

The Center for International Private Enterprise announces the
2007 International Essay Competition:
Engaging Youth in Reform

The Center for International Private Enterprise invites young people to share their ideas on how to create opportunities for youth to strengthen democracy and the private sector in their own countries.

Eligibility: Students and young professionals aged 18-30

Contest Deadline: May 31, 2007

Essay Length: 2,000 - 4,000 words

The three winning essays from each category will be published as *Economic Reform Feature Service* articles.

A \$1,000 honorarium will be given for each winning essay.

See attached guidelines for more information or visit www.cipe.org/essay

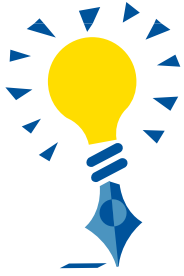
For more information about the Center for International Private Enterprise, please visit www.cipe.org.

Topics:

- Citizenship in a Democratic Society
- Educational Reform and Employment Opportunities
- Entrepreneurship and Leadership

Please see guidelines for detailed questions about these topics





The Center for International Private Enterprise announces the

2007 Essay Competition Guidelines: Engaging Youth in Reform

Young people can be a powerful force for change! As future reformers, young people (18-30) have innovative ideas on how to solve the political, economic, and social problems facing their countries. However, they often lack the voice to bring these ideas to policymakers. Simply, young people are often regarded as recipients of reforms, not active participants in the reform process.

CIPE's essay contest gives you the opportunity to share your ideas about citizenship, democratic and market-oriented reform, youth leadership, and the ways that your country can create avenues for youth to participate in the political and economic spheres. We encourage you to get thinking, get involved, and use your own experiences to develop concrete solutions to these development issues.

Eligibility

Open to students and young professionals aged 18-30. Special weight will be given to essays submitted by citizens of non-OECD countries.

Top Essays

In each category, a first, second, and third place winner will be chosen by a panel of CIPE staff and international partners. The three winning essays from each category will be published as *Economic Reform Feature Service* articles. **CIPE will provide each of the nine winners an honorarium of \$1,000.**

Topic Categories

1. Citizenship in a Democratic Society

What needs to be done to develop a sense of citizenship in young people and help them find their role in a democratic society?

True reform occurs only when citizens actively participate in the governance process – it can't be achieved by street protests alone. Young people are an integral part of society and their input and participation in their countries' governance is necessary to effect political and economic reform. However, many lack the skills and opportunity to communicate with policymakers and get involved in their country's development. Youth are often disengaged from the political process and rarely develop the sense of citizenship that is so crucial to building an inclusive, participatory democracy. To become active citizens in their countries, young people must have the skills to develop their ideas on reform and outlets to express those ideas in a constructive manner. What does citizenship mean to you? How are citizenship and good governance connected? How can your country engage and enable young people to participate constructively in the governance process? **Be sure to begin your essay by describing the situation in your country.**

2. Educational Reform and Employment Opportunities

How can your country reform the educational system to give young people the right skills and opportunities to enter the workforce?

In many countries, the youth unemployment rate is very high. In some countries, this is caused by a lack of jobs. However, in many others, young people entering the workforce are not prepared for the jobs available – they lack the necessary skills and education. Unable to find good jobs, they face a difficult choice: remain unemployed or accept low-paying jobs with no opportunity for advancement. Improving the educational systems of many countries is a key step towards creating a generation of young people who possess the skills and knowledge to participate in the economy, locally and globally. What are the major employment problems young people face in your country? What can be done to give them the right skills and opportunities to enter the workforce? Who should be taking the lead in doing so? **Be sure to begin your essay by describing the situation in your country.**

3. Entrepreneurship and Leadership

What needs to be done in your country to provide youth with the opportunity to become entrepreneurs and/or leaders in their communities?

Young people can play a positive role in the political and economic spheres in their countries, on both local and national levels. Unfortunately they often lack access to the resources and groups that would help them get involved and have an impact. However, when provided with the opportunity and skills to become influential members of their communities, youth can accomplish their goals. What are the skills that young people need to acquire to start a successful business or civil society group? What are the major barriers that prevent them from opening a business or assuming a leadership position in your country? What programs or policies would give youth the skills to become active and influential members of society? **Be sure to begin your essay by describing the situation in your country.**

For readings that address these topics, visit CIPE's youth web site: www.cipe.org/essay

Judging Criteria

Essays will be judged on clarity, originality, and their contribution to the understanding of development issues facing countries. The logic of the ideas expressed is more important than perfect English grammar.

Judges: Essays will be evaluated by a panel of judges comprising CIPE staff and CIPE's international partners.

Formatting Guidelines

- All essays must be written in English.
- All essays must be original and unpublished.
- Word count: 2,000-4,000.
- Indicate which topic category you chose on the cover page.
- Provide full contact info on the cover page, including citizenship.

Deadline

All essays must be submitted by [May 31, 2007](#).

How to Submit

- E-mail a copy of the essay as a .pdf file or MS Word document to essay@cipe.org.
- An e-mail will be sent confirming receipt of the submission.

About CIPE

The Center for International Private Enterprise is a non-profit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy. CIPE has supported more than 1,000 local initiatives in over 100 developing countries, involving the private sector in policy advocacy and institutional reform, improving governance, and building understanding of market-based democratic systems.

CIPE maintains that countries need to build market-oriented and democratic institutions simultaneously, as they are essentially two sides of the same coin. Without a functioning market system, democracies will remain weak. Likewise, without a democratic process, economic reforms are unlikely to succeed.

For more information about CIPE, please visit www.cipe.org.

Note: Winning essays and other essays of merit will be considered for publication as Economic Reform Feature Service articles. Some articles may be translated into Arabic, Russian, Spanish, or French.

The Feature Service is CIPE's online and electronic article distribution service. It provides in-depth articles designed for a network of policymakers, business leaders, civic reformers, scholars, and others interested in the issues relating to economic reform and its connection to democratic development. Before publication, all authors will be contacted by CIPE and provided with a proof of the article for approval.



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