



The Parliament Prize

Frequently asked questions

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The Parliament Prize

What is the Parliament Prize?

The Parliament Prize is a student competition where participants submit a 90-second video statement modelled on member statements; an opportunity for members of parliament to speak on a matter of importance to them or their electorate.

Is there a specific topic or prompt students must speak to?

The prompt for Parliament Prize is always:

"What would you say to Parliament if you were a Member of Parliament?"

The specific topics students speak about can be broad or specific, personal or public, and are not limited to state issues, though state-related topics are appreciated.

Who can enter?

The competition is open to Victorian students, across three categories:

- Grades 5–6
- Years 7–9
- Years 10–12

Students must reside in Victoria, even if they attend school outside the state. Immediate family members of members of parliament and their staff, as well as employees of the Parliament of Victoria are ineligible to enter.

What are the rules?

The rules for Parliament Prize are as follows:

- The competition is open to Victorian students in three year-group categories: Grades 5-6, Years 7-9, and Years 10-12.
- Videos must not contain any copyrighted or offensive material, must not contain defaming comments, and must be the student's own work.
- Videos must not exceed 90 seconds.
- Entries must be submitted via the online form.
- Only one entry per student will be accepted.
- Late entries will not be considered.
- Full terms and conditions are provided on the webpage and entry page.

What are the important dates?

The Parliament Prize runs at a consistent time each year, and entries are generally open for one month:

- Opening Date: mid-May
- Closing Date: mid-June
- Winning announcements: Late July / Early August
- Award ceremony: Late August / Early September

Check the website for specific dates.

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/parliament-prize/>

The video entries

How long can the video be?

Videos must be 90 seconds or shorter (approximately 230 words)

- The entry platform will only accept videos under 95 seconds (additional seconds are to allow for any buffer at the start or end of the video)

Are there any things that participants can't say or do in their videos?

The Parliament Prize provides opportunity for parliament to hear what matters most to young people. We aim for this experience to be a positive one for not only the students who participate, but for the schools, judges, parliament staff and wider community who support the prize. We therefore cannot accept videos that:

- use any offensive material or language
- use any copyrighted material
- that make derogatory statements about any persons or organisations

What if an entry discusses a sensitive topic?

Very occasionally a participant may wish to discuss a topic that might be considered sensitive in nature, for example discussing mental health issues with stories from their lived-experiences. If a judge raises a concern about a young person's wellbeing, the video will be reviewed by the prize administrators, and the school notified if there is a concern.

How are Members of Parliament involved?

The Parliament Prize is administered by the Community Engagement Team at Parliament of Victoria. The team notify every Member of Parliament when the Parliament Prize opens.

Each year there are three Members of Parliament that are involved in the final round of judging.

Once the winners are announced, each Member of Parliament receives a summary of the entries in their electorate, including:

- Any prize winners in their electorate
- The number of entries
- Summary information about the topics students spoke about in their electorate

For any further information about student entries, the Member of Parliament is directed to contact participating schools.

The entry form

What information is needed for the entry form?

The entry form includes information relating to:

- Student name and contact, used to:
 - confirm one entry per student
 - announce the winners at the conclusion of the prize
- Topic details, used to
 - summarise what young people were talking about each year
- Parent contact details, used to
 - verify students are Victorian residents
 - used for contacting winning participants and seeking additional permissions for using participants' videos
- School contact details, used to
 - Notify schools of any winning entries
 - Seek feedback on how we best support accessibility to the prize
 - Support any communication requests regarding MP engagement with young people

Note: With the exception of automated messages from the platform to confirm successful entry upload and notification of the outcome of the Parliament Prize, there are no emails sent directly to students. If there is an occasion to contact a student this is always with parent, school or both parent/school knowledge (e.g. teacher and/or parent cc'd into the communication).

What happens to all the information on the entry form?

All the personal information is deleted at the conclusion of the prize, with the exception of the information for the winning videos. The personal information that is deleted includes:

- Student name and email address
- Parent details, including name, phone number and email address

The information that we keep includes:

- The number of students who entered in each category
- Topic information
- The number of schools and name of schools
- Whether the entry was part of a class activity
- Teacher information (e.g. to seek back on how we can improve student access to participate)

All videos, with the exception of the winning videos are also deleted prior to the following year's competition.

Winning entries

What are the prizes for winning entries?

A prize of \$500 and a commemorative trophy will be awarded to the first-placed entry in each category.

There will also be prizes of \$250 to the second-placed entries and \$150 to the third-placed entries in each age group.

An award of \$1,000 will be made to each first-placed student's school, which will ideally be used to promote civics and citizenship and law-related education within these schools, at the schools' discretion.

How are winners notified?

Winners are usually notified a week before any social media and general announcements.

Students and parents are asked to confirm that they are okay with their videos being shared on social media and on the Parliament of Victoria website as part of the official announcement.

The students, parents and school are notified of the winning entry at this time.

How are the winners announced?

The winners are announced via Parliament of Victoria's social media channels and on the Parliament Prize webpage. This usually happens in late July / early August.

All participants will also receive an email to notify them that the winners have been announced.

Does anyone get feedback on their videos?

Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide feedback on videos.

Judging

What criteria is used to judge the videos?

The Parliament Prize is not a speaking competition, judges are not necessarily looking for the most confident or polished speakers, but participants who have interesting insights, perspectives or ideas that stand out. The criteria is:

- A clearly articulated message
 - The key message/s are clear
 - The statement is focused, logical, and on-topic
 - The time is used effectively (don't necessarily need to use the full 90 seconds but it's encouraged)
 - The ideas are easy to follow (a clear structure can help)
- Interesting insights, ideas and/or perspectives
 - The ideas are insightful, well-thought out, or original
 - There is evidence of a unique viewpoint, perspective or personal insight that supports their message, or
 - There is an unusual angle or connection between ideas
- A clear understanding of why this issue or idea is important
 - An explanation or some consideration about why the topic is important or why it matters
 - A personal, local or broader societal impact
 - A potential call to action (doesn't need to be explicit)
 - A demonstration of real-world outcomes, e.g.: A student advocating for a pedestrian crossing demonstrated impact on local safety and broader health/wellbeing.

Are there some general things that make a submission stand out?

- Specificity: e.g. taking a small part of a much larger topic
- Personal stories that relate to a broader issue
- Fresh perspectives or lesser-known insights
- Clear connection between personal impact and broader implications

What information do the judges have access to?

The judges have access to the student video, the category (grade/year level based) and the participant's first name.

The judges cannot see any other entry form data.

How do judges select the winning videos?

Each judging round, the same three criteria are used by the judges to score the videos.

- A clearly articulated message
- Interesting insights, ideas and/or perspectives
- A clear understanding of why this issue or idea is important

There are three rounds of judging:

1. Longlisting (an initial review)
 - A group of parliamentary staff and young people watch every video and rate each entry against the criteria.
2. Shortlisting
 - Approximately the top 10-20% of videos in each category are reviewed by a second group of parliamentary officers. There are usually two to three judges per category
3. Final Judging
 - The top ten entries make it to the final round of judging. Each category is allocated three judges (an MP, a parliamentary staff member and an educator). The results are collated and the top three videos are awarded a prize.
 - If there are any ties, the videos are sent to another judge who has not previously seen the videos in question.

Technical issues

What video formats can be used?

The platform accepts all video format types.

Why won't my video upload?

The three most common reasons a video won't upload:

- Slow or patchy internet
- The video is too long. If upload issues occur, check the video length to make sure it is under 95 seconds in total.
- The video file is too large. The file size limit for each video is 200MB, which for a 90 second video is a lot of data. If the file size exceeds 200MB, try and resave the video in a lower resolution.

If there are other technical difficulties with the entry platform, please contact parliamentprize@parliament.vic.gov.au

What if a video file has issues?

The most common issue with videos is poor sound or visuals. Although this doesn't automatically lead to a poor result, but it can impact the judges' ability to hear the statement

- Audio quality is more important than visual quality
- Try to avoid filming outside, especially if it is windy. If you do film outside, do a test run to make sure the audio is as clear as it can be.

Make sure to watch the video before submitting it, to make sure you're happy with the quality of the video and make sure you upload the correct video.

Classroom connections

How can I connect the Parliament Prize to the classroom?

There are multiple ways to help connect Parliament Prize to the classroom. These include:

- Writing speeches
- Conducting research
- Filming techniques
- Active citizenship

There are strong connections to civics, English, politics, legal studies and sociology curriculums. However, depending on the topics students select, the Parliament Prize can be used to address outcomes across a wide variety of subjects.

For more ideas on how to connect Parliament Prize to the classroom, visit <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/connecting-the-parliament-prize-to-your-classroom>

What are the best topics?

Topics vary widely, from environmental concerns to health, education, local community issues, and even international affairs. Past examples include:

- Animal rights
- Mental health
- Climate change
- Local infrastructure

Choosing the most popular topic does not affect the judging of the video—each entry is judged on its own merit.

Over the last couple of years, we have summarised the topics from the various Parliament Prize entries on our blog: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/vicparled>

2024 topics

- Education <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/parliament-prize-2024-what-were-young-people-saying-about-education>
- Health <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/parliament-prize-2024-what-were-young-people-saying-about-health>
- Environment <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/parliament-prize-2024-what-were-young-people-saying-about-the-environment>

2023 topics

- Parliament Prize 2023: What were young people talking about this year <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/Parliament-Prize-2023-What-were-young-people-talking-about-this-year>

2022 topics

- What were young people talking about in this year's Parliament Prize? <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/education-blog/what-were-young-people-talking-about-in-this-years-parliament-prize>

Are there additional resources for teachers and students?

Preparing for the Parliament Prize has a list of resources to support both teachers and students, including:

- Teacher notes, that include ideas for classroom activities
- Student resources:
 - Choosing your topic
 - Researching your topic
 - Preparing your Member's Statement
 - Filming your Member's Statement
 - Submitting your entry

There are also some additional details about how Parliament Prize connects to the classroom and other related resources.

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/Resources/preparing-for-the-parliament-prize/>