The 3rd National Essay Competition (2026)

Organized by Ethiopian Law Schools Association (ELSA)

Introduction

The Ethiopian Law Schools Association (ELSA), among others, aims to advance the legal education in the country in various ways. One of the viable options, it believes, is to engage academia, particularly university students, in the areas of legal education in Ethiopia through essay competitions among university students (undergraduate students). To that end, ELSA is happy to offer an essay competition that is open to any Ethiopian undergraduate student on the title of "The Role of Youth in Advancing Transitional Justice in Ethiopia." The aim of this essay is to encourage students to critically explore and analyze the significant role that young people can play in promoting accountability, reconciliation, and sustainable peace within Ethiopia's transitional justice framework.

Objective of the Essay Competition

- To promote awareness and understanding of transitional justice among university students;
- To encourage youth engagement in national discussions on justice, accountability, and reconciliation;
- To encourage academic research on the role of youth in transitional justice processes;

- To provide a platform for students to propose innovative ideas and solutions for strengthening Ethiopia's transitional justice framework;
- To contribute to the development of informed, responsible, and active future legal professionals.

Theme: The main theme of the competition is "The Role of Youth in Advancing Transitional Justice in Ethiopia." However, the participants may select one of the following

Sub-themes:

- **Youth Participation and Representation in Transitional Justice Processes**

- The Role of Digital Platforms in Enhancing Youth Participation in Transitional Justice
- Legal Empowerment of Youth and Access to Transitional Justice Mechanisms
- The Role of Youth Agency in the Documentation and Preservation of Human Rights Records during Transitions
- Challenges and Risks Facing Youth in Transitional Justice Engagement

Eligibility

- The application is open to all undergraduate Ethiopian students from any social science disciplines that are enrolled at an accredited institution in Ethiopia at the time of the award.
- Finalists will need to show current enrollment at an accredited institution to confirm the status of their applications for an award.

Format:

- They must be typed in English for a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 pages, with 1.5 lines of space (excluding footnotes), and submitted in PDF format.
- Page size must be standard (8”x11” or A4).
- The font size should be 12 in Times New Roman style.
- Essays have to be the result of research and analysis, which will provide insight and ideas instead of a mere review of academic literature on the subject matter.
- Essays should have a clear introduction, body paragraphs addressing key aspects, a concise conclusion, and proposed recommendations.
- An essay may not be acceptable unless it is original work that is in line with academic standards with proper citation rules.
- Referencing Style: Use a dedicated referencing style (e.g., APA, Harvard, OSCOLA, etc.) for proper citation and to avoid plagiarism.

Evaluation Criteria:

The essays will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Critical analysis of the issue.
- Originality of Ideas.
- Relevance to the topic.
- Adherence to submission guidelines.
- Structure: coherence, organization, grammar, and overall quality of writing.

Selecting procedure:

- ELSA will establish a panel of experts for the selection of essays.
- Each essay will be coded by ELSA so that the selection process can be based on a blind review by at least two experts.

- The experts return scores to ELSA that is averaged using the mathematical mean to determine the finalists.

Submission Deadline

- April 27,2026 : The essay competition call will be released.
- May 25,2026: Deadline for the submission of essays
- June 10,2026 : Announcing Winners
- There will be a conference where award-winning essays will be presented.

Limit: Each participant shall submit only one essay.

Submission Method: Submit your essay as an attachment to **ethiopianlawschoolsassociation@gmail.com and CC to: makdamulugeta957@gmail.com.**

Use the subject line: **"National Essay Competition Submission 2026"**

Personal Information: In the body of the E-Mail and on the essay parts, provide the following information: full name, contact address, phone number, E-Mail address.

Educational Institution/Organization: Applicants must submit either an enrollment letter or their current registration slips along with their essay.

Awards and Recognition

To recognize excellence and encourage meaningful engagement, the competition offers the following awards:

1. Monetary Awards and Distinctions

First Prize

- ETB 15,000 cash award
- Summer internship opportunity with a modest stipend
- An opportunity to present their essays at a conference organized by the Ethiopian Law School Association (ELSA)
- Certificate of excellence

Second Prize

- ETB 12,000 cash award
- Summer internship opportunity with a modest stipend
- An opportunity to present their essays at a conference organized by the Ethiopian Law schools Association (ELSA)
- Certificate of excellence

Third Prize

- ETB 10,000 cash award
- Summer internship opportunity with a modest stipend
- An opportunity to present their essays at a conference organized by the Ethiopian Law schools Association (ELSA)
- Certificate of excellence

2. All participants will receive an official certificate recognizing their contribution and participation in the competition.

Declaration

Please include the following statement on the last page of your essay:

Certification: I, _____, attest that the attached essay is my own original work. [Include your full name and the date you sent the essay.]

If you have a question, you can contact us via phone at 0935467702/0900115123, or you can use the above-mentioned email.