



LETTER CIRCULAR

Date: 5th October 2021 **Ref:** DLAP 236/2021
To: All Heads of College Network and Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State)
From: Isabel Zerafa – Education Officer, Primary (Science)
Subject: Thematic STEM Debate – Primary (Year 6 students)

Heads of School are kindly informed that the Science Centre (Pembroke) within the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes is launching the 3rd edition of the Thematic STEM Debate which has been extended to the Primary Sector. The aim of this initiative is to engage students to become active critical thinkers and skilled debaters.

Through active participation in the debate, students will:

- Examine ideas, reports, audio-visual material and policies;
- Verify the value of evidence for concepts;
- Recognize strengths and weaknesses of arguments;
- Engage with opposing views and speak strategically.

This year's Thematic STEM debate for the primary sector will focus on *Genetically Modified Food*. In preparation for the Thematic STEM debate, student participants together with their mentors are requested to carefully read and analyse the document 'From Field to Fork: Genetically modified food'. The document, which includes related audio-visual resources and links for further research/reading can be accessed through the Primary Science website under the section [STEM Initiatives](#).

The following criteria will be used by a team of professionals to adjudicate the debate:

- organization and clarity – main arguments and responses presented in a clear/orderly way;
- use of argument – response given to support the arguments;
- use of cross-examination and rebuttal – identification of weaknesses in other's arguments and ability to defend own arguments.
- presentation style – tone of voice, clarity of expression, precision of arguments.

The Thematic STEM Debate will be held on Friday 3rd December 2021 from 10.00 am to noon at MUŻA, The Malta National Community Art Museum, Auberge D'Italie, Merchant Street, Valletta.

Each school can nominate **one Year 6** student by accessing the **registration [LINK](#) by Friday 19th November 2021**. Registrations are on a first come first served basis. Kindly note that travel to and from MUŻA, Valletta should be coordinated by the participating school. All COVID-19 protocols and measures will be adhered to throughout the event.

Three participants will be presented the *Top Debater Award*. Winners will be announced towards the end of the debate. Certificates of participation will be presented to all students while winners will be awarded a limited-edition commemorative coin celebrating the 15 years membership of Malta in the EU by the European Commission Representation in Malta.

Any queries can be put forward to Mr Christopher Buttigieg, Head of Department, Primary (Science) on christopher-john.buttigieg@ilearn.edu.mt.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sandra Ebejer
Director,
Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes