

GUIDELINES FOR THE FIFTH ANNUAL NATIONAL STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

I. Background

Inspired by the [Blueprint 2020](#) vision for the federal public service, the National Student Paper Competition was launched to engage students on the issues facing the public service. In recent years, the Competition has expanded to address broader questions of public service renewal and public policy. We are currently inviting Master's and doctoral students to contribute innovative ideas and new perspectives in support of better outcomes for Canadians.

II. Topics for 2017–2018

For its fifth year, the Competition is inviting submissions from Master's and PhD students in fields such as public administration, international relations, public policy, business, management, health administration, law and journalism as well as disciplines in the social sciences, humanities and applied sciences.

Submissions should address one or both of two broad questions:

1. What are your ideas to help ensure that the public service will be ready to meet the needs of the future?

- You may choose a topic already identified as a public service priority, such as diversity, experimentation, evidence-based policy making, results and delivery, mental health and recruitment. For additional topic ideas, we encourage you to review documents that set formal public service-wide priorities or objectives, such as the [Clerk's Twenty-Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada](#). These documents can typically be found on the websites or web pages of the [Privy Council Office](#) and [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat](#). You are also welcome to propose new topics that you think are relevant to meeting the future needs of the federal public service.
- If you are uncertain what aspects of your topic to address in your paper, you may wish to think it through from different perspectives. For example, there may be implications related to areas such as leadership, management, the workplace, the workforce, business processes, tools, technology, networking, engagement, collaboration, culture, values, governance, accountability and so on.

2. What are your ideas to advance the government's forward objectives?

- You can choose a topic already identified in government documents, such as Open and Transparent Government, Skills and Innovation, A Clean Environment and Strong Economy, Security and Opportunity, and Diversity. For additional topic ideas, we encourage you to review key government documents such as the [Speech](#)

[from the Throne](#) and the [Annual Budget](#), or identify emerging topics of current interest (e.g. digital government, inclusiveness, and so on).

- If you are uncertain what aspects of your topic to address in your paper, you may wish to think it through from different perspectives. For example, there may be implications related to areas such as policy, program or service design, development, implementation, delivery and/or measurement; regulation, inspection and/or enforcement; and so on.

Whatever the content of your final paper, remember that it will be assessed against four criteria: originality, research, relevance and clarity (below). A video and presentation will also be considered in the identification of the Grand Prize winner from among five finalists.

III. Participation Rules and Process

A. Eligibility

Participants must be enrolled in a Canadian university Master's or PhD program in at least one academic term during the 2017 calendar year on a full- or part-time basis.

B. Rules for Papers

1. Papers must be submitted in either English or French.
2. Papers can be submitted by a single author or co-authored (maximum of two people).
3. Papers can be new or adapted from previous original course work.
4. Papers must be a maximum of 1,500 words, following either an essay or a briefing note format. The total length does not include the cover page, bibliography, footnotes/endnotes, appendices or any charts and figures.
5. Papers must be submitted in **all** of the following three formats:
 - PDF (formatted with cover page including title, author, word count, university and author's university program);
 - MS Word (identical content to PDF version); and
 - MS Word (cover page with name of paper and word count only, omitting author's name and university).

C. University Participation

A competition coordinator for each participating university department must register through the IPAC website by October 13, 2017. To avoid conflict with exam schedules, coordinators are encouraged to identify a deadline in November 2017 for student submissions. University coordinators must submit their department's top three papers through the IPAC website by December 10, 2017.

Multiple competition coordinators may register for each university to represent different departments.

D. Student Participation

Professors may assign the paper as part of their graded coursework. Students are also invited to write papers independently.

Students must submit their papers to their university coordinator by the submission deadline that will be posted on the IPAC website.

Students interested in participating in the competition should contact the director or dean of their department, school or faculty to seek support and ask that a university coordinator be identified for the Competition if one hasn't already been identified.

IV. Assessment

A. Papers will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Originality

- Contributes to new knowledge and understanding.

Research

- Demonstrates critical thinking and analysis and looks beyond the obvious.
- Draws from diverse sources of academic research and/or government publications.
- Includes complete citations for research and follows a consistent style for references.

Relevance

- Is forward-looking and aligned with one or both of the two key questions provided above under Topics (Section II).
- Advances timely and pertinent ideas, practices or approaches.
- Demonstrates potential practical application.

Clarity

- Is well written with a logical sequence of ideas.
- Is succinct, cogent and free from typos and grammatical errors.

B. Videos – to be produced only by the five finalists

- Videos will be assessed on originality, content quality, the student's presentation skills and the clarity of their message.

C. Live presentations by web-conference – the five finalists give a presentation to a deputy minister panel that selects the Grand Prize winner(s).

- Students will be assessed on their presentation skills, their ability to defend ideas and their ability to think on their feet.

V. Public Voting Process (for papers and videos)

Finalists' papers and videos will be featured on IPAC's National Student Paper Competition website, where visitors will be invited to vote for the "Public Choice Award."

VI. Prizes and Recognition

The five finalists' submissions will be translated and posted on the Canada School of Public Service's website and highlighted on the IPAC website.

The submission with the most votes will be highlighted with a "Public Choice Award" on the IPAC site.

The Grand Prize winner will receive the following:

- an offer for a four-month paid placement in the federal public service¹;
- a certificate to recognize their accomplishment;
- an invitation to attend the 2018 Manion Lecture in the National Capital Region (NCR); and
- an opportunity to present their paper on a national platform (round-trip travel costs, if applicable, will be reimbursed for the winner(s) and their university coordinator).

¹ The staffing process will be handled by the department hosting the placement.