the scientific breakthroughs of the past and consider what discoveries and inventions will advance science, engineering, and innovation throughout the world for the benefit of all people in the future.

By taking part in the Competition, you will inspire the next generation of scientists, gain invaluable writing skills, and meet amazing like-minded people. Importantly, you will also become part of an increasingly exciting network of scientists able to clearly and imaginatively explain their science to the general public.

We look forward to your participation!

**THE COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS AGED 18–30**

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ESSAYS IS 14 APRIL 2017**

**THE RESULTS OF THE COMPETITION WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON 10 MAY 2017**

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

You are kindly requested to meet **all** the requirements.

1. The maximum word count is **950** words. (Exceeding the word count will result in automatic disqualification.)
2. Essays should be written in English.
3. Only one essay per entrant is allowed. Once an essay is submitted, students will not have the opportunity to revise it. Please carefully check and improve your writing before submitting the final copy, and also ensure that all supplementary information is filled in correctly (name, contact details)
4. Plagiarism: Every year a number of students are disqualified because they are suspected of plagiarism.
5. The final copy submitted for the competition must be the entrant's own work, and cannot be excessively corrected or improved by another person. This does not rule out input or assistance from others. However, an entry will be disregarded if there is any suggestion of excessive external help.
6. Essays can only be uploaded as a **Microsoft Word document (.doc / .docx)** or in **PDF format (.pdf)**. Note: if we are unable to find or open your essay file (either through an incorrect format or upload error), your entry may not be counted in the competition.
7. All entries must be submitted before midnight (BST) on **14th April 2017** to the following email address: **russianwcc@gmail.com**
8. You will be given a reference number when you submit your essay.

## PRIZES

The overall national winner will get the unique opportunity to publish his/her essay in the **New York Times**. See examples [topics.nytimes.com/top/news/science/columns/essay/index.html](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/science/columns/essay/index.html)

**The winner and 5 runners-up will travel to the US to visit some of the best universities.**



The winners and the runners-up of the Competition will attend our Research Writing master classes on 1–3 June 2017 in Moscow. The master classes, run by some of the best science writers, will help the participants develop scientific writing skills so that they could write a publishable research paper ready for submission to an international peer-reviewed scholarly journal.

## JUDGING

The competition is not an exam with entrants expected to meet a number of specific requirements; rather, the competition is an opportunity for creativity and high quality discursive writing.

Judges come from a wide variety of backgrounds and offer a diverse range of skills and experience. Mostly, they are tutors working in well-established writing centers at leading North American universities. This is an opportunity for them to read written pieces from students from Russia and participate in international collaboration.

In return for their time and effort, judges have the satisfaction of making a vital contribution to the promotion of the best examples of science writing and science popularization. In addition to this, all judges receive a personalized certificate of recognition of their participation, and the most active judge receives unlimited access to all NYTimes.com content.

## PARTNERS

English Language Office, U.S. Embassy Moscow  
Russian Writing Centers

PLEASE SEND YOUR ESSAYS TO **RUSSIANWCC@GMAIL.COM**

## THE SCIENCE ESSAY: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

For an essay you will be expected to read widely about the topic, select the best references, and then write a careful critical analysis. Your essay should introduce the topic, discuss it, and lead to a logical conclusion. The essay should have a title page, introduction, body with appropriate section headings, conclusion, and list of references.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION
Title Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays your name</li> <li>• states what the essay is about</li> </ul>
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• places the question in its scientific context</li> <li>• gives the minimum necessary background for the topic</li> <li>• states the thesis statement</li> <li>• sets out the interpretation of the topic</li> <li>• defines important technical terms</li> <li>• outlines how you intend to approach the topic</li> </ul>
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• makes clear the logical development of the subject matter</li> <li>• states what led you to your point of view</li> <li>• uses relevant information to support the argument</li> <li>• references all sources of information including tables and figures</li> </ul>
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a brief restatement of the purpose of the essay</li> <li>• summarises the main points made in the body of the essay</li> <li>• states your conclusions clearly and concisely</li> <li>• sets out your reasons for your conclusions</li> <li>• indicates limitations of the study if appropriate</li> <li>• indicates suggestions for future research if appropriate</li> </ul>
List of References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lists all references cited in the text</li> </ul>

CATEGORY	4 (above standards)	3 (meets standards)	2 (approaching standards)	1 (below standards)
Content	Good coverage of the topic with clear evidence of original input. The main message is very clearly communicated.	Good coverage of the topic, some original ideas. The main message is clearly communicated.	Satisfactory coverage of the topic, some ideas are not on the topic.	The topic is not quite fully covered, the message is not communicated.
Support for topic	All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.
Evidence and examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the topic.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the topic.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the topic.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.
Sequencing	Arguments and support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy and interesting to follow the author's train of thought.	Arguments and support are provided in a fairly logical order that makes it reasonably easy to follow the author's train of thought.	A few of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem a little confusing.	Many of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem very confusing.