



# MUN Research & Position Papers

2024–2025



# Intro to Position Papers

## **What is a position paper?**

A position paper is a brief research paper on your country's views on your committee topic. Position papers are **REQUIRED FOR ANY AWARDS AT LOS AL**, and you can win a research award if you write a strong one!

## **Why should I write one?**

Like previously mentioned, position papers come with an award opportunity! They also really help you organize your research and make it much easier to give an impromptu speech or comment in committee.

## **Are they hard to write?**

Nope! As long as you do thorough research, understand it, and keep a list of sources, they're pretty simple (they just take some time)! Make sure to give yourself at least a week to research and at least another week to write. This is not something you can procrastinate.

# How Do I Write My Position Paper?

**They usually have four sections.**

1. **Background:** general statistics, facts, and history of your committee issue on a global scale  
\*This is the shortest section in your paper.
2. **UN Involvement:** previous UN campaigns, resolutions, documents, etc.  
\*This can get confusing, so leave plenty of time for this section.
3. **Country Policy:** your country's laws, publications, speeches, organizations, funding, beliefs, programs, or actions (or lack thereof) that pertain to the issue
4. **Solutions:** your country's future plans to deal with the issue; you want other countries in your committee to adopt these plans  
\*The most important and most detailed section—you can build off existing solutions or come up with something new (just make sure it aligns with your country policy).

# This Sounds Difficult. Where Do I Start?

## 1. Read your committee background guide.

- Linked under your committee topic on the conference website
  - [www.lahsmun.com/novice-committees1.html](http://www.lahsmun.com/novice-committees1.html)
- It contains outlining questions that give you a general idea of what to research.

## 2. Look at the provided rubric and outline.

- Los Al specific format:  
[docs.google.com/document/d/1O3si4KZ8qqRXuiPOww1STkbkp2NkmaGXdlPIHw7XEfA/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O3si4KZ8qqRXuiPOww1STkbkp2NkmaGXdlPIHw7XEfA/edit)
- Adhere to the conference's rules, or your paper will lose a lot of points unnecessarily.

## 3. Research.

- Use credible sources and look at a variety of places: UN documents, news articles, country publications, world factbooks, speeches, etc.
- Look into everything you can think of! It's always better to have more information than not enough.

# How Do I Write My Position Paper?

## 4. Write

- Put your research into sentences; paraphrase all information.
- DO NOT COPY/QUOTE WORD-FOR-WORD, EVEN WITH A CITATION!
- Use strong vocab, but make the paper easy to read and understand. The people grading these are high schoolers, not English teachers.

## 5. Works Cited

- Los Al requires MLA format. Use Purdue Owl or EasyBib for help.
  - Remember to remove https:// and hyperlinks, alphabetize sources, and add date accessed for online sources.

## 6. Submit

- Use the committee email in your background guide by **FEBRUARY 9TH AT 11:59 P.M.**

# If You're Not Doing a Position Paper...

You still need to research! Look into these categories:

- Background of the issue (you can just rely on the background guide instead of researching this unless you want to find more statistics to use in your speeches)
- Previous UN action (this isn't super important, so just briefly look into it)
- Country policy (laws, programs, funding, voting, speeches, etc. on the issue)
- Solutions (based on country policy; can be previously implemented or new and creative)

\*See next slide for more information on solutions.

# Solutions

- **NGOs**
  - Stands for non-governmental organizations (basically nonprofits)
  - Ex: Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders
  - SUPER IMPORTANT in solutions; countries partner with them to reach more people with solutions
  - Have 3–5 up your sleeve for different solutions (ex: the NGOs you research should not all be focused on providing education to underprivileged kids).
- **UN Agencies**
  - The UN has a lot of different offices and partners, like the UNHCR, UN Women, ECOSOC, UNESCO, UNEP, UNODC, WHO, etc. These are great to include as partners with your solutions! For example, if you're in the UNHCR (refugees) committee, partnering with UNODC (drugs and crime) to minimize the amount of drugs coming across the border could be a good idea.
- **Acronyms**
  - This is more advanced, but it helps you break down information for your audience.
  - Ex: The HUG plan (each letter stands for a different part of the plan—H for Humanitarian aid, U for Universal education, G for General access to food).
- **Come up with your own ideas! Make sure to include the following.**
  - Overall purpose, overall plan, leaders, partnerships, timeline, funding, predicted or current impact
  - Detail is everything!
  - Solutions MUST follow your country's policies.

# Good Research Sources

- *The New York Times, The Washington Post, BBC, and The Guardian*
  - Some won't let you read unless you put in your email, but they're free!
  - Brief, simple articles
- CIA World Factbook
  - Each country's page has general facts as well as a list of its industries and their up-to-date information.
  - This is more of a starting point; you'll get names of programs and other things you can research further.
- UN Website (un.org)
  - Just type words associated with your topic into the search bar! You might have to scroll through some stuff, but the site is really reliable.



# Misc. Research Tips

\*This has more to do with speeches and your behavior during the actual conference; if you want to get all your research done at one time, feel free to look into these things, but otherwise, don't worry about them until after you write your position paper.

- Briefly research your country's enemies so you have an idea of who you don't want to work with before you go into the conference. You want to represent your nation as accurately as possible.
- Research how actively your country votes and participates in the U.N. (present vs. present and voting) and the general attitude of your country (if you were Russia, you would need to assert dominance in your solutions, but if you're a smaller country with fewer resources, your solutions might focus on smaller countries getting help from larger countries).