



Statute of the "Euro-Atlantic Perspectives: Young People as Drivers of the Romanian-American Strategic Partnership" Essay Contest

General presentation of the contest

The "Euro-Atlantic Perspectives: Young people as drivers of the Romanian-American Strategic Partnership" Essay Contest is a competition of scientific papers organised under the aegis of a grant offered by Meridian International Center, a renowned American think-tank in the sphere of public diplomacy and leadership in global affairs.

Under the auspices of 26 years of consistent bilateral cooperation in the spheres of regional security, energy policy, science, research, innovation, trade and a variety of other relevant fields, the US-RO Strategic Partnership flourished into a pivotal landmark of the transatlantic affairs and became a guarantee of regional stability in a context determined by unprecedented, successive crises.

Times for new fruitful progresses in the spectrum of Romanian-American bilateral ties have arrived, and young people's role is crucial in this framework. Harnessing the potential of emerging technologies, developing new horizons for societal innovation and promoting a sense of Euro-atlantic citizenship are now fundamental pillars of a solid agenda for a prosperous future.

Transformational leadership in fostering meaningful endeavors in the framework of Romanian-American strategic bilateral ties is, more than ever, vital for the security of the regional context. Based on these premises, shaping a relevant setting for youth participation in building new grounds for the Bilateral Strategic Partnership of the United States and Romania is an essential pursuit.

Eligibility requirements

Young people fulfilling the following eligibility criteria are highly encouraged to apply:

- 18-30 years old Romanian citizens;
- Undergraduate, graduate or doctoral students enrolled in either a Romanian or a foreign higher education institution recognized by the Ministry of Education;
- Proven interest in American politics, culture, history, diplomacy, international relations, security studies and/or international policy.



Essay-related requirements

1. The sections of the contest include the following topics:
 - Bilateral relations, transatlantic affairs and defense - NATO and the larger Euro-atlantic cooperation framework;
 - Trade, research, technology and innovation;
 - Human rights and social inclusion;
 - Culture, public diplomacy and education.

2. In order to be admitted to the competition, the essays need to fulfill the following requirements:
 - To comply with a specific section of the contest;
 - To be written in Romanian or English;
 - To be authentic works, developed under the auspices of original research endeavors;
 - To respect the norms of academic integrity;
 - To expose a consistent body of references;
 - To cover the topic in a minimum of 600 words and a maximum of 2000 words, excluding the references and bibliography;
 - To be written using Times New Roman font, 12 pts., 1.5 rows;
 - All essays should propose a creative solution for the further development of the Romanian-American strategic partnership, given the specific topic chosen by the candidate.

3. The essay proposal (max. 150 - 200 words) will be sent along with a two paragraphs presentation of the student, a portrait photo and a duly completed consent declaration at the following email address: atlanticyouth-contest@gmail.com

4. The contest includes the following phases:
 - Applications and further selection of the finalist essays;
 - Intermediary learning cluster for the selected participants;
 - Final conference, including a presentation of the winning essays.



Calendar of the contest

- 21st of March – 25th of April: application period - participants send in their essay proposals, along with their presentations and portrait photos;
- 25th of April – 5th of May: evaluation of the essays by the jury, publication of the final essays and popularity contest;
- 10th of April – 25th of April: training sessions for the participants, including a variety of relevant topics;
- 15th of May: The Romanian-American Youth Forum at the Romanian Parliament, including keynote addresses and the final phase of the contest. The participants will interact with various policy makers and experts in international relations, diplomacy and cultural personalities and have the chance to share their ideas on the development of the relations between the two countries.

Evaluation process

A jury composed of renowned experts in the field, both from academia and from the professional settings, will evaluate the works. The minimum grade will be 1 and the maximum grade will be 10. The following list incorporates the main qualitative dimensions expected to be approached consistently by the essay:

- 2.5 points for scientific quality and academic eloquence;
- 2.5 points for original ideas and authentic perspectives allocated to the specific topics approached in the essay;
- 1.5 points for diplomatic or policy ideas identified in the context of personal research on the topic;
- 1.5 points for quality of academic writing;
- 1 point for clear identification with the chosen section.

Awards

1. A prize will be awarded for each of the sections. The awards will include an opportunity to shadow or to benefit from mentoring from a partner expert, organization or public official with extended activity in the field. Simultaneously, the finalists will be beneficiaries of extensive learning opportunities and will have the opportunity of joining an extended network of changemaking young leaders in the field of transatlantic affairs.
2. All of the awardees will have access to a private course in cyber diplomacy, lectured by an expert of European Defence Agency;



3. Moreover, two supplementary prizes will be allocated in the context of the final stage of the contest:
- A prize of popularity;
 - A prize for diplomatic and communicational quality of the presentation.

Recommended readings for the essays proposals (a brief selection)

Romanian Presidency, Foreign policy priorities

<https://www.presidency.ro/ro/angajamente/politica-externa>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romanian-American strategic partnership

<https://www.mae.ro/node/4944>

Romania-USA - 25 years of strategic partnership <https://romania-usa.ro/en/prima-pagina/>

National Defense Strategy

https://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/Documente/Strategia_Nationala_de_Aparare_a_Tarii_2020_2024.pdf

Romanian Diplomatic Institute, *România Occidentală* magazine <https://www.idr.ro/romania-occidentala/>

Romanian Aspen Institute *A World in Flux – Towards a New European Architecture Report*

<https://aspeninstitute.ro/a-world-in-flux-towards-a-new-european-architecture-report/>

NATO 2022 - Strategic concept <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/>

Recent reports of US Embassy in Romania (human rights, religious freedoms)

<https://ro.usembassy.gov/ro/our-relationship-ro/rapoarte-oficiale/>