



Arts-based competition
for young people

Australia • New Zealand • Thailand • Vietnam



NEWSLETTER

Newsletter – Speaking 4 the Planet initiative

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Thank you! 2

A message from the founder

The entries 3

The results

Speaking 4

Writing 5

Art 6

Performance poetry 7



With our project, we aim to make meaningful contributions to the United Nations
SUSTAINABLE GOALS
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Thank you!



Speaking 4 the Planet 2023 offered students around Australia an opportunity to link global and local issues and ideas. The overarching topic for the competition was Edge of the Future. Participants had to discuss this in regard to one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) selected by the local council. All entries needed to combine futures thinking with the SDG selected by council.

Councils from around Australia helped fund this year's competition and support students in their LGAs to participate.

<https://speaking4theplanet.org.au/australia-2023-edge-of-the-future/>

Each council chose a locally-relevant SDG for their students. The SDG selected by most was SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production (8), followed by SDG13 – Climate Action (6) and SDG11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities (4).

S4P 2023 had four competition categories:

- Speaking – prepared speeches of up to 4mins.
- Writing – have your say in 30 words.
- Visual Arts – a range of materials/ styles can be used.
- Performance poetry – write and perform your own poem.

Thanks to all the Councils around Australia that supported this inaugural national S4P competition.

Thanks for the ongoing support from Paddy Pallin and the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre.

And thanks to the brave participants who put themselves and their ideas out to the world.

Next year, there will be another national online competition. Councils will be invited to consider hosting a local event. More on this in early 2024.

Phil

The entries

S4P 2023 attracted nearly 100 entries. They came from city and country and from five different States and Territories.

We received:

- 33 speeches
- 36 artworks
- 8 pieces of performance poetry
- 20 writing pieces.

What a joy to see these budding advocates for a better world! Participants seemed to love the notion of the 'edge of the future'. And they were able to link that to pressing local and global issues. They talked of...

- cliffs and endpoints
- choices about directions and steps away from the edge
- divisions and distinctions between sustainable and unsustainable ways of living
- the importance of connections between people – they did not lose sight of the human elements as they focused on the environmental issues
- the relationships between people and planet - some students said their participation helped them learn about those connections.

In places, there was sardonic humour – the irony of humanity's focus on small things whilst letting the big things get away from

us. There was doubt about the willingness – or not – of individuals to make changes themselves – the easy route is to just expect 'someone else' to change.

Yes, there was fear, there was anger. But there was also hope, and the submissions were rich with ideas as the students drew attention to – for example – the multiple crises caused by climate change and pleaded for human change.

Participants seemed to understand the complexity of the problems and their causes, as well as the complexities of repairing damage and building healthier systems to protect the environment.

These 90+ students will be a part of the shift to sustainability. In their own ways, all are spokespeople for a generation that calls for action to build a sustainable world for the future... their future.

How wonderful it would be to put these speakers and writers and artists and performers in front of local audiences. If you are able to achieve that in your LGA, the students would benefit enormously.

► ***My commitment beyond this competition: In the new year, I will run a one-hour session on public speaking for all the speakers and council staff who participated in the 2023 competition. I will communicate that to you in January.***

The results

Speaking

From amongst the 33, the judges found a winner and a runner-up. But they could not separate the next 3! After some deliberation, they agreed to award joint 3rd places

The judges – all speakers and educators – wanted me to stress that these speakers all excelled in key aspects of speechmaking... Well-trained and well-practised

The **winner** is **Roseanna Huang** from Brigidine College, St Ives, NSW

With a powerful voice, her speech delivers powerful messages about equity and sustainability.

<https://youtu.be/KI8P4riHeR8>

The **runner-up** is **Ashwini Aravinthan** from Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta NSW

Great use of verbal and non-verbal skills as she delivers a strong message.

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFs6A88G1Y/IdE0tTtelS4VbhYQSpKGLA/watch?utm_content=DAFs6A88G1Y&utm_campaign=share_your_design&utm_medium=link&utm_source=shareyourdesignpanel

Sharing third place are:

Sierra Lake from Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta, NSW

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f-wpUIGTaGQN27PDXYHh8JScZM--YB7O/view?usp=sharing>

Avryl Bergado from Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta, NSW

<https://youtu.be/6EiyJp30ewo>

Anthony Baaini from Parramatta Marist, Westmead, NSW

Clever shifts from the large to the small to large to the small.

<https://youtu.be/BVjyYYbBI-k>

► *To all speakers*

Individual feedback will not be given. However, here are three hints for all speakers.

First. Purpose matters. You must be clear and explicit in your purpose. Otherwise you leave the audience with disconnected pieces of a puzzle. You only have a few minutes. There's no time to have the audience guessing what your speech is about. You must be clear yourself, and you must tell the audience the purpose of your talk.

Second. Research says that much of the message is communicated and received non-verbally. Your body language matters. Please practice matching verbal and non-verbal elements. And know which points you want to emphasise. Then and use voice and body to achieve this.

Finally. You are submitting a video for a national competition. You have prepared the words and maybe you have practiced the delivery. But also, please ensure the background isn't an untidy, unmade bed! Or a bookshelf looking like it's going to fall on you. Find a space that is clear and clean...or appropriate to the purpose of your talk. Have the camera at eye height. Lift your chin. Speak up.

Writing

From the twenty entries, the judges selected two as **joint winners** in this category.

Aleksi Pearce and **Nicolas Lecuna** from Northside Montessori School, Pymble, NSW

*Reaching Net Zero Together
Recycle and reuse.
Reduce waste and emissions.
Research and responsibly make
choices.
Run or ride to work.
Reach out and educate others.
R you ready? Earth is!*

Mayurie Sivananthan from Abbotsleigh Girls College, Wahroonga, NSW

*Community in harmony, we
embrace change,
Reduce energy, waste, and
transport's carbon range.
Together we build a city,
sustainable and bright,
For healthier lives, a future shining
with light.*

Highly commended

Taylor Van Niekerk from Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School, Tweed Heads, NSW

Broken world

*A fire burns in our hearts
Mirrored by the toxic flames
burning our world
Harmful air dances around the
planet
The tears of a poisoned ocean
Fill our fractured Earth*

► To all writers

Stay on topic. Stay within the word limit. Submit your 16th draft! Writing is a process. Quality, precision, beauty come from writing and re-writing and re-writing....and re-writing.



Performance poetry

For only the second time, we included this category in the S4P competition. Eight students participated. Perhaps it's a new medium for lots of students. It invites creativity in text and actions. The competition support package provided information on performance poetry. Perform it. Don't just speak it. Make it a whole-body performance!

First place

McKayla Tan from Ravenswood School for Girls

The Weather Report

An excellent performance with great variation in voice and emotion and body language.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84oui7JTxEI>

Second place

Beatrice Broad from Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar College

A piece about solving global warming.

Shakespearean in content and delivery. A clear message expressed with passion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwzTRHTEj8M>

Highly commended

Victoria Chu from Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School

A clever rhyme about the impact of humans.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gRTmDM2CbDplnmMFkEh1vlb2Hq5Xv2uW/view?usp=sharing>

► *To all poetry performers*

Don't forget the performance part! There are some great words spoken...without any effort at performance. This category asks for more than simple recital. For this category, you may also want to think about a background other than a room.

► *Message to all participating councils*

If councils want emails of participants, please ask.

If you can provide prizes or gifts to participants in your LGA, please do. You may even wish to invite them to speak or perform or display their artworks and writing.

► *Message to all winners*

If you are a first place winner, please send a postal address to phil@speaking4theplanet.org.au

Emma Jessop from Paddy Pallin will arrange to have a prize sent to you.

Advice for the Future

To all participants

- Respond to the topic.
- Be clear in your purpose.
- Eschew clichéd responses.

Let your individual self, your voice, your personality rise to the surface of the submission

Be courageous. Now is not the time for dithering.