

The Gerald O'Connell Essay Competition in Economics 2024

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce its second annual Gerald O'Connell Essay Competition in Economics. This competition is open to all Home students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attending a State School in the UK. We invite applicants to send in essays of **no more than 1,500 words** discussing one of the following questions:

1. "The main claim of microeconomic theory is that markets are beneficial institutions." Discuss.
2. High and stable economic growth, as measured by an annual percentage change in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), has long been targeted as a primary objective of governments' economic policies across the globe. Is GDP growth an adequate measure of a country's prosperity, a nation's well-being and an appropriate policy objective? Discuss

Gerald O'Connell

Gerald O'Connell (Fitzwilliam, Economics, 1970) was a teacher, musician, artist, businessman and blogger who inspired generations of talented students to come and study at Cambridge. Gerald taught economics at Leyton Senior High School for Girls, which later became Leytonstone School. His pupils include Sonita Alleyne OBE (Fitzwilliam, Philosophy, 1985), Master of Jesus College, Cambridge, and Dame Sharon White (Fitzwilliam, Economics, 1985), Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership, and Helen Sinclair (Newnham, Economics, 1984), venture capitalist.

Gerald described himself as "A working class boy from the east end of London". After a career in music, teaching and business he became an artist - painting, drawing and devising unique acrylic ink techniques for abstract and figurative work. He was also an independent blogger, writing on political economy and current affairs. Gerald encouraged large numbers of students from a wide range of backgrounds to aspire to study at Cambridge. This essay competition was established by some of Gerald's former pupils who went onto Cambridge; it is hoped that it will continue his legacy.

Competition Rules

This essay competition is for Home State School students in the UK in their penultimate year of education - Year 12 (Eng + Wales), S5 (Scotland), Y13 (NI). Applicants will be required to enter their details online and to either upload one PDF copy of their essay electronically **or** post a hard copy to:

Schools Liaison Officer
Fitzwilliam College
Cambridge
CB3 0DG

by **6pm on Friday 1st of March 2024**. If the PDF file is too large to submit to the online form, please email your submission to essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk. Further submission information can be found on the essay competition website: <https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/admissions/events-prospective-students/essay-competitions>.

Your submission must be entirely your own work. When submitting your essay you will need to provide contact information for one of your teachers and if necessary we may contact them to verify that your submission is entirely your own work. Students are only permitted to enter one competition and may only submit one entry to their chosen competition. There is a strict limit of five submissions per school for each essay competition. If more than five students from the same school enter the same competition, a teacher from that school will be contacted and asked to select the five entries; failure to do so will result in all submissions from the school to that competition being disqualified.

Essays should be less than 1,500 words long, and contain a list of works consulted and cited at the end. This bibliography is excluded from the word limit, but any footnotes are included. Guidance on referencing is available on the website. Applicants must ensure that pages are numbered and that their full name is on each page.

Prizes:

The prize fund (per competition) is £300 with a first prize of £200 and highly commended applicants being awarded a £25 book voucher. A prizegiving ceremony will be held in summer 2024.

For further information about the competition please contact:

essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.

For questions about the Economics course, please contact:

admissions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.