

CALL FOR ESSAYS

National Tertiary Institution Essay Competition **AI Literacy & Responsible Technology Use**

For students at universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of technology, schools of nursing, and other diploma-awarding institutions across Nigeria

Deadline: 15 April 2026, 10:00 AM (WAT)

Prizes: ₦400,000 (1st) | ₦300,000 (2nd) | ₦200,000 (3rd)

Apply: <https://forms.gle/TF4FXTYmpVnH87M7>

The Opportunity

AI is already reshaping how Nigerians learn, work, access information, and participate in public life. But the conversation about what AI should look like in Nigeria *cannot happen without the people who will live with its consequences longest: young people.*

The Brain Builders Youth Development Initiative (BBYDI) invites students from tertiary institutions across Nigeria to enter a national essay competition on AI literacy and responsible technology use. This is an invitation to think critically, argue clearly, and contribute your perspective to one of the most important conversations shaping Nigeria's future.

This competition is part of BBYDI's *AI Literacy for Everyday People in Nigeria* project, supported by the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.

About BBYDI

BBYDI is a youth-led Nigerian nonprofit and a leading voice on AI literacy, digital rights, and responsible technology use in Nigeria and across Africa. Our work includes **Kemi**, an AI-powered WhatsApp chatbot that provides a safe space for women and girls experiencing technology-facilitated gender-based violence. The tool was co-created with survivors and it's the first of its kind in West and Central Africa. We build practical tools and programmes that make AI work for everyday people, not just those with technical backgrounds.

Essay Topic

***“Artificial Intelligence for Public Good:
Balancing Innovation, Human Welfare, and Responsible Governance”***

Your essay should be grounded in the Nigerian context and demonstrate critical thinking, ethical awareness, and a practical understanding of how AI affects real people and communities. You may approach the theme from any angle, but your argument must be specific and well-evidenced, not a general overview of AI.

To sharpen your focus, consider questions such as:

- How should AI be governed in a specific Nigerian sector — education, healthcare, agriculture, governance, or creative industries — to serve ordinary citizens?
- What does “responsible AI” look like in a context where most people lack reliable internet access, and what are the risks of leaving those communities out of the conversation?
- How can young Nigerians move from being passive consumers of AI tools to active participants in shaping how those tools are built and deployed?
- What ethical trade-offs does Nigeria face in adopting AI, and who should be making those decisions?

These are starting points, not requirements. You are free to develop any argument within the theme, provided it is specific, grounded, and clearly reasoned.

Who Can Enter

To be eligible, you must:

- Be a current student at a recognised Nigerian tertiary institution (university, polytechnic, college of education, college of technology, monotechnic, school of nursing, or other diploma-awarding institution) with a verifiable student ID
- Be between 18 and 30 years old
- Submit an original, previously unpublished essay
- Grant BBYDI the right to publish, excerpt, or reference your essay, with attribution, in its publications, learning resources, impact reports, and advocacy materials

Essay Requirements

Word count	1,200–1,500 words (excluding references)
Language	English
Format	Typed, Times New Roman, 12pt, double-spaced
Structure	A clear argument with a logical progression, not a general survey of the topic

A note on AI use: You may use AI tools to support your research and thinking, but the argument, voice, and analysis must be demonstrably your own. Submissions that read as AI-generated without substantive original contribution will be disqualified.

Judging Criteria

Essays will be assessed on:

- **Originality of argument:** Does the essay present a distinctive, well-reasoned position, not a summary of commonly held views?
- **Contextual depth:** Is the essay grounded in Nigerian realities, with specific examples and evidence?
- **Ethical awareness:** Does the essay engage seriously with questions of fairness, inclusion, risk, and responsibility?
- **Clarity of writing:** Is the essay well-structured, clearly argued, and free of unnecessary jargon?

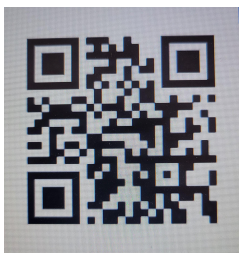
Prizes and Recognition

1st Place	₦400,000
2nd Place	₦300,000
3rd Place	₦200,000
Top 10 Finalists	₦100,000

Winners will be announced publicly and the top essays will be featured in BBYDI's publications and advocacy materials.

How to Apply

1. Complete the application form at: <https://forms.gle/TF4FXTYmpVnH87M7> or scan:



2. Upload your essay as part of the form submission



3. **Submit by 15 April 2026, 10:00 AM (WAT).** Late submissions will not be considered.

Questions?

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This competition is supported by the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.