

# A SEA of words

INTERNATIONAL SHORT STORY CONTEST  
A SEA OF WORDS

16<sup>th</sup> edition

**Artificial Intelligence and Youths:  
Ethical Commitment and Critical Thinking**

Organised by



With the collaboration of



## A CONTEST WITH 16 YEARS OF HISTORY

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**A Sea of Words** is a contest created in 2008 by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) in collaboration with the Anna Lindh Foundation. The goal of this initiative is to **bring together the voices of young people** on subjects of interest that concern and affect them in the context of Euro-Mediterranean dialogue.

*Giving a voice to youths in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean and the European Union to strengthen debate and promote positive narratives on common challenges and shared values.*

Each year focuses on a current issue that challenges young people. This literary creation contest encourages sharing of ideas and reflections on the themes proposed through **creative writing**. By means of unpublished and original texts, narrating lived or fictitious experiences enables young people to contribute their personal and literary vision on shared issues and realities.

The authors of the 10 best stories – selected by an international jury – will be invited to **Barcelona on 9 November 2023** to participate for three days in the awards ceremony, creative workshop activities, and cultural exchanges. This year, the winners will participate in a workshop designed to identify and formulate proposals for the next edition.

## A SEA OF WORDS 2023

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The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the literary contest focuses on the following theme:

### **“Artificial Intelligence and Youths: Ethical Commitment and Critical Thinking”**

We are currently witnessing a new **change of paradigm** in which algorithms and new information technologies not only create and produce content but also interact with us to provide answers, help us make decisions or anticipate various situations. The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) does not seem to have limits and also opens up a whole universe of applications in different social, cultural and employment fields that affect us very directly.

AI provides a multitude of opportunities to accelerate necessary transformations but also poses **risks** that our societies will have to face. As AI becomes more sophisticated, it will influence decision-making and therefore have a greater impact on our lives.

Beyond its economic effects and in terms of progress, we are interested in exploring others that are related to our immediate social environment and behaviours, which involve new learning, changes in the concept of privacy, and new social relationships. An important consideration concerns the challenges that affect the new narratives, especially the creation of transmedia content and the latent danger of misinformation.

As people are affected by increasingly automated decision-making, **great challenges** arise in these fields, mainly in **ethical terms**. A negative conception and misuse of AI can exacerbate inequalities and social polarisation, bring about the loss of skills, or contribute to the creation of unreal realities. In particular, in a region like the Mediterranean with one of the world's biggest digital divides in terms of gender, AI risks creating more gender inequality and bias.

Given this new paradigm, it is essential to empower young people with the **right skills to enable them to think critically**, innovate and reduce uncertainty in the face of potential negative effects.

In this new contest, we invite **young European and Mediterranean authors to write a story about the impact of AI in their societies, particularly emphasising the dilemmas in terms of ethical values and criteria that it poses and how to promote talent and creativity in the face of exploitation and manipulation.**

Therefore, our aim is to **provide a space of participation** where young women and men can create and share critical thinking, thereby forging ahead in developing a democratic culture with a future.



A Sea of Words is a contest that sees literary creation as a tool that enables us to express convictions, share experiences and build Mediterranean imaginaries. And also as an instrument to combat false narratives and polarising messages that undermine understanding and dialogue. Thus, in this new contest, we propose through the literary message a reflection on people's autonomy in a digitised world; in other words, we invite you to actively contribute to the revolution of thinking in the face of the technological revolution.

**Participate by sending your short story to [concurso@iemed.org](mailto:concurso@iemed.org)  
UNTIL 25 JUNE**

## CONDITIONS

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- Participation is open to young people between 18 and 30 years of age at the deadline for submission of the texts (1993-2005).
- People with nationality and residence from one of the 43 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean area\*.
- The story must be original and may be written in any of the official languages of the 43 states of the Euro-Mediterranean space. Only one piece per author will be accepted.
- The text cannot exceed the maximum length of 2,500 words.
- People who have been selected in any of the previous editions are not eligible.
- The document must be sent in Word format to the following address: [concurso@iemed.org](mailto:concurso@iemed.org). The message must include the title of the work along with the author's personal data: name, telephone number, postal address, email address and date of birth.
- The selected works will be published in a book in digital format with the texts in the original language and their corresponding translation into English.

\* If a person with nationality from one of the Euro-Mediterranean countries but residing outside that area wishes to participate, the travel costs to Barcelona will only be assumed from a Euro- Mediterranean country.

## MORE INFORMATION

[www.iemed.org/sea-of-words-edition](http://www.iemed.org/sea-of-words-edition)