



"Dreaming Lebanon" Contest – 2026

"Let the Walls Speak"

Regulations

Article 1: Presentation of the Contest

For the fourth consecutive year, within the framework of the "Dreaming Lebanon" contest, Banque BEMO, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the National Commission for UNESCO, the Institut français du Liban, Librairie Antoine, L'Orient-Le Jour, and Assabil Association, is launching the 2026 edition under the theme "Let the Walls Speak."

This contest aims to restore hope among young Lebanese by inviting them to explore and reclaim Lebanon, past and present, through writing, in order to dream the Lebanon of tomorrow. This project is an educational initiative that encourages discovery of others and an effort to root or re-root a generation that embodies the Lebanon of the future.

Article 2: Categories and Participants

The contest is open to:

- Young Lebanese, both residents and non-residents
- University students
- High school students (Grades 10, 11, and 12)
- Maximum age: 25 years old

Each participant may submit **only one text**, and must be its sole author. Participation implies an honor statement confirming the authenticity of the submitted work.

Article 3: Contest Theme

The theme for the 2026 edition is "Let the Walls Speak."

Participants are invited to choose a place or an object from Lebanon's heritage, located within their close environment (home, neighborhood, village, school, university, etc.), and give it a voice.

The chosen subject may belong to tangible or intangible heritage, material or symbolic, such as: a ruin, a house, a mosque, a fresco, an ancient tree, a fortress, or an engraved stone etc..

The text must:

- Be written in the first person, adopting the perspective of the place or object
- Give voice, memory, and emotion to that chosen element

Article 4: Format and Guidelines

- **Narrative perspective:** The voice of the place or object is mandatory
- **Form Free:** Prose, poetry, monologue, letter, diary, tale, fable, etc.
- **Languages accepted:** French, Arabic, or English
- **Length:** Maximum 800 words (approximately 4,500 characters including spaces), with a tolerance up to 1,000 words (5,500 characters including spaces).
- **File format:** Word document (.doc or .docx), A4 page size, readable font (Calibri 12 or equivalent), single spacing.
- Participants must include their full name, phone number, email address, and the name of their affiliated academic institution. **This information will remain strictly confidential** and will not be shared with the jury, which deliberates under complete anonymity.

Article 5: Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence tools is tolerated, provided it does not exceed 15% of the total text.

Article 6: Suggested Lines of Inspiration

a. The Witness of History

- A Beirut house recounting the lives of its residents
- A Roman temple or the ruins of the Umayyad or Crusader eras
- A damaged mosque or church bearing memories of peace and war

b. The Guardian of Collective Memory

- A millennial cedar or an ancient mosaic
- A deserted cinema or a forgotten hammam

c. The Object that Questions the Present

- A silent statue observing the city
- A graffiti wall crying out rebellion
- A dry fountain echoing a voice of absence

d. A Poetic or Metaphorical Voice

- Walls that sigh, stones that weep
- A symbolic, dreamlike, or fantastical narrative

Article 7: Submission

Texts must be submitted no later than February 28, 2026, by email to:
✉ reverleliban@bemobank.com

The email must include:

- First and last name of the participant
- Phone number
- Email address
- Name of the affiliated institution

Article 8: Selection Process

A pre-selection may be conducted in advance at the discretion of schools and universities if they wish.

The selection of the best text in each of the three languages (French, Arabic, English) and for each category (university / high school) will be carried out by a jury composed of representatives from the partners, writers, and experts. Specific criteria related to thematic coherence, emotional impact, originality, and overall effectiveness will be taken into account in the evaluation process.

The jury's assessment will be based on the following elements:

- Coherence with the theme
- Emotional depth and imagination
- Language quality
- Originality of voice

The jury's deliberations are confidential, and its decisions are final. No appeals will be accepted.



Article 9: Awards

Prizes will be awarded to the top three winners in each category and language (French, Arabic, English).

University Level:

- 1st Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 300 + a 15-day internship at *L'Orient-Le Jour*
- 2nd Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 200
- 3rd Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 100

High School Level:

- 1st Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 300
- 2nd Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 200
- 3rd Prize (French, Arabic, English): USD 100

Additionally, winners and all published authors will receive a one-year subscription to the Institut français du Liban library network (Beirut, Deir el Qamar, Jounieh, Zahlé, Saïda, and Tripoli).

Article 10: Publication of Texts

By participating, contestants grant the organizers and their partners the non-exclusive, universal, irrevocable, and royalty-free right to use, reproduce, distribute, publish, and display the submitted texts for promotional, educational, and other purposes, including publication on the organizers' websites and in local press. The best texts will be compiled into a printed and digital collection published by Librairie Antoine. Participants retain copyright to their works but agree that the organizers and their partners may use them in accordance with the terms stated above without further consent or compensation.

Article 11: Right of Publicity

Participants agree that their names and photos may be published in newspapers and on the organizers' and partners' social media platforms as part of the promotion of the contest and results announcement.

Article 12: Political Neutrality

Any text containing explicit or implicit political statements that go against the principles of coexistence, which are the essence of Lebanon, will be automatically disqualified from the contest. The contest aims to be a space for unity, dialogue, and collective imagination.

Article 13: Disputes and Disagreements

Participation in the contest implies full and unconditional acceptance of these regulations in all their stipulations.

1. Adult participants (age > 18 years old) automatically accept the regulations by participating.
2. Minor participants (age < 18 years old) must submit, along with their works, a signed authorization from their parents or legal guardians (Annex 1).

If condition 2 is not met, the works cannot be accepted.

Article 14: Timeline

- Launch of the new edition: **October 10, 2025**
- Deadline for submission of texts: **February 28, 2026**
- Award ceremony: **April 25, 2026**
- Presentation of the published collection: **Festival Beyrouth Livres 2026**

This regulation applies to the 2026 edition of the "Dreaming Lebanon" contest. Participants are encouraged to follow updates on the website www.reverleliban.com and on the social media platforms of Banque BEMO and its partners.

Annex 1: Parental Authorization for participation in the 2026 competition "Dreaming Lebanon" for participants under 18 years old

"Let the Walls Speak"

I, the undersigned, [**Name of parent/legal guardian**], acting as the legal guardian of [**Participant's name**], born on [**Participant's date of birth**], hereby authorize the participation of my child in the writing contest organized by **Banque BEMO**, in accordance with the regulations established for the said competition.

I certify that I have read and understood the contest regulations, including all conditions, eligibility criteria, and rights related to participation.

I approve the terms stated in the regulations and consent to my child's participation in the competition in compliance with these rules.

I understand that this authorization is required to allow my child to fully participate in the contest, including the possibility of their name and/or photo being used in the promotion of the event.

Done at [**Location**], on [**Date**]

Signature of the parent/legal guardian with the mention "Good for Agreement":

Name of the parent/legal guardian: _____

Contact information of the parent/legal guardian:

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Name of the student: _____