Students can win up to $1,000 in national essay competition focused on the Constitution.

The deadline for high-school students and their teachers to submit essays for the Bill of Rights Institute’s national Being an American Essay Contest is fast approaching. The contest asks students to explore the founding principles outlined in the Constitution by answering the question: “How does the Constitution establish and maintain a culture of liberty?”

The contest, which has quickly become the largest high-school essay competition of its kind, totaling over 80,000 submitted essays, is administered by the Bill of Rights Institute, a non-profit educational organization in the Washington, D.C. area devoted to educating young people about the Constitution and founding principles.

“This contest is unique in that it gives students the opportunity to think about the importantfounding principles communicated in our Constitution,” said Dr. Jason Ross, Bill of Rights Institute vice president of education programs. “This contest is vital to helping students see the founding principles as a meaningful part of the American experiment of self-government.”

The top three student winners from each of five geographical regions will be awarded cash prizes of $1,000 (first place), $500 (second place), and $250 (third place). Teacher sponsors of each student winner will also receive a cash prize of $100.

Essays must be submitted online at www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/Contest by 11:59 P.M. PST on Dec. 15.

Supporting contest materials, including lesson plans meeting Common Core standards, are provided at no cost to teachers who want to incorporate the essay contest into their classroom.

The contest is sponsored by the History Channel.

“We are pleased to support the Bill of Rights Institute’s Being an American Essay Contest,” said Dr. Libby O’Connell, SVP, corporate outreach and chief historian, History Channel. “The contest encourages students to think critically and truly makes the past relevant in their lives today.”

The essay contest serves as a key part of the Bill of Rights Institute’s mission to educate young people about the words and ideas of America’s founders, the liberties guaranteed in our founding documents, and how our founding principles continue to affect and shape a free society.