

SIXTH NATIONAL STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION 2019-2020

Submission Guidelines

What is the National Student Paper Competition?

Each year Canadian students in Masters and PhD programs are invited to submit their research papers on issues that impact the Canadian Public Service and service excellence for Canadians.

The National Student Paper Competition is open to **all faculties**. Past years of the competition have drawn the interest of students across a variety of disciplines (where they have a focus on public administration, public policy, political science, business management and other domains) who bring forward ideas which challenge and expand how our government supports Canadians. Participants are encouraged to focus on developments and new methods in their field. As well, the competition seeks research papers on new developments in evolving fields such as:

- artificial intelligence, gig economies and economic displacement;
- Indigenous relationships in the 21st century and new models of self-government;
- implications of the Cannabis Act, the Indigenous Languages Act, the Accessibility Act, and other new and potential legislation on the lives of Canadians;
- new approaches to national infrastructure, procurement, and project management;
- regulation, security, privacy, and infrastructure integrity in a digital world;
- trust in government, transparency, accountability, and new media landscapes;
- energy strategies, renewable technology, and environmental research
- policy effectiveness and equity – the current state of peer-reviewed research, use of new evidence, big data, and Gender-Based Analysis Plus.

This competition is administered through the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) and is implemented by various university coordinators across the country.

How does it work?

The competition is designed to work within academia to build a platform for interesting and innovative ideas from students on topics related to governance and Canada's Public Service. It relies on partners within universities, with the University Competition Coordinators evaluating papers submitted from students at their university (or in their faculty) as the first step.

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

Students interested in participating should contact the director or dean of their department, school or faculty to seek support and confirm that a university coordinator has been identified for the Competition.

University Competition coordinators must register through the IPAC website by November 30th 2018, and will be responsible for submitting papers by February 12th, 2019.

To avoid conflict with exam schedules, coordinators are encouraged to identify an earlier deadline through December to January for student submissions. University coordinators will then submit their department's top three papers through the IPAC website by February 12th 2019.

A university may be represented by multiple coordinators if that university plans to be represented by different departments or faculties.

After all submissions are assessed, the students selected as the five finalists will be instructed to prepare a presentation about their research paper.

Who is eligible to apply?

Participants must be enrolled in a Masters or PhD program at a Canadian university in at least one academic term during the 2018 calendar year on a full or part-time basis.

How does this initiative support students?

All participants are given a platform for their ideas, and the top 20 are given the opportunity for their papers and resumes to be posted on GCconnex, the internal public service network, which can lead to networking opportunities for the students. The primary benefit for student participants is the chance to have their work vetted, early in their career, by high-level public servants and academics working directly in their field of interest.

What are the prizes?

Following adjudication and scoring, the writers of the top five papers will be given the opportunity to present their paper and ideas to a panel of deputy ministers for discussion and feedback. This panel of deputy ministers will then select the Grand Prize winner(s).

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 Grand Prize winner(s) will receive the following;

- a paid opportunity to work directly within government on a casual contract or term assignment (4 months, during the period of May 2018 to March 2019 as determined by the hosting federal Government Organization or Department¹).
- a certificate to recognize their accomplishment;
- an invitation to attend the Manion Lecture in the National Capital Region (Ottawa) or another applicable keystone event;
- 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).

How does this initiative support Universities?

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

As institutions of higher learning, universities are given the opportunity to promote their future alumni, and create links directly with the public service.

How does this initiative support the Federal Government?

The National Student Paper Competition has several key benefits to the Canadian public service:

1. Sharing of ideas related to federal government objective, priorities, issues and initiatives
2. The opportunity to employ motivated, highly-qualified candidates
3. A chance to showcase the excellence of Canadian students
4. The opportunity to network with the next generation of thinkers

What are the government's current priorities?

Students are encouraged to review documents published on Canada.ca that identify public service-wide priorities or objectives, to examine various departmental plans and reports, to peruse Ministerial mandate letters, and to reflect on the Clerk's Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada. Additional relevant documents for a Canadian government perspective may be found on the websites of the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Which broad considerations should be included in the submissions?

Topics: While determining a research topic, a student may consider the following questions:

1. What are your ideas to help ensure that the Public Service will be ready to meet the needs of the future?
2. What are the major social, economic, technological and/or environmental challenges facing Canada in the next decade, and which strategies should Canada pursue to address these?
3. Which emerging topics will have a significant impact on the federal public service and service excellence for Canadians?

This should be a forward-looking, think piece that explores innovative ideas and approaches to help position Canada and Canadians for the coming decade.

What themes are particularly relevant for this sixth session of the NSPC?

Students are encouraged to focus their work on one of the following themes or any combination herein:

- Digital government
- Project management
- Indigenous relationships

- Respect in the workplace (Including Mental Health)
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Data and Policy; including Gender-based Analysis Plus

How will submissions be assessed?

Each submission will be assessed by experienced adjudicators including an academic, a practitioner in the field of the paper, and an executive within of the public service. The academic reviews the submission with a conceptual and theoretical perspective; the practitioner reviews the submission with a practical and applicable perspective; and the senior public servant (at an EX-level) reviews the submission with a higher-level, whole-of-government perspective.

Papers will be assessed against four criteria: originality, research, relevance, and structure, including communication and clarity.

Originality

- Contributes to new knowledge and understanding of their topic.
- Takes a unique perspective to, or dimension of, an issue for Canadians.
- Proposes innovative approaches and solutions to new and existing challenges for Canada.

Research

- 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 three key questions provided above under broad considerations.
- Identifies the importance of the selected topic as well as the key drivers, and provides timely and pertinent ideas, practices, or approaches.
- Demonstrates potential practical application.

Structure, communication and clarity

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

Live presentations by web-conference will be assessed based on the following criteria.

Each of the five finalists will have their presentation assessed to determine the Grand Prize winner.

Students will be assessed on their presentation skills, their ability to defend ideas, their ability to think on their feet, and the content and clarity of their presentations.

How do you apply?

Students interested in submitting a paper should engage their university coordinator on the website [here](#) early in the fall semester.

How should the submission be structured?

- Papers must be submitted in either English or French;
- Papers may be submitted by a single author or co-authored (maximum of two authors);
- Papers may be new works or adapted from previous original course work;
- Papers must be a maximum of 1,500 words, following an essay format;
- The total length does not include the cover page, bibliography, footnotes/endnotes, appendices or any charts and figures;
- 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).