

## Istanbul Rotary Club 2nd Essay Competition on International Peace

### Purpose Statement

The **Istanbul Rotary Club Essay Competition** is the second edition of the competition initiated for the launch of International Rotary Peace Center at Bahçeşehir University and Presidential Peace Conference of Rotary International in Istanbul in 2025. Our purpose is to foster thoughtful discourse and critical thinking among young individuals aged **14 to 19**. By inviting participants from various countries, we seek to create a global platform for sharing ideas, perspectives and solutions related to **international peace**.

### Essay Prompt

“A Gateway to Peace: An Education-Based Roadmap Shaped by Youth”

Education is a powerful instrument for cultivating peace and sustaining it across all levels of society, from individuals to the entire World.

In this international essay competition, high school students are invited to explore how education can contribute to the development of a lasting culture of peace. Participants are expected to identify three key educational areas that they believe should be prioritized in the high school curriculum to strengthen peace-oriented values and practices.

Based on their own experience, reflection and research on the topic, they should support their view, clarify in what ways the chosen areas support cognitive, emotional, and ethical competencies of the youth to enhance peace in the World. Essays are encouraged to adopt a structured approach, offering well-reasoned perspectives on the transformative potential of education in promoting peace.

### Guiding Principles

- Originality:** We value fresh insights and creative thinking. Participants are encouraged to identify three key educational areas that they believe should be prioritized in the high school curriculum to strengthen peace-oriented values and practices. Based on their own experience, reflection and research on the topic, they should support their view, clarify in what ways the chosen areas support cognitive, emotional, and ethical competencies of the youth to enhance peace in the World. Essays are encouraged to adopt a structured approach, offering well-reasoned perspectives on the transformative potential of education in promoting peace
- Inclusivity:** The competition is open to all eligible individuals, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or background. We believe that diverse voices contribute to a richer dialogue.
- Expert Evaluation:** Our esteemed **Selection Committee**, comprising experts in international relations, will rigorously assess the essays. Their expertise ensures a fair and insightful evaluation process. The composition of this committee will be determined by the board of **Istanbul Rotary Club**.
- Youth Empowerment:** By engaging young writers, we empower them to be advocates for peace. Their words have the potential to shape policies, influence minds, and ignite positive change.

## Timeline

- **Announcement:** December 2025
- **Submission Deadline:** February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- **Announcement of Winners:** April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- **Prize Ceremony:** May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

## Participation:

All students and Interactors born between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 are eligible to join the competition.

## Recognition and Award

- **First Winner:** A monetary award of 3,000 USD.
- **Second Winner:** A monetary award of 2,000 USD.
- **Third Winner:** A monetary award of 1,000 USD.
- The winners are invited to Türkiye for the Prize Ceremony. Flight tickets and accommodation for the winners and 1 respective parent will be provided by the club.

## Prize Ceremony:

On 16-19 May 2026, the annual conference of Rotary District 2420 including İstanbul Rotary Club will be held in Antalya (attended by Rotary governors of Turkey, presidents and members of Rotary clubs and guests). The prize ceremony will be held during this conference, on May 18th, 2026.

## Essay Requirements

- **Word Limit:** Essays must be **500 words or less** in the English language. The word count does not include the email address or essay title.
- **Format:** Essays should be typed and submitted in **PDF** format, double-spaced text.
- **Originality:** Essays must be **original and unpublished**.
- **Content Guidelines:** Essays containing hate speech, social, racial, or sexual discrimination will be **disqualified**. External content should be identified as a citation. AI generated essays will not be accepted.
- **Privacy:** Compliance with **GDPR** is essential.

## Essay Submission

- **Submission Deadline: February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026**
- The completed essay in PDF-format to be submitted to the following email address: [PeaceEssay@istanbulrotary.org](mailto:PeaceEssay@istanbulrotary.org)
- For inquiries and updates, visit the İstanbul Rotary Club website or contact us via email: [PeaceEssay@istanbulrotary.org](mailto:PeaceEssay@istanbulrotary.org)

**Together, let's write a future where peace prevails.**

**Prof. Dr. Uğur Haklar**

**President 2025-2026, İstanbul Rotary Club**