



HART Prize for Human Rights 2026 Terms & Conditions

The HART Prize for Human Rights is organised and promoted by Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART). By entering the competition, entrants agree to the following Terms & Conditions.

Timeframe

The competition is free to enter online and runs from Monday 16 March to Friday 15 May 2026.

Consent and notifications

We collect personal data (including name, email and age) to administer the HART Prize, verify parental/guardian consent and send educational outreach.

Private contact data (email) is held only for the duration of the competition cycle plus a three-year outreach period, after which it is securely deleted.

During the submission process, entrants (or their parent/guardian) must specify their preferences regarding publicity. We will only feature an entrant's first name, age category, country, summary and submission if explicit consent has been provided on the application form.

For applicants aged 11-17, prize notifications will be sent to the named parent/guardian.

For applicants aged 11 or 12, an authorisation link will be sent to the parent/guardian's email address immediately upon submission; verification is required to finalise the entry.

Entrants may request the removal of their data at any time by contacting office@hart-uk.org

Public archive and historical record

To celebrate the history of the HART Prize and maintain a lasting record of human rights advocacy, we maintain a permanent digital and physical archive of winning entries.

Notwithstanding the three-year deletion period for contact data, the entrant's first name, age category, country, summary and submission will be retained indefinitely as part of a historical archive of the Prize.

Winners may be showcased in printed newsletters and online.

This data is processed for archiving purposes in the public interest and for historical research purposes, ensuring that the legacy of participants' work remains accessible to future generations.

Entry requirements

Each participant is permitted to submit only one entry across all categories.

All entrants should spotlight a forgotten conflict or human rights issue that does not have mainstream attention.

Submissions must be the entrant's entirely original work, must not be AI-generated, and must not have been previously published or submitted to other competitions.

We ask all entries to be respectful, constructive and avoid contributing to a culture of division or hate. HART reserves the right to disqualify entries that breach this requirement or are found to be plagiarised.

Content warning

Entrants are mandated to include a prominent Content or Trigger Warning in their summary or at the very beginning of their submission

if the content includes explicitly gruesome, highly graphic, or deeply traumatising descriptions of violence, injury or abuse.

Language and translation

We welcome and celebrate submissions in all languages. However, please note that for entries not submitted in English, HART will utilise digital translation tools (such as Google Translate) during the evaluation process. While we strive to honour the original meaning, we cannot guarantee that the full nuance or poetic quality of the work will be captured in translation. Entrants are welcome to provide their own English translation alongside the original text to assist the judges.

Category requirements (location and age)

The 2026 HART Prize consists of three categories: creative; essay; and journalism.

The creative category is open to participants aged 11 to 25 from anywhere worldwide. Pieces (including photographs of creative pieces) should be submitted via the online submission form. We cannot accept physical entries.

The essay category is open to participants aged 11 to 25 from anywhere worldwide. The maximum word count is 1,000 words, excluding footnotes and references.

The journalism category is open to frontline journalists aged 18 or over who live and work in Nigeria at the time of entering the competition. The maximum word count is 800 words, excluding footnotes and references.

Marking criteria

We are looking for clear and thoughtful submissions about a forgotten conflict or human rights issue that does not have mainstream attention, such as those highlighted on www.hart-uk.org

Your entry will be judged on the depth of your understanding and ability to tell a story with clarity and empathy.

What we're looking for	Weight
Resonance and focus: How effectively does the entry highlight a truly forgotten issue? The piece must cut through noise or distraction to deliver a clear, singular, powerful point about the chosen topic.	25%
Listening and storytelling: The quality of the narrative must reflect a capacity to listen to a specific perspective (real or imagined) related to the issue. Entries should clearly communicate a view that is often marginalised, unacknowledged, or perhaps different from the dominant narrative.	25%
Empathy and tone: The entry must be respectful and constructive, even when firm in its critique, and should avoid contributing to a culture of division. We look for empathetic communication that aims to unite, inform, or offer clarity on difficult human rights issues.	25%
Clarity and impact: The submission must be original and clearly executed (whether written, visual, or audio). The core message must be instantly clear, offering the judges a moment of quiet reflection or focused attention away from the noisy world.	25%

While these criteria provide a structured framework, the judging panel reserves the right to recognise entries that demonstrate an exceptional and unique voice or a profound emotional impact that transcends standard marking metrics. The judges' decision is final.

Intellectual property and usage rights

The entrant (or their named parent/guardian) retains the copyright to their submission.

Except where consent is withheld at the point of submission, the entrant grants HART a non-exclusive, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free license to use, publish, reproduce, edit, adapt, and display the submission (or excerpts) for purposes related to the competition, promotion, and publicity, across all media.

Independent creative voice

While we celebrate the creativity and talent of all our winners, the views and opinions expressed in the winning entries are those of the individual creators and do not necessarily reflect the views or endorsement of HART.

Prize details

All prizes are announced and given online and not in-person.

The final nature, value, and specific non-certificate items of the prizes may vary by category and are subject to change based on available sponsorship or resources.

While prizes are not fixed, all winners will, at a minimum, be guaranteed an official HART Prize e-certificate.

HART's website and social media will showcase the most outstanding entries.

Winners of the creative and essay categories, aged 18 and over, will be offered the opportunity to join the exclusive HART Prize Alumni Community.

For entrants under the age of 18, winner notifications, prize claim details, or changes to the terms will be directed to the named parent/guardian.

Feedback

Due to the number of entries received each year, we are unable to give individual feedback.

Accessibility

At HART, we are inclusive of all levels of learning and ability. If you have a learning or physical disability and require any sort of assistance, please contact the HART team at prize@hart-uk.org

Remit

HART retains the right to cancel or amend the competition due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.

We hereby exclude any liability for loss, injury or damage to persons/property or disappointment incurred by entrants as a result of entering the HART Prize for Human Rights, downloading any materials related to the Prize, or participating in celebratory events; or any other liability of HART that cannot be excluded under applicable law.

The above Terms & Conditions are governed by the laws of England and Wales.

If you require more information or have any questions at all, please contact the HART team at prize@hart-uk.org