

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER TO AWARD NEARLY \$200,000 TO STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS IN PHILADELPHIA AND MID-ATLANTIC REGION**

Philadelphia, PA (February 8, 2016) – The National Constitution Center will award nearly \$200,000 to local students and schools through short-story, playwriting, and essay contests for students and a civic literacy lesson plan contest for teachers. The contests include prizes of up to \$100,000 for the school with the winning civic literacy plan and up to \$10,000 for the student writing contests.

The contests are part of a multi-year, multi-project \$5.5 million grant awarded from the [John Templeton Foundation](#) to increase awareness of the rights established by the U.S. Constitution and founding documents.

**The Civic Literacy Contest**

The National Constitution Center's Civic Literacy Contest challenges public and independent school teachers in Philadelphia to develop multi-year plans to improve constitutional literacy, with the chance to earn cash prizes to implement the plans in their schools. Cash prizes ranging from \$100,000 for first place, \$50,000 for second place and \$25,000 for third place will be awarded to the winning teachers' schools. The Contest asks teachers and school administrators to develop lesson plans and materials that will use and support the Center's new Interactive Constitution within their classroom and school to enhance student learning.

The Center will hold a series of workshops that will provide teachers and administrators with hands-on support in the development of their submissions. Only one application accepted per school.

Click here for the [Civic Literacy Contest Entry Criteria, Workshops and Deadlines](#)

**Founding Freedoms Essay and Playwriting Contest**

The Founding Freedoms Essay and Playwriting Contest invites 6th, 8th, and 12th grade students to submit an essay in response to a grade-specific prompt for the chance to win a cash prize. 12th grade students also have the option of writing a play that, if chosen as the winning submission, will be performed live at the National Constitution Center by professional actors. The contest is open to students enrolled in a public or private school in the Mid-Atlantic region, including Delaware, Washington DC, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Six cash prizes, two per grade level, will be awarded to the winning submissions.

Click here for the [Founding Freedoms Contest Entry Criteria and Deadlines](#)

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### **Coalition of Freedom Short Story Contest**

The Coalition of Freedom Short Story Contest invites 11th grade students to compose short stories exploring the civic virtues embodied and demonstrated by the Founders during the drafting and ratification of the U.S. Constitution. The contest is open to students enrolled in a public or private school located in Philadelphia County.

The contest will award two cash prizes of \$10,000 and \$5,000.

Click here for the [Coalition of Freedom Short Story Entry Criteria and Deadlines](#)

### **About the National Constitution Center**

The [National Constitution Center](#) in Philadelphia inspires active citizenship as the only place where people across America and around the world can come together to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America's leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its Congressional charter "to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a non-partisan basis." As the **Museum of We the People**, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As **America's Town Hall**, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a center for **Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire, excite, and engage citizens about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org).

### **About the John Templeton Foundation**

The [John Templeton Foundation](#) serves as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to the Big Questions of human purpose and ultimate reality. The Foundation supports research on subjects ranging from complexity, evolution, and infinity to creativity, forgiveness, love, and free will. It encourages civil, informed dialogue among scientists, philosophers, and theologians and between such experts and the public at large. The Foundation's vision is derived from the late Sir John Templeton's optimism about the possibility of acquiring "new spiritual information" and from his commitment to rigorous scientific research and related scholarship. The Foundation's motto, "How little we know, how eager to learn," exemplifies its support for open-minded inquiry and its hope for advancing human progress through breakthrough discoveries.

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