

EDITORIAL

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Cite this: *RSC Sustainability*, 2023, **1**, 10

DOI: 10.1039/d2su90002e

rsc.li/rscsus

Call for essays

The International Organization for Chemical Sciences in Development (IOCD), in collaboration with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), is launching an annual essay competition on the role of the chemical sciences in sustainability. The competition is open globally to entrants under 35 years of age. The theme for the 2023 competition is:

How can the chemical sciences lead the stewardship of the Earth's element resources?

Essays will be grouped into seven regions for shortlisting and selection of winners, based on the entrant's country of normal residence. Each regional winner will receive a prize of US\$500 and their entries will be published in *RSC Sustainability*. The shortlisted essays will be collected in an annual compendium, *Young Voices in the Chemical Sciences for Sustainability*, published as a PDF online and available on IOCD's website. Individual shortlisted entries will also be featured from time to time on IOCD's website. The seven regional groupings are:

- East Asia & Pacific
- Europe & Central Asia
- Latin America & Caribbean
- Middle East & North Africa
- South Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- USA and Canada



1. Theme: Broad flexibility will be applied in assessing the approach taken by entrants to framing the theme, which might be addressed, for example, through (but not limited to) contexts such as those related to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, ongoing international negotiations related to specific challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss or plastics pollution, or critical resource shortages. Whatever framing of the problem is adopted, essays will be judged on how well they highlight the importance of scientific approaches grounded in the chemical sciences for solving sustainability challenges. Entrants are encouraged to take a broad, global perspective, including reflecting on the intersection of science, society and policy aspects, rather than to describe a particular scientific advance in great technical detail.

2. Essay constraints and timelines: Essays must not exceed 1500 words of main text. Literature references to indicate sources and Tables or Figures may be included, in excess of the limit of 1500 words. However, the essay itself should be self-explanatory without requiring further background reading. Entries will initially be screened for compliance with

competition rules (including entrant's age, word count, relevance to the set theme, absence of plagiarism) and then reviewed for short-listing. Eligibility is limited to entrants who are under 35 years of age on the submission deadline day of 31 March 2023. The aim is for selection of shortlisted candidates to be completed by mid-May and the seven regional finalists determined by mid-June.

3. Prizes: The regional winners of the annual competition will each receive a cash prize of US\$500 from IOCD and a Winner's Certificate and their entries will be published by the RSC in its journal *RSC Sustainability*. The regional shortlisted competitors will each receive a Finalist's Certificate and their entries will be published by IOCD in the annual compendium, *Young Voices in the Chemical Sciences for Sustainability*. At intervals throughout the year, IOCD will select one of the shortlisted essays and feature the text and author's profile on IOCD's website.

4. Submissions: Essays must be submitted in English as a Word document, not later than midnight GMT on 31 March 2023 to essay@iocd.org accompanied by a completed Entry Form, which will be made available on IOCD's website: <http://www.iocd.org>.

