



**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF  
INFORMATION AND CULTURE**

**AFLON DIGITAL  
ACADEMY, KUJE - ABUJA.**

Radio House, Herbert Macaulay Way (South), P.M.B. 247 Garki, Abuja.

Website: [www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016](http://www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016); E-mail: [essay2016@aflon.edu.ng](mailto:essay2016@aflon.edu.ng); [facebook.com/FMINigeria](https://www.facebook.com/FMINigeria)

## **2016 National Essay Competition among Secondary School Students in Nigeria**

**Federal Ministry of Information (FMI)** in conjunction with **Aflon Digital Academy, Kuje, Abuja (AFLON)** hereby announce for the benefit of senior secondary school students, their principals and proprietors, a national online essay competition with the theme: 'Life and living in Nigeria.' The programme is in part to commemorate the Children's Day Event for 2016

### **Background Information**

---

The novelist Chukwuemeka Ike wrote variously about the way the Nigerian society was during the period 1960 to 1980. For example: **Toads for Supper** (1965), which was set in a fictitious Nigerian university and dealt with love and the inherent problems that married couples from different ethnic backgrounds encountered; **The Naked Gods** (1970), which highlighted the corrupt practices in the then process for the appointment of vice-chancellors also at fictitious Songhai University; and then **Expo '77** (1980), in which secondary school students trying to gain admission to the university cheated in entrance examinations. All these novels graphically highlighted the way we were in those early years.

In 2016, essays are hereby requested is to be written about "**Life and Living Nigeria**" of today: to also highlight the joys and pains of daily living and how it affects everyone, especially among children growing up in contemporary Nigeria. We seek practical illustrations of helplessness and discouragement all around; inclusive of stories that show how we are as a society at home, on the road, at work; even at places of worship. And very importantly, we also seek feedbacks on personal experiences or of those of others about courage to do what is right and good, kindness to others, survival and excellence, in spite of all odds.

Essays could be about the **energy of the electricity** or the **petrol situation**; in terms of their practical effects on daily living? How are we coping and how these issues affecting our lives regarding the shortfall of promise and the agony of our unrealized aspirations as a nation. It also could be about **our politics and the ways, means and processes leading to being elected or selected to positions of power**. It could be about how political power is being used or otherwise mis-used to liberate and do good or otherwise?

It could also be about **corruption** as seen from the eyes of the youth: practical tips on how corruption is to be recognized? How does corruption dictate our attitudes about who we are and how we relate with others? Above all, essays could be about the practical and innovative ideas on effectively combating the problem?

**Finally, and very importantly, it could be an essay on how to overcome many of our national challenges. It could be on how goodness and moral uprightness could be made to triumph over the very worst of the human behaviour that are all before our eyes in Nigeria.**

## **Why use the Internet Medium?**

---

The internet is the medium of choice for this competition. It is being used for this project for among other reasons to show that online technology is a very practical avenue for communications and project management. It is also being used to make students at secondary school level appreciate the value of being Internet literate.

## **Registration**

---

In order to submit an essay and contest, you must first register on the website: [www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016](http://www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016). Go to this page on the website and register, by completing the online form. Once this form is completed and submitted successfully, participants will be issued a **Unique Registration Number (NRN). This will be sent to the e-mail address that was used for registration. It is very important take note of the URN, as it be used henceforth for all correspondence by us with you. It is in fact now your username, whenever you wish to log on to the essay website.**

After registration, participants now need to go back to the web page containing all important information that will guide participation. Please take time to read and understand the rules and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ). Should you find it necessary to ask further questions; send email to [essay2016@afion.edu.ng](mailto:essay2016@afion.edu.ng).

After reading and understanding the rules, you may now proceed to write your essay. You are free to get facts and opinions from your friends and teachers; from everyone around you. **But bear in mind that it is you that must write the essay in your own words based on your understanding of the issues.** This is very important, as you will be required later to come and show to a panel of judges that you are the writer of the essay. **Writers that fail to convince the panel that they are the writers of the essays will be disqualified.**

## **On Completion of the Essay**

---

1. Whenever you complete writing the essay, please visit the website again: [www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016](http://www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016) and sign in using your URN and your password.
2. Afterwards, copy (Ctrl+C) your written essay from a word processing software application (eg. Microsoft Word) and paste (Ctrl+V) into the Content section of the Essay submission page.

3. Make sure to submit your essay by clicking the Submit button below the Essay submission page.
4. You will receive confirmation that your submission has been accepted

## IMPORTANT DATES

**The closing date for the submission entries is MIDNIGHT Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2016.**

**Shortlisted Finalists will be announced on or before Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2016**

### Selecting Committee

---

A panel of judges composed of reviewers from whose membership would be drawn from the staff of collaborative sponsors will read the submitted essays and select the finalists on the basis of originality, creativity of thought, structure and coherence of the arguments, relevance to the theme of the competition. The jury evaluated presentations of the finalists will subsequently be announced on or before **21-May-2016**.

The initially selected 50 best essays will be published on our website: [www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016](http://www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016), for feedback from the public. Thereafter the 50 finalists will be invited for camping at Abuja. The objective of this second phase would be to make sure that the submitted essays were rightfully written by the authors as submitted online. It would be required that the shortlisted writers demonstrate ownership of the ideas contained in their submissions to a panel of judges. Despite being so shortlisted, those that fail to convince the panel on being the writers of the essay entries will be disqualified.

### Prizes

---

Winners' event will be held to coincide with the Children's Day Celebration on Friday, May 27, 2016. The proposed prizes are as follows.

- First Prize - ~~₦~~500,000
- Second Prize - ~~₦~~300,000
- Third Prize - ~~₦~~200,000

In addition, recognition will also be accorded schools that produced winning essays.

### Rules

---

- The essay competition is open to all Secondary School Students in all schools: Public and Private in Nigeria. It is for Nigerian students and must be currently resident in Nigeria.

- Participants must be not less than 13 or more than 20 years of age on **Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2016** and should currently be in **SS1** and **SS2** classes.
- Participants are to express interest to take part by registration on our website: **www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016**. After due registration, each participant will be given a **Unique Registration Number (URN)**, which will subsequently be used for all subsequent transactions.
- Registration of prospective participants through our website is **FREE of ANY CHARGE**.
- **Unique Registration Number (URN) is to be used in all subsequent submission by the participants**. All essays will be blind reviewed, using the assigned **URN only**. The essay as submitted should therefore not contain references to specific individuals, firms, or schools, which might reveal the writer's identity to the reviewer.
- Essays must be in English language and should not be longer than Ten (10) A4 pages (4,000 words, maximum), 1.5 line-spaced.
- Each participant can only submit one essay. It should be submitted electronically (online). The information on how to do this is on the essay website
- All essays must be original. No previously published material will be accepted. Any form of plagiarism will result in automatic disqualification.
- It is hereby recommended that essays first be written in a word-processing program (check for grammar and spelling; clarity counts). Later, the contents will be copied and pasted on the essay website.
- All submissions become the absolute property of FMI/AFLON, and it reserves the right to publish and/or to make available to the public the winning essays without recourse to the writer
- The decision of the Panel of Judges is final and is not subject to an appeal. Regardless, the very utmost would be done to ensure transparency and fairness to all stakeholders

## Frequently Asked Questions

---

### Submissions, eligibility, formal requirements:

#### 1. What is the deadline for submissions?

The deadline for submissions is Saturday, May 14, 2016, midnight (Abuja time).

#### 2. How do I submit my essay?

The submission should online as instructed on the website. Essays submitted by hand, through post or by courier **will not be accepted**.

#### 3. Who is eligible for the essay competition?

The essay competition is open to all Secondary School Students in all schools: Public and Private in Nigeria. Participants must Nigerian students that are currently resident in Nigeria.

They should not be less than 13 or more than 20 years of age on **Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2016** and should currently be in **Secondary School Classes 1 and 2** classes. Students in secondary class 3 are not eligible to participate.

**5. In which language shall I submit the essay?**

The essay shall be written in English

**6. What is the length and format of the essay?**

Essays must be in English language and should not be longer than Ten (10) A4 pages (4,000 words, maximum), 1.5 line-spaced. The following elements do NOT count into the number of pages or words: abstract, content page, title page (if you provide one). Moreover, graphs and tables do NOT count into the number of words.

**7. Am I allowed to include graphs and tables?**

Yes, you are welcome (but not obliged to) to include relevant graphs and tables. Their content will not count into the number of words in your essay.

**8. What is an abstract?**

You are required to write an abstract to go with your essay, which cannot exceed 1 page (400 words). **IT SHOULD BE THE FIRST PAGE OF YOUR SUBMISSION.** Thus, essays will comprise the FIRST PAGE as ABSTRACT, plus not more the 10 other pages: a maximum of 11 pages overall.

An abstract is a summary in which you explain the aim, the methodology, the reasoning and the main conclusions of your paper. The abstract is important; as pre-selection of the essays will be based on the assessment of these only. That means that a good essay without an abstract or with a poorly written abstract will not be graded highly.

**9. What are the grading criteria for the essays?**

The essays will be graded for their originality, clarity and the use of thoughtful and concrete proposals/ examples.

**10. Is it allowed to mention my name in the paper?**

No. Rather, Include the **unique registration number (URN)** assigned to you when registering for the competition. URN is therefore taken as your examination number.

**11. Is it allowed for two or more people to work on the same essay?**

**No.** We would like the essay to be the work of an individual. However, participants are free to undertake necessary research for facts and supporting information.

**12. Can I use personal style in my essay, including the 'I' form?**

Yes. We are asking about your own experience and your own ideas.

**13. Can I identify persons I consider corrupt?**

**NO.** The essay is about ideas and issues. Personalities are not the object of the essay. Our motive is for solutions to identified problems. The essay is not to be taken as petition about or against any person or institution.

**14. Can I attach petitions?**

No. Petitions should be directed at appropriate agencies of government

**15. If I am a finalist, who will pay for my travel and stay in Abuja for the Presentation Event?**

FMI and its sponsors will subsidize the cost of travel for the finalists and an accompanying teacher to be invited to participate in the Presentation Event. Hostel-like accommodation and feeding will be provided for all.

16. For additional information, all participants are free to contact the following representatives of the organizers':

1. Mr Olujimi OYETOMI,  
Federal Ministry of Information & Culture, Abuja.  
[OLUJIMI.OYETOMI@fedcs.gov.ng](mailto:OLUJIMI.OYETOMI@fedcs.gov.ng), 07030639782
  
2. Dr. Akin FAPOHUNDA,  
Aflon Digital Academy, Kuje – Abuja.  
[essay2016@aflon.edu.ng](mailto:essay2016@aflon.edu.ng)

it is very important that all participants regularly visit the Essay Competition Website, while the completion lasts: **[www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016](http://www.fmi.gov.ng/essay2016)**

**09-April-2016**

---