

6th October 2014

Re. Graduate.ie Active Citizenship and Democracy Programme – Online Competition

Dear CSPE Co-ordinator,

I would be most grateful if you would bring **Graduate.ie** Online Competition to the attention of teachers and students in your school by displaying the attached poster and sharing this letter. Outlined below you will find information about how **Graduate.ie** works and about the benefits to students taking part:

How Graduate.ie Works

- **Graduate.ie** is a government (local and national) and EU funded citizenship and democracy programme for post-primary students in Ireland
- It has been operating successfully since 2001
- The competition operates for twenty weeks of the academic year
- Students compete to win free educational trips to Washington DC and Strasbourg
- Each sponsoring organisation provides **Graduate.ie** with twenty questions for the weekly competition, i.e. one question each week for a total of twenty weeks of the academic year
- There is no financial pressure on or exposure to young people, their families, their teachers, their schools or youth groups
- Each week students log on to **Graduate.ie** and select their Local Authority Area/County where they will be given access to one question from each sponsor
- Students are directed by hyperlinks back to each sponsor's webpages where they can carry out their research to find the correct answers
- Students submit their answers to **Graduate.ie**
- Winners are randomly selected from all the correct answers at the end of the twenty-week competition

Benefits for Students

- Students and through them, their parents/guardians and families, learn about how national and local government works
- They become more aware of the importance of their local community and local democracy
- They learn about the importance of voting, how to get on the register of electors and how to vote
- They become more aware of the types of services, and the extent of these, provided by their local authority
- They learn about the local Enterprise Office and entrepreneurship
- They learn more about their environment, sustainability and waste management
- They learn about housing, planning, libraries, leisure facilities, the fire service and other local services
- Students are provided with opportunities to win fantastic educational prizes, e.g. free trips to Washington DC and to *Euroscola* (Youth Parliament) in the European Parliament in Strasbourg

Yours sincerely,

Martin Heneghan,
Programme Co-ordinator