



Bessastaðir,
22 September 2026

Dear students,

We are living through a time of profound change and extraordinarily rapid technological development. At times like these, it matters more than ever that we nurture what holds us together as a society: trust, democratic participation, and our willingness to listen to one another and engage in honest conversation, even when our views, age, experiences and backgrounds are different.

When change happens quickly, it can be tempting to think that the answers must come from governments, experts or older generations. I do not believe that.

I believe we need to find the answers together. And I believe that it is crucial that **your voices and your ideas shape what comes next.**

That is why I would like to invite you to join us in a dialogue called *Samtal*.

The occasion is a special one. This October marks 40 years since the Reykjavík Summit of 1986. At a time of great tension and fear in the world, the leaders of two superpowers, Reagan and Gorbachev, sat down together at Höfði House and talked. They did not resolve all their differences, but their willingness to engage in dialogue helped change the course of history.

Forty years later, we want to put **dialogue and peace on the agenda** again and look to the future together.

On **10 October**, *Samtal* will take place across Iceland, with upper secondary schools at its heart.

At the heart of *Samtal* is one big, open question:

What kind of society do we want to shape together?

Upper secondary schools will be at the heart of *Samtal*, but this is not meant to be a conversation among young people alone. We want to bring generations together: students, parents and grandparents, teachers and people from the wider community. We want to create a genuine **conversation across generations**, where we can listen to one another, learn from one another and imagine the future together.

We have long spoken about equality between genders and between different groups in society. But we also need to think about **equality between generations**, ensuring that you, who will inherit this country and help shape its future, have a real voice and real influence.



That is why I do not simply want to invite you **into** the conversation. **I would like you to help lead it.**

We are looking for students across Iceland who would like to become facilitators, or *guides*, for *Samtal* in their schools.

You do not need to be an expert. You do not need to have the loudest voice in the room or the answers to every question. What matters is that you are curious about other people, willing to listen and interested in bringing people together. We need guides who can help people of different ages and backgrounds speak with one another openly, respectfully and sincerely.

These are qualities our world needs now more than ever.

Those who take on this role will receive training and support, as well as guidance and materials that can be adapted to each school. I also hope that, during the preceding week, students will have an opportunity to watch the documentary *The AI Doc*, about the artificial intelligence revolution, during school hours, as inspiration for the conversations to come.

The ideas, questions and perspectives that emerge from these conversations across the country will then be brought together. We will put artificial intelligence to good use, helping us bring together what we hear through *Samtal* and share it with the whole nation, as well as at other events taking place in Reykjavík to mark the 40th anniversary of the Reykjavík Summit.

The future belongs to those who help shape it. And you deserve more than simply a seat at the table. We need your ideas, your courage and your leadership. At the same time, we need to connect them with the experience and wisdom of older generations.

Let's shape the future together!

I very much hope that as many of you as possible will take part in *Samtal*, and that many of you will step forward to help lead it.

We may not change the world in a single day. **But change begins when we start talking and listening to one another, and hope grows when we choose to take part.**

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Halla Tómasdóttir'.

Halla Tómasdóttir
President of Iceland