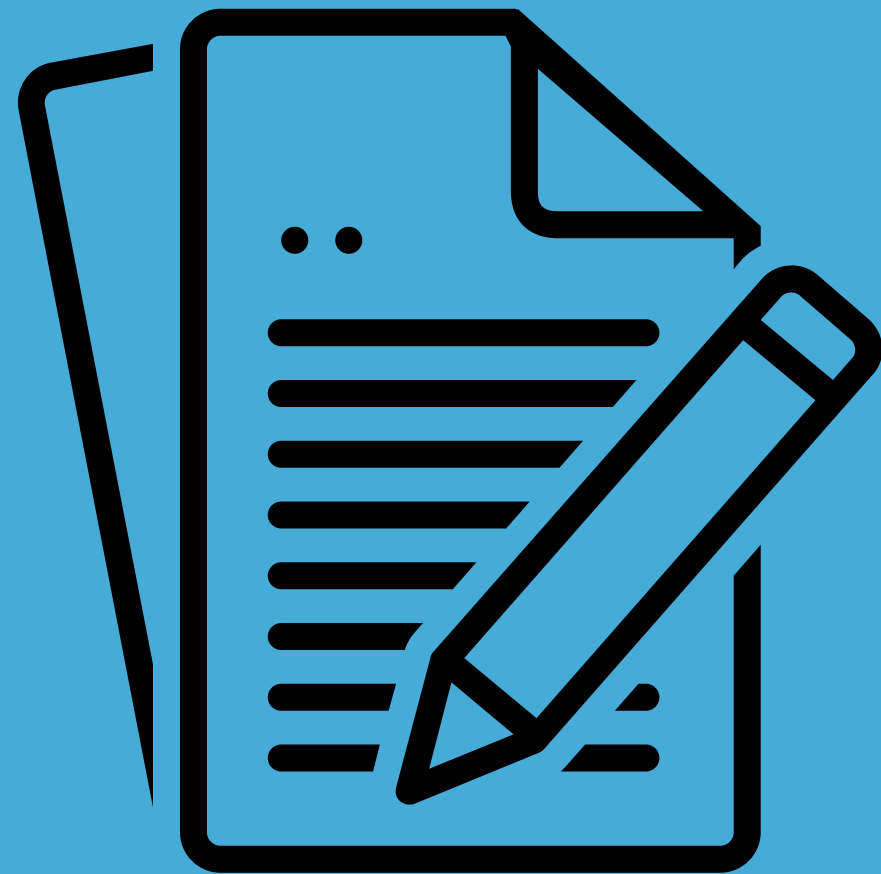


Opening Information Session for Educators



Agenda



- 1 Introductions (ourselves and the essay competition)
- 2 Eligibility and terms of participation
- 3 Essay topics, preparation, development, and brainstorming
- 4 Jury
- 5 Evaluation criteria
- 6 Competition prizes
- 7 Preparatory workshop series

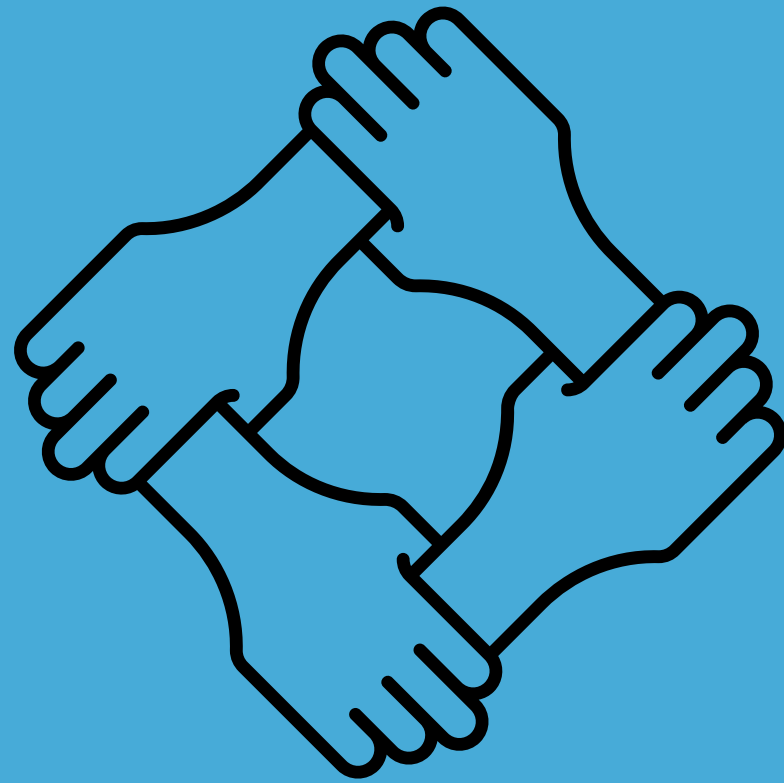
Introductions



In chat or unmute:

- State & city
- Grade level taught
- Subject you want to incorporate the essay competition into
- Likely language your students will submit their essays in

Solidarity



Collective action and mutual support that transcends individual interests in favor of the common good. It plays a crucial role in navigating social, political, and global challenges—especially within transatlantic relationships between Germany, Europe, and the U.S.

The essay competition encourages students to explore solidarity as a value, practice, and potential point of tension across cultures and systems. The goal is to spark critical thinking, promote civic engagement, and inspire young people to reflect on how solidarity can shape a more just and connected world.

Eligibility and Terms of Participation



High School or
College Student



Essay length:
1500-2000
words



Language:
German or
English

Submission deadline: October 14, 2025

Essay Topics



Solidarity in politics: What role does solidarity play in the democracies of Germany, the USA, and Europe? How does it contribute to stability and justice—or give rise to tensions?



Digital solidarity: How do social media platforms influence modern solidarity movements? What opportunities and risks arise from digital engagement?



Solidarity in art, film, and music: How is solidarity represented in creative forms of expression, and what impact do these portrayals have on civic engagement?



Solidarity in a globalized world: How can solidarity be strengthened across the transatlantic space? Explore the challenges and opportunities for cooperation in social, economic, political, and environmental matters.

Pedagogical Strategies

Simplify Concepts: Use real-life examples and analogies to make abstract ideas about solidarity more accessible and relatable.

Socratic Method: Use guided questions to help students explore ideas about solidarity and civic engagement through active, self-driven learning.

Discussion-Based Learning: Encourage open dialogue where students share and debate their views on solidarity, fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking.

Interdisciplinary Connections: Link the concept of solidarity to literature, history, or current events to make it more relevant and accessible for students.

Encourage Reflection: Have students reflect on how the concept of solidarity shows up in their own lives—within their communities, families, or social movements—fostering personal and civic connections to the material.

Use Primary and Secondary Texts: Introduce students to foundational texts and case studies on solidarity from both historical and contemporary contexts.

Pedagogical Strategies Brainstorm

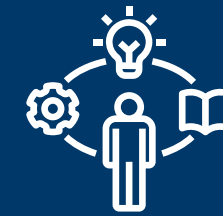


Break-Out Rooms: How might you implement some of the previously mentioned, or other pedagogical strategies in your classroom?

Student Essay Development



Link Theory to Practice: Encourage students to explore how the concept of solidarity can be applied to real-world challenges in transatlantic civic life—whether in politics, culture, or digital spaces.



Focus on Personal Relevance: Ask students to reflect on their own experiences or social environments through the lens of solidarity—how have they witnessed or participated in acts of civic engagement, and what role does collective responsibility play in their communities?



Historical Context: Encourage students to investigate how expressions of solidarity have influenced historical events or social movements, prompting reflection on the role of civic engagement in shaping political and cultural outcomes across the transatlantic world.



Comparative Analysis: Encourage students to compare forms of solidarity across cultures or movements to spark critical thinking and highlight diverse civic traditions.

Student Essay Development Brainstorm



Break-Out Rooms: What activities might you use with students to help them develop ideas for their essays?

Essay Topic Brainstorming



On which topics might you help your students brainstorm to begin writing their essays?

Essay Topic Brainstorming

Digital Solidarity & Access to Technology: Explore how digital inclusion (or exclusion) affects civic engagement. How can transatlantic cooperation close the digital divide?

Solidarity in Migration & Refugee Support: Investigate how countries show (or fail to show) solidarity in response to migration crises. What transatlantic models of cooperation exist?

Health Equity & Global Solidarity: Analyze access to healthcare and vaccines in different regions. What responsibilities do wealthier nations have in supporting global public health?

Art & Cultural Solidarity: Discuss how art, film, and literature foster empathy and build bridges between cultures. Can cultural exchange strengthen civic engagement?

Climate Solidarity: Examine the role of collective action across nations in addressing climate change. How do movements like Fridays for Future exemplify global solidarity?

Racial & Social Justice Movements: Explore how movements like Black Lives Matter and European anti-racism protests have fostered transnational solidarity. What lessons can be drawn?

Labor Rights & Economic Solidarity: Consider how international labor movements push for fair wages, safe working conditions, and ethical globalization.

Youth Activism & Civic Engagement: Highlight examples of student and youth-led initiatives that promote solidarity. How are young people shaping transatlantic civic dialogue?

Jury



Alex Paul

German teacher, Walingford
Swarthmore School District, PA

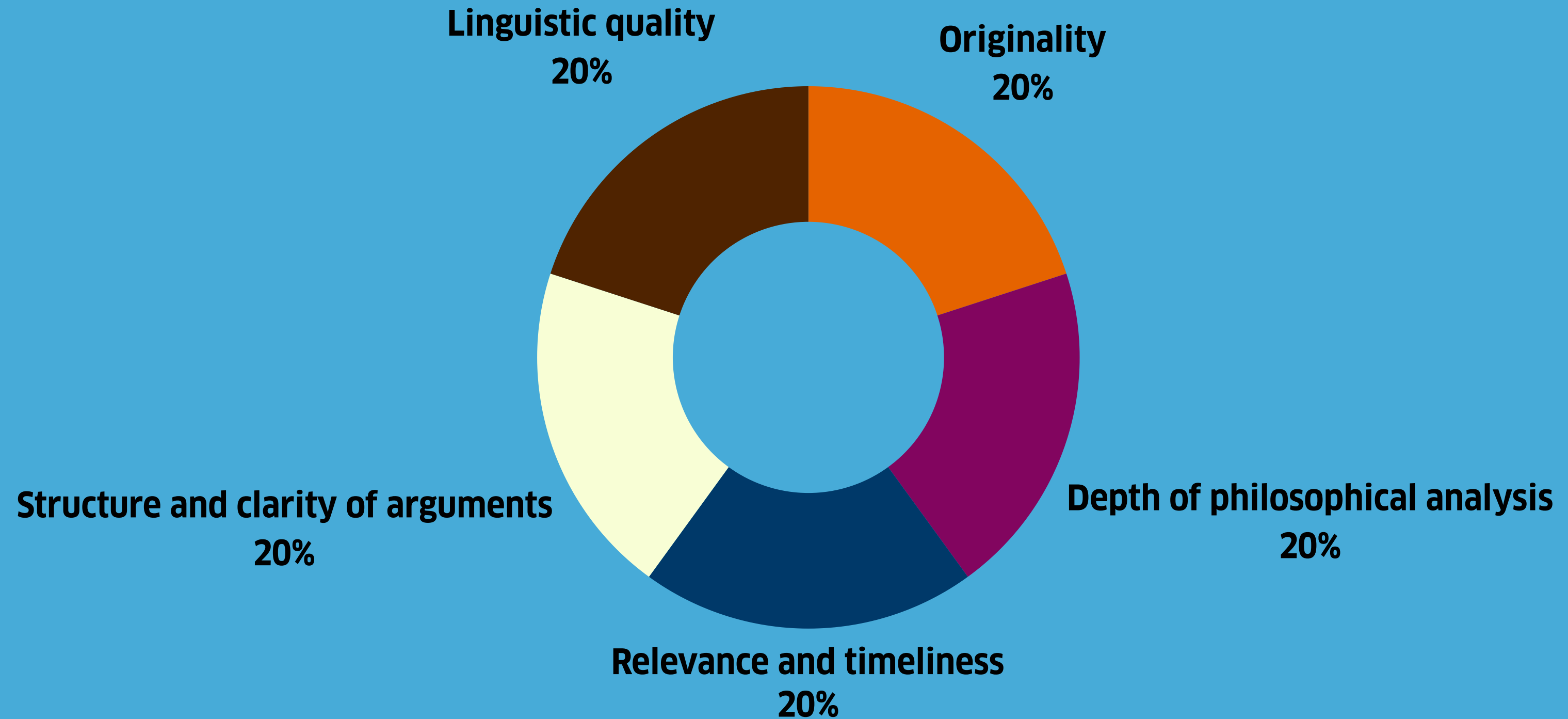


TBC



TBC

Evaluation Criteria



Competition Prizes

The top three high school and top three college student essays will be awarded the following prizes, along with an invitation to an in-person Awards Ceremony:



- Scholarship for a language course at the Goethe-Institut in Germany
- Prize package



- Scholarship for an online German language course by the Goethe-Institut USA
- Prize package



- Scholarship for an online German language course by the Goethe-Institut USA
- Prize package

All essay competition submissions will receive a certificate of participation

Preparatory Workshop Series

1

**GEMs: Solidarity and Cultural
Memory in the Classroom -
Implementing Materials from the
Goethe-Institut Creatively**

Date: 5/19/25

Time: 7pm ET

Target audience:
German teachers

2

TBC

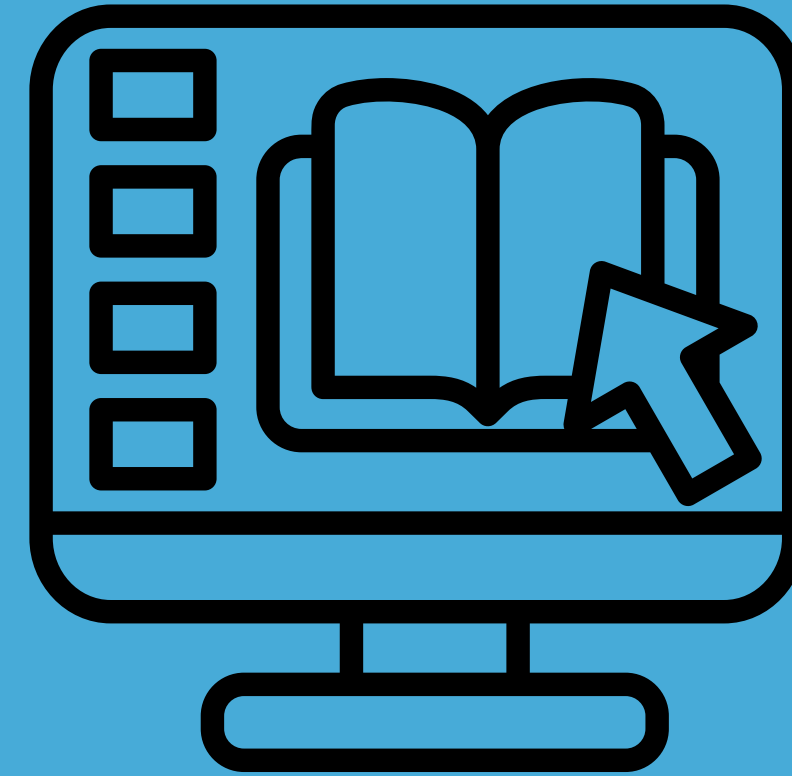
Target audience:
Students and teachers

3

TBC

Target audience:
Students

Resources:



www.goethe.de/usa/solidarityessay

Questions?



Contact: teacherservice-usa@goethe.de