

Country to Canberra

# Leadership Competition Resource Document

Version 2

## CONTENTS

Contents	2
Welcome	3
Who we are	3
What is the Leadership Competition	3
Who can I contact for more information?	3
Leadership Competition Prize - The Power Trip	4
How to Apply	5
Selection Criteria	6
Previous Winning Entries	7
Terms and Conditions - Eligibility	11
Terms and Conditions - Submissions	12

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1.0	Version 1	08/07/2023
2.0	Version 2	12/07/2024

## WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in Country to Canberra, our Leadership Competition and Power Trip. This resource guide has been designed to contain all the information needed to apply for Country to Canberra's 2024 Leadership Competition. If, after reading this guide, you still have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our friendly team.

## WHO WE ARE

Country to Canberra is an Australian not-for-profit that is empowering young rural women and non-binary people to reach their leadership potential. Founded in 2014, we run national initiatives that provide leadership opportunities, inspire self-belief, and uniquely, connect young rural people with tools and networks to breakdown gender and geographical barriers to success.

**Our Mission: To empower young rural women and non-binary people to reach their leadership potential.**

## WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP COMPETITION

*Leadership Competition and Power Trips:* Country to Canberra runs a nationwide leadership competition about gender equality for high school students in rural and remote Australia. After having their work published, the competition winners are awarded a Power Trip to Canberra where they meet with politicians and influential role models, connect with mentors, undertake leadership and public speaking training, tour Parliament, connect with other young trailblazers and much more!

## WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you want more information, please contact the Country to Canberra Leadership Competition Team at [leadershipcompetition@countrytocanberra.com.au](mailto:leadershipcompetition@countrytocanberra.com.au)

## LEADERSHIP COMPETITION PRIZE - THE POWER TRIP

Winners of our Leadership Competition will be awarded an exclusive, all-expenses paid 5-day Power Trip to Canberra, including:

### Leadership and Empowerment Training

- Award-winning Country to Canberra Project Empower workshop to develop an understanding of diversity, build your self-esteem, and learn to apply your values.
- Targeted public speaking and presentation workshops from industry professionals.
- Personalised leadership coaching and support.

### Networking Opportunities

- Q&As with CEO's, industry leaders, and inspiring activists.
- Powerful discussions and private meetings with state and federal politicians.
- The chance to connect with other incredible like-minded people from all across rural and remote Australia!

### Careers Coaching

- An inspiring careers fair, with opportunities to discuss diverse careers and pathways with industry trailblazers.
- Future focused goal setting support from the University of Canberra.

Runners-up will also have their competition entries published on the Country to Canberra website as part of the 'Top 40' and promoted on social media.

### Other incredible perks include:

- Access to our exclusive Alumni Network, and additional networking opportunities
- An inspiring winners pack, full of incredible merchandise, resources, information, and goodies!
- Winning entries will be published on the Country to Canberra website, as well as by our sponsors and key partners to provide national exposure.

## HOW TO APPLY

### What do I need to do?

To apply for the Leadership Competition, you need to submit a response to the 2024 Leadership Competition Question:

### **You can't be what you can't see. How do women and non-binary leaders in your community inspire you to make change?**

This response can take any of the following formats. Be creative! If you have a format in mind that isn't covered here, reach out to us! We are more than happy for you to be as creative as you like in your entry!

- Written entry: 450-600 word response - for example essay, story, poem, blog post, listicle or article.
- Video entry: 3-4 minute video. Video must include the participant or their voice narration. Video must be submitted via a private or public YouTube account and the link is provided as part of the submission. Landscape (horizontal) view is preferred.
- Art entry: an art piece accompanied by a 300-450 word response justifying the piece in the context of the competition question. The artwork must be scanned or photographed and attached as a jpeg or pdf file as part of the submission.

### How will you mark my application?

Your application will be reviewed by the Country to Canberra team and an external Selection Panel. All applications are assessed and rated against the 2024 Selection Criteria. It is advised that you look at the selection criteria to guide your response.

# SELECTION CRITERIA

Question: You can't be what you can't see. How do women and non-binary leaders in your community inspire you to make change?

Consideration	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Exploration of the role of diverse leaders in strengthening rural communities.</b>	The response was a sophisticated exploration of the question and was delivered in an inspiring and powerful way.	The response was a clear exploration of the question and was delivered in a clear and considered way.	The response was a general exploration of the question.	The response discussed gender-related issues that departed from the question.	No evidence.
<b>Exploration of leadership and/or other relevant qualities for inspiring young people.</b>	The response demonstrated an excellent grasp of a range of qualities and explained why they are important.	The response explored a number of qualities and suggested their importance.	The response explored at least one quality.	The response made reference(s) to or alluded to a quality or trait(s).	No evidence.
<b>Quality of examples</b>	Examples provided were outstanding, intelligent, and used to enhance the overall argument.	The example(s) provided were relevant and made the piece relatable and engaging.	The example(s) provided were thoughtful and considered.	The example(s) provided were simple and unidimensional.	No examples provided.
<b>Articulation of passion through coherent exploration of relevant themes, ideas, and concepts</b>	Passion about the topic is invigorating and communicated clearly and consistently throughout.	Passion about topic is communicated clearly and consistently throughout.	Passion about the topic is communicated clearly throughout most of the piece.	Passion about the topic is evident, and generally communicated.	No passion evident.
<b>Coherence and flow</b>		Coherent, controlled, and complete themes. All ideas were well developed.	Ideas are grouped into themes – with some overlaps and/or weaker stronger ideas.	Attempted to group ideas into themes.	No evidence of structure or organisation of ideas.
<b>Persuasion and engagement</b>		Sustained and effective use of persuasive devices and appealed to one or more of the reader's reason, values or emotion.	Used some devices that persuade.	Used a statement(s) of personal opinion(s).	Limited evidence of an attempt to persuade and engage the audience.
<b>Written technical elements</b>			Spelling, punctuation and grammar enhances meaning and understanding.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar minimally impacts meaning and understanding.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar significantly impacts meaning and understanding.
<b>Visual technical elements</b>			Composition enhances meaning and understanding.	Composition minimally impacts meaning and understanding.	Composition significantly impacts meaning and understanding.

## PREVIOUS WINNING ENTRIES

**Sithmi Konara**, 2021 Winner, Rockhampton Queensland

Video Entry: <http://countrytocanberra.com.au/winner-2021-sithmi-konara/>



**Olivia Titley**, 2020 Winner, Charters Towers Queensland

Video Entry:

<http://countrytocanberra.com.au/winner-2020-olivia-titley/>



More examples can be found at

<http://countrytocanberra.com.au/leadership-competition/>

## PREVIOUS WINNING ENTRIES CONTINUED

Denise McCarthy, 2023 Winner, Tatura East Victoria

### ***Strong communities, stronger futures: How do diverse young leaders strengthen rural communities?***

In the vast tapestry of society, rural communities stand as resilient threads, often overlooked but integral to the fabric of a nation's identity and progress. While the connection between strong communities and prosperous futures is undeniable, this link is further fortified by the emergence of diverse young leaders who infuse energy, innovation, and a commitment to change. Diversity in leadership brings a kaleidoscope of perspectives that foster innovation and creative problem-solving. Young leaders from various ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds bring unique viewpoints to the table. By challenging the status quo, they invigorate rural communities with renewed optimism. These trailblazers, hailing from various backgrounds and experiences, are catalysts for positive transformation, propelling rural communities towards more vibrant, connected, and promising futures.

Strong communities are built on the foundation of inclusivity. Diverse young leaders are skilled at harnessing the positive energy of communities to ensure that marginalised voices are heard and their needs are met. They amplify the concerns of minorities, advocate for social justice, and promote equitable distribution of resources. In doing so, they cultivate an atmosphere of unity and empathy that resonates across generations.

Varsha Yajman, a nineteen-year-old speaker, podcaster, and supporter of mental health and climate justice, is a model example of how diverse leaders can strengthen rural communities. She has organised events for the Australian Youth Climate Coalition and School Strike for Climate. Varsha is currently a paralegal at Equity Generation Lawyers, a firm that handles climate change litigation, and a coordinator of SAPNA (South Asian Climate Solidarity Network). Her inclusive leadership is evident through her work and her podcast, 'Not to be Controversial', which aims to develop a community where young South Asians can feel powerful and represented.

Diverse young leaders bring an infectious enthusiasm that encourages youth engagement and participation. In many rural areas, the departure of young people in search of opportunities elsewhere has led to a decline in community vitality. However, these leaders serve as beacons of hope, inspiring their peers to stay engaged and invested in their hometowns. In an era defined by rapid technological advancements, young leaders with a deep understanding of technology's potential bridge the gap between tradition and progress.

Josh Murray is a young person who utilised technology to establish a successful, sustainable farming business. At just nine years old, Josh started with a few hens in his backyard, fast-forward over a decade and he has transformed his hobby into a business selling thousands of dozens of eggs per year to Woolworths, Coles and local independent retailers in Victoria. The business has even developed a unique model of free-range egg production, with mobile solar powered sheds, custom designed and made in Melbourne. Josh's business 'Rainbow Eggs' is highly efficient, fully automated and powered entirely by a 3KW off-grid solar system, allowing workers to move the sheds to fresh pasture thus constantly enhancing the soil, plant and insect life on our farm. For his innovation and creation, Josh was awarded the 2019 Victorian Young Achiever Award for Environmental Sustainability.

The confluence of diverse young leaders and rural communities is a reciprocal relationship that holds the promise of a brighter future. By recognising and nurturing the potential of these leaders, societies can unlock the transformative power that lies within rural communities and ensure that their contributions resonate for generations to come. In this partnership, the potential for growth is boundless, and the bond between stronger communities and stronger futures is etched with promise.



## PREVIOUS WINNING ENTRIES CONTINUED

Kayanne Lewis, 2020 Winner, Ernabella (Pukatja) South Australia

### ***LIFTING US UP – How can women and girls empower each other and their communities in times of uncertainty and change***

Katuralanya Kanyini ãõñ Lifting us up

By Kayanne Lewis

My grandmother is the most important woman in my life. She is strong and supportive. Her words constantly encourage me to stay at school and keep learning. This year I will be the first student in a decade to complete SACE on country and in my community. My community is very different to country towns and city centres of Australia. I live in the very remote central desert; my language is Pitjantjatjara and my culture has evolved from more than 70,000 years in this place – it keeps us strong. The challenges we face as women and girls in our community are like that which other girls and women face globally however, being Anangu adds another layer of disempowerment and voicelessness to our story.

This year has been too hard. It has been hard for everyone all over the world. In February 2020, Anangu felt scared about Coronavirus and its impact on people and community. In March everything shut down. In the APY Lands, shops stopped selling fuel, the art centre closed, there was uncertainty about whether school would close, the old people in aged care were sent to Adelaide, the youth program was closed and the youth worker left, we were restricted from travelling between communities, and funerals stopped. This meant we could not hunt for food; adults were without income to support their families; people could not get home to community and were stuck all over the place; our grandmothers and grandfathers were in a foreign place with no family; and the children had no afterschool activities and no bush trips for on country learning. As part of the federal bio-security act most of these decisions were out of our control – in an isolated community we were even further isolated.

Even though corona virus has been scary and hard in the uncertainty and change for community, women have stayed strong. Women have always been strong. My grandmothers, aunts and mothers have shown me this. Women work hard in lots of ways. They care for family, help each other when there is fighting and violence and help keep culture strong by taking us young girls out bush and telling us stories. When I have fight with my friends my Aunties help me, they help us talk and calm down. Compared to the men in community, almost all women have a job. My sister-cousin Eva, (Anangu way) has two jobs, she works at the clinic helping keep people to be safe and at the school, helping children learn. Lots of the jobs that women have not only supports their family but support the whole community. An important job is working for NPY Women Council, they have a strong Anangu voice for women. They help with domestic violence, when women need food or clothes, and help make change for women's health and wellbeing.

I learn from the women around me, they have taught me to be strong. With this strength I can empower girls to be strong and empower each other. By finishing school, I am a role model for valuing education. We can also empower women and girls by teaching and empowering the boys in our community because the strength and safety of women and girls is their responsibility too.

Ngayulu Anangu Pitjantjatjara kungka munu ngayulu kunpu munu ngayulu ninti ngayuku tjukuparku. Panya empower-milantjaku ngayuku kiminiti nganana mukuri nganyi, kutjupa tjutangka kulintjatku nganampa tjukurpa munu tjataringkula nintiringkutjaku nganampa wai. I am a strong proud Anangu Pitjantjatjara girl, I know my story. To empower my community, we need others to listen to our story and start to understand our way.

## PREVIOUS WINNING ENTRIES CONTINUED

Elora Guirguis, 2021 Winner, Wagga Wagga NSW

### ***COURAGE TO CHALLENGE: what is the role of rural women in driving change in their communities?***

They are as sweet as the nectar they seek – each one embellished with the brilliant yellow of sunny daydreams and reassuringly dark bands. Into the honeyed light of day they come, blessing each flower as they pass. Bees, despite their minutest frame, hold what is key to replenishing our earth and protecting ecological balance so that humans can survive – pollen.

Just as bees ensure our replenishment and survival, so too do rural women as they hold leadership qualities to constantly take on various roles within their communities. These qualities spark changes and thus prosperity to then fit members' growing needs.

Without our bees, there cannot be enough to sustain our population. And yet, despite their nourishment, humans take the sweetness, the warmth of their honey, and mercilessly trample them underfoot. Just as so, women's efforts are often underappreciated, overlooked, ignored; nevertheless, they continue to drive change and create new transformational pathways for each other...

We are volunteers.

Women often play a role in community changes and development by aiding organisations within rural communities with nothing in return. A study led by the University of Melbourne found that women are more likely to volunteer.

We are supporters.

Women constantly face uncertainty, thus affecting their well-being. In fact, the Beyond Blue organisation states that women aged 16-24 had the highest rate of psychological distress of any age group or sex in 2017-18. Rural women, however, often aim to change this by empowering and supporting one another and the community. The Worn-Kind youth organisation within my regional NSW town, for instance, had a young female ambassador. She ran various social activities to change current stigmas and close the gap in effective emotional support and education for fellow adolescent girls.

We are activists.

We are Sabina Yasmin. Women, though often viewed as weak, play an imperative role in fighting for the rights of members within their rural communities – as activists. Their participation at the forefront is essential in effectively leading to community change. Sabina, a rural woman located near Bangladesh, is a great example. Disabled since 6 months old, she became a disability activist and helped form a local women's council.

We are resourceful. We are Esther Nyaga.

In spite of doubt and limited resources within rural communities, our women continue to make a difference. For instance, in the face of residing within a poorer community in Kenya, a woman named Esther Nyaga worked with community groups in her area to coordinate the planting and care of thousands of trees to tackle climate change.

As leaders, women now often hold an active role in leading initiatives and economic dynamics that create positive changes in the socio-economic development of rural areas (as made clear by Bourke and Luloff, 1997). They are more responsive to the people they govern and thus bring out necessary changes and stability within their communities in times of uncertainty. In this ever-changing world, these qualities are essential for community survival. Don't you agree? Despite the underappreciation we receive, we rural women will continue to pollinate our communities. We empower each other and our rural communities. We will not be torn by the ever-growing winds of misogyny and underappreciation. Instead, in a meditative buzz of togetherness, we, the bees, will sing our way through these winds in harmony. Small, but mighty, we strive to make a difference.

We are change-makers, sprinkling sustenance wherever we go. We are the bees of our rural communities. And we will fight until we receive the recognition we deserve.

Just think – where would we be without our bees?

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS - ELIGIBILITY

**NOTE: Our Terms and Conditions are available in full on our website. However, we have included key eligibility and submission information below.**

To win the Power Trip prize, entrants must be:

1. Female/female identifying/non-binary students who are attending school in grades 10, 11 or 12 in 2024;
2. Be 15 years of age by 16 November 2024;
3. Attend a school or TAFE that fits with the below criteria.

For students in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, entrants must:

- a) Attend a school categorised by MySchool ([www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)) as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote; OR
- b) Not attend any school categorised as being within a Major City.

For students in Tasmania and the Northern Territory, entrants must:

- a) Attend a school categorised by MySchool ([www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)) as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote; and
- b) Not attend a school located in the state or territory capital city. Schools in the following postcodes are determined to be part of the capital city and surrounding suburbs, and are ineligible.  
- Darwin - 0800, 0801, 0804, 0810, 0811, 0812, 0813, 0814, 0815, 0820, 0821, 0822, 0828, 0829, 0830, 0831, 0832  
- Hobart - 7000, 7001, 7004, 7005, 7007, 7008, 7009, 7010, 7011, 7015, 7016, 7017, 7018, 7019, 7021, 7030, 7050, 7052, 7053, 7055, 7170
- a) Entrants attending boarding school in Darwin and Hobart are eligible if they are from a regional or remote town. For example, a student in Tasmania could attend boarding school in Hobart, and still enter the competition if they came from Wynyard. Country to Canberra reserves the right to determine eligibility.

For students from Australian external territories, the Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Norfolk Island, the Jervis Bay Territory, the Ashmore and Cartier Islands, and the Coral Sea Islands, are eligible to apply.

Entrants from these territories will be considered together with entrants from the following states for marking and eligibility purposes:

- a) Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Ashmore and Cartier Islands - Western Australia, and
- b) Norfolk Island - New South Wales
- c) Coral Sea Islands - Queensland

For students attending TAFE, entrants must:

- a) be enrolled in a TAFE program listed on the relevant state or territory TAFE locations website, and
- b) the TAFE suburb must be categorised by MySchool ([www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)) as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote

Australian Capital Territory students are ineligible to apply.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS - SUBMISSIONS

To submit an entry:

1. Entries must be submitted via the Country to Canberra [Leadership Competition Entry Portal](#) by 11.59 pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) on 16 August 2024.
2. Submit in one of the formats listed on Page 5 of this document.

Country to Canberra reserves the right to use its discretion if an entry exceeds format limit and parameters. Entries must be in English, written or spoken.

Reasonable adjustments and special consideration are available for students with unique individual circumstances including, barriers arising from language, submission format, and educational disadvantage. More information on this can be found in the full T&C's on our website.

### Additional Terms & Conditions

1. Only one entry per person is allowed.
2. Previous Country to Canberra competition winners (those that visited Canberra on the 'Power Trip' or participated in 'C2C On Screen' in 2020 and/or 2021) are not eligible for the 2023 prize. Previous finalists (Top 40) can enter.
3. Parents/Legal Guardians of competition winners must be willing to sign a Talent Release Form. Parents/Legal Guardians of the competition winners must also be willing to sign a legal consent form, and a medical form. This form allows the winners to travel to Canberra between 25 November 2023 and 29 November 2023. If not, the Power Trip prize will be revoked.
4. Winners must be available to travel to Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory, unaccompanied, between 15 November 2024 and 20 November 2024 and attend all Power Trip events.

Country to Canberra is cognisant of the fact that final exams may impede on the ability for some students to be able to travel on these dates. Unfortunately, Country to Canberra is unable to change the Power Trip dates and therefore, students must be available on the specified dates. If a winner is unable to attend after being selected, the prize will be provided to a runner-up. Efforts will be made to provide the affected individual with mentoring and other opportunities as deemed appropriate by Country to Canberra.

In submitting an entry to the 2024 Country to Canberra Leadership Competition, you declare that the entry provided is your own work and has not been published previously by another website or entered into another competition. You have read all of the terms and conditions and agree to abide by them.



Country to Canberra

**THANK  
YOU**