



# The 2026 Brandon Langhjelm Essay Contest

## Criteria and Guidelines

Please review your eligibility for the contest and follow all the guidelines in this document. Essays that violate these guidelines may be disqualified.

### **Eligibility**

- Contestants must be Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or be able to provide proof of immigration status.
- Contestants must be aged 15-25 at the time of the contest deadline. Age verification will be required for all winning contestants.
- The Justice Centre will not accept submissions from its directors, employees, representatives, or their immediate family and household members.

### **Length**

- Essays should be at least 1,200 words but should not exceed 1,500 words.
- The word count does not apply to footnotes or the bibliography.
- The word count must be included in the submitted document.

### **Formatting**

- Essay should contain a title page that includes (1) the essay title, (2) word count, and (3) submission date
- Essays should not contain any personal, identifying information about the contestant (e.g., their name, email address, or gender). Essays containing such information will be disqualified
- Essays should contain a clearly marked (1) introduction, (2) body (and/or body subheadings), (3) conclusion, and (4) bibliography.
- Essays should be double-spaced with (a minimum of) one-inch margins
- Any font is acceptable (Times New Roman is preferred)
- Essay should be submitted in PDF format

## Sources

- Essays should use a variety of sources – academic journals, news sources, magazines, books, government documents, or publications from think tanks and research organizations.
- At least three of the cited materials should be primary sources (i.e., not a second-hand account of a primary source).
- General non-academic encyclopedias (including Wikipedia) are not acceptable sources. Any citations to general encyclopedias in the footnotes or bibliography will result in deductions.
- Expert-reviewed and specialized encyclopedias such as the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (SEP), Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (REP), and Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (IEP) are good as secondary sources.
- If you are unsure if your source is acceptable, it is best to exclude it.

## Citations

- Contestants must submit an original essay. By submitting an essay, contestants acknowledge that the material is original and their own.
- All sources should be properly cited. (The Justice Centre has no citation style preference. However, whatever style is used must be used consistently and properly.)
- Essays that contain plagiarism (use someone else's work without properly citing them) will be automatically disqualified.
- Essays will also be monitored for the use of AI. Essays that were generated with AI will be automatically disqualified.